



*Published exclusively for the members of*  
**AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555**  
**PELHAM, ALABAMA**

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**THE TRIPLE NICKEL**

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*IN GOD WE TRUST*



**PAST COMMANDER BARRY K. BLOUNT AWARDED**  
**"VETERAN OF THE YEAR"**

Pelham's Barry Blount was honored with the Veteran of the Year Award by the National Veterans Day Foundation on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at the Birmingham National Veterans Day Awards Dinner held at the Sheraton Downtown Birmingham. Barry was surrounded by his family, close friends, and fellow Legionnaires from The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555, who beamed with pride and love as Barry crossed the room to receive his well-deserved award.

Barry was presented with a plaque signed by Governor Ivey, and was draped with a hand-made "Quilt of Honor", both very prestigious awards. His son, A.J., said that receiving this award was a "huge accomplishment" for his father after his years of hard work and dedication. "My family is known for service to our country and community, so this award will be held dear to my father," A.J. said. "We are extremely proud of him in everything he does knowing that he will always put God and Country first."

On a day where most people would be soaking up the spotlight, Barry spent the evening instead praising those who have supported him and worked with him throughout his career. He said his whole life he has purposefully surrounded himself with strong people in the community. "This award tonight is not about me," he said. "It is about the people who surround me and got me here." Throughout the evening, Barry praised the hard work and determination of his son, Matthew. As he spoke of his son's continued dedication to service even through his cancer diagnosis, Barry became emotional.



Barry served in the United States military for 28 years and since his retirement in 2005, he has thrown himself into his work representing Veterans and those in his community.

In 2014, he began The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555. Every year the Post holds a Memorial Ride from Pelham to the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo in honor of his son, Matthew, who died of cancer in 2012 and is interred as an honored Veteran. In turn, the Post sponsors local Boy Scout Troop 404, and through their Junior Shooting Program, provides scholarship opportunities to America's youth. The shooting program keeps record of the students' marksman scores so when the time comes to apply to universities that have programs of their own, they will be able to submit their scores for scholarship consideration. "It is only through The American Legion that they can get involved in this scholarship opportunity, and we totally encourage those kids to come through the Civilian Marksmanship Program," Barry said.

All of us who were present to witness Barry receiving this award that evening, were proud to be there to share in his special time as the Veteran of the Year. Post 555 was very well-represented by four tables of fellow Legionnaires and guests with a standing ovation as Barry walked to the center of the room where he was handed his plaque, and draped with a "Quilt of Honor". I think all of you will agree that Barry is someone who cares deeply for his family, friends, Veterans, fellow Legionnaires, and the community he proudly serves. Please congratulate Barry for being selected as the Veteran of the Year.



## COMMANDER'S CORNER

**Jeff Monday**  
*Post Commander*



Fellow Legionnaires: I hope this newsletter finds you in good spirits and good health as we are coming very close to the end of this year. I leave you with these two articles; one to remember the past and the other to remind you of the future that we have so kindly decided to take part of as Legionnaires. As we move into a new year, I encourage each of you to copy the Four Pillars and post them on your refrigerator door or bathroom mirror to remind you of your purpose in the American Legion. Not every Pillar will fit your reason for being a part, but I will go out on a limb in saying that you fit into at least one of the four. Together we are strong and apart we are weak.

### FOUR PILLARS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

In 1919, The American Legion was founded on four pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. Each of these Pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's Veterans, its service members, their families, the youth of America and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives each year. Our organization's positions and programs are guided by resolutions passed by American Legion National Convention delegates, and by committee and commission members who represent 2.5 million wartime Veterans and their families. These programs, and the men and women who take the time to perform them, allow The American Legion to make a difference on the local, state, and national levels. It is who we are and what we do.

#### I. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

• VA Claims Backlog • Access to VA Health Care • Network of Service Officers • VA Vet Centers •

Health-care Funding Formula • Veterans with Special Needs • Volunteering • Final Respects • Heroes to Hometowns • Careers for Veterans • Homelessness • GI Bill Benefits

#### II. National Security

• Support for the Troops • Size of the Armed Forces • Quality of Life • Homeland Security • POW/MIAs • Operation Comfort Warriors

#### III. Americanism

• Flag Protection • Illegal Immigration • Voter Registration and Participation • Boy Scouts of America • The Pledge of Allegiance • Establishment-Clause Lawsuits • Legacy Run • Boys Nation • American Legion Baseball

#### IV. Children & Youth

• Child Pornography • Catastrophic Illness • Intellectual Disabilities • Immunization • Family Integrity • Media Violence • Drug Abuse • Child Sexual Exploitation • Family Support Network • Temporary Financial Assistance • Samsung Scholarship • Child Welfare Foundation

In 2022, let us work as a family, team, brothers, and sisters to make sure that we do our best to protect the Four Pillars, and to live by them. I hope you enjoy the reading below, and I hope that you all have a Very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

**Commander**

**Jeff Monday (Fuzzy)**

**Read the History of Veterans Day  
on pages 10-11**



## 1ST VICE'S COMMENTS

**Bill Blank**

*1st Vice Commander*



Time is near to the deadline to make our membership dues payment. The sooner we can make our dues payment the better. The important thing to keep in mind is to avoid a lapse in our membership. And keep in mind: Our post at this time is in pretty good shape but there is room for improvement. I want to thank all of you for your continued support of our Post's membership.

One more thought. I would like to invite all of you to come and join us December second for our last post meeting of this year. It would be good to greet and meet with those of you who have not attended a meeting in a while.

Baseball, yes one of my favorite events that I enjoy and I am sure it is the same for many. American legion baseball is as good as any baseball high school, college or the pros. Many American legion baseballers go to play and manage in the pro leagues. Also, American legion baseball is among the largest event we support as a post.

Last year Post 555 hosted the Southeast Regional Tournaments, a huge event and a very successful one. This was our first time ever hosting an event of this magnitude. We will be hosting this event again this year, thanks to state director Allen Philips and his son Kyle. Which brings me to my request:

We need volunteers to work the ticket booth for our regular season games and the regional tournaments; please consider helping for a few hours each sea-



son. The money we collect for the sale of tickets, funds the many aspects of hosting regular season games and the tournaments. The major one is paying for the referees, which is a large part of the cost of hosting a game.

As you know, my name is Bill Blank and I am the First Vice Commander of Post 555 and I am the one who is always looking for people to volunteer to work the ticket booth. It is my goal to form a team of people to make calls to request volunteers and/or a team that we can count on to work the ticket booth. I know it is a little early yet to be talking baseball but it is the time to start putting all of this together. If you are interested in working baseball this year, please contact me: Bill Blank, Ph.# (214) 476-7074, Email: [bhbpac@yahoo.com](mailto:bhbpac@yahoo.com)

Last but by far not the least is, we need to strengthen the membership in the auxiliary in Post 555. If you are Post member or the spouse (male or female) of a Post member, you qualify to be in the auxiliary and a part of all of our events. The president of our Auxiliary is Caroline Culpepper. Membership in the Auxiliary is an important part of family participation. Caroline is also a member of Post 555. If you are interested in membership in the Auxiliary, and I hope you are, you may contact: Caroline Culpepper, Ph# (205) 419-4549, Email: [carolineiculpepper@gmail.com](mailto:carolineiculpepper@gmail.com)

The Auxiliary is an important unit of the Post. Some of its functions include: Girls State, helping with Christmas gift bags for patients in the VA hospital over Christmas, helping to put out flags at the National Cemetery, helping out with the grave wreaths at Christmas, just to mention a few. They participate in fund raisers for scholarships, etc. All of this requires dedicated people who want to help provide a service for the community. The Auxiliary needs members! Please give this some thought and contact Caroline Culpepper to join us. Thank you for your consideration.



*"Acting" 2nd Vice's  
Interim Report  
Nancy Waller*



The events in which we participated in November went very well and had a lot of participants from Post 555. I want to thank the following members for their help with the Pelham Police National Night Out on November 2, 2021: Frank Lakotich, Ray Pata, Bill Blank, Ron Koonce, Doug McDaniel, Chic Cecchini, Jeff Monday, Sparkie Waller, and myself. We even had a new member join that evening, Cheryl Gilliam. Say hi if you see her at a meeting of event. The flag placement and removal at the Alabama National Cemetery had a TON of Post 555 members volunteering; thank you to the following members: Bill Blank, Ray Pata, Karryl Anderson, Frank Chacon, Gerald Ginn, John Zeiss, John Gaydon, Robert Sanders, Chic Cecchini, Tom Long, Eldon Woodie, Henry Crist, and myself. Some of these members worked on November 9 and 16, 2021, so a double thanks to them. Here is what to look forward to in December and one event so far in January 2022.

**Sat., December 11, 2021:** The first annual "A Pelham Hometown Christmas" parade and Christmas tree lighting are happening!!! The parade will start at the Pelham Civic Complex at 5:00 p.m. and travel through Pelham and return back to the Pelham Civic Complex for a tree-lighting. There will be a ton of things to do and food to eat, so put this date on your calendar. Commander Monday has been keeping us up-to-date from the committee meetings with the City of Pelham and we will be responsible for "staging" the floats at the Civic Complex, and recovering them as they return. Riders Director, Doug McDaniel, was "voluntold" to be the Float Chairman, and he is looking for members to help with the Post 555 float, so let him know if you are interested. Even if you do not volunteer to help, please make sure you attend these events!!

**Wed. thru Fri., December 15-17, 2021:** The reason for these three dates is that we do not know exactly when the Wreaths Across America semi-truck will be arriving at the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo with the Balsam Wreaths, so all of the members of the Support Committee are on stand-by for Pam Nichols to contact us when they are expected. At that time all Volunteers will report to the Storage Building at 7:00 a.m. that morning to off-load boxes and boxes and boxes of wreaths.

**Sat., December 18, 2021:** This is the day of the Wreaths Across America Ceremony at the Alabama National Cemetery at 11:00 a.m. After the ceremony, the family members will be invited to visit the section(s) where their loved ones are interred to place a wreath on their graves. The Volunteers will wait until the families are finished, then will start putting out the rest of the wreaths. Everyone is welcome to help with this project.

**Wed., January 19, 2022:** The Pelham High School Oratorical Contest is scheduled for January 19, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. in the Pelham High School Auditorium. If you have an interest in volunteering to help, let Richard Kaster or me (Nancy Waller) know (he is still the point of contact but will be working with Jerry McClain to do a hand-off to him). I helped with my first Oratorical Contest a good while ago and it was very interesting and a rewarding experience. The students who participated were amazing!! Get involved!!

*For God and Country  
Nancy J. Waller*

## ADJUTANT'S AREA



*Nancy Waller*  
Adjutant



Here is how we are doing with our membership numbers: As of today's report, we have 158 members paid through 2022 (including the 11 PUFL members), and 71 paid through 2021 (in other words, these members have not renewed as of yet). These are my "target" members!!! There are also 19 members who are paid through 2019 and 28 members who are paid through 2020. ALL of these members can be contacted to return to us even though their "continuous years" will start back at "1" which is a terrible shame for them. Hopefully we can convince them to come back to Post 555.

So far this year, we have been doing very well with the requirements that the Alabama Department set for us:

September 15, 2021's goal was to have 50% of our goal of 218; we had exactly 50% (109), even without the PUFL members that were left off for some reason.

September 21, 2021's goal was to have 55% of our goal of 218; we were at 55.5% which DID include the PUFL members, so we were good-to-go there.

November 3, 2021's goal was to have 65% of our goal of 218; we had 65.14% (142) so we met the goal again.

December 3, 2021's goal is to have 75% of our goal of 218 which would be 164 members paid through 2022; as of today we have 158, so we need six more to meet our goal.

Everyone should have received their notification from The American Legion asking for your dues for 2022, so please make sure you take care of that as soon as you can. One reason for doing it now will prevent you from continuing to receive more notifications and mistakenly paying duplicate times. I have heard some members tell me that they are going to wait until the end of 2021 to pay their 2022 dues, but I try to explain to them that the State Department puts requirements out that have certain percentages that need to be met at certain times of the year, so the earlier we get our 2022 dues in, the better we will do in meeting these requirements. Make your check payable to **Matthew Blount Post 555** and put it along with the "Dues Notice" in an envelope and mail to the Post address which is 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124. Ron Koonce will get them out of the mailbox at the Pelham Senior Center, deposit your check, and send me a copy of the "Dues Notice" for me to update your membership in MyLegion.org as a 2022 paid member! I will then send

your 2022 membership card via USPS along with a nice letter thanking you for your Service and continued support of Post 555. I cannot wait to send you my nice "thank you" letter and your 2022 membership card with my signature on it; that is the best part of my job as Adjutant; taking care of YOU!!!

If you prefer paying with a credit/debit card, please go to legion.org and join on-line. I check that report almost on a daily basis, so I would LOVE to see your on-line renewal if you like renewing from the comfort of your own home.

Do not get behind on your membership since that would affect the loss of your benefits. If you pay your 2022 dues after 12/31/21, your membership will have expired, so don't take a chance that you might forget and lose your valuable benefits. Everyone is important to the Post even if you cannot participate in meetings or events. We still want you to stay on our rolls as an honored member of Post 555.

If you are a current R.S.V.P. (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) member, don't forget to report your volunteer hours for the month of November when you come to the December 2, 2021 Post 555 meeting. I submit the hours by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the next month. If you are not yet an R.S.V.P. member, the only criteria is that you are age 55+ years young. You need to complete an application and supply a copy of the front of your driver's license (proof of age). There is a copier at the Senior Center that I can use to make a copy of your driver's license for you. Every month you will record your volunteer hours anywhere you serve, including Post 555 meetings and events. Just let me know if you would like an application!!

Our current R.S.V.P. members will be honored at the December 2, 2021 Annual Volunteer Recognition Christmas Brunch at the Pelham Civic Complex at 9:00 a.m. that morning. We have a full table of eight attending to ensure that Post 555 is well-represented. If there are any "goodies" distributed for those of you who could not attend, I will be sure to get them to you.

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



## SERVICE OFFICER NOTES

**Jerry McClain**  
*Service Officer*

### VA's tobacco cessation programs can help – anywhere, anytime.

VA has a range of treatment options for all Veterans who wish to quit smoking, available through all VA medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. You may call, text, have an in-person appointment or have a telehealth visit with a provider for smoking cessation counseling.

A combination of treatments will increase your chance of quitting for good. Your provider may recommend combining counseling with FDA-approved prescription medications or nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products. Those products may include gum, patches and lozenges that can help you transition away from smoking.

#### Treatment options

- **In-person counseling:** Tobacco cessation counseling offers Veterans the best chance of becoming and staying smoke-free when combined with another cessation tool, such as medication or NRT products. VA offers group and individual counseling to talk about smoking, triggers and lifestyle changes that can help you overcome the urge to smoke. Cessation counseling is routinely provided through VA medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics.

**Remote counseling:** VA offers secure virtual appointments that you may attend from your home or another place of your choosing. Remote monitoring devices and tools – such as [VA Video Connect](#), VA's secure videoconferencing app – help bring your providers closer to you.

- **Medications and NRT:** VA offers FDA-approved

prescription medications as well as NRT to help relieve nicotine withdrawal symptoms and the cravings that come with quitting smoking. Your VA provider can guide you through the available options and help you decide which one might work best for you.

- **Quit VET:** Veterans can call 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838) to receive tobacco cessation counseling and get help building their plan to quit smoking. Quitline counselors are available Monday through Friday, between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. ET. Counselors can help you prepare for potential challenges and avoid relapse. They also offer continued support through follow-up calls and counseling. Counseling is available in English or Spanish.

- **SmokefreeVET:** For tools and tips you can use to quit smoking, sign up for SmokefreeVET by texting VET to 47848. SmokefreeVET provides regular text messages as well as extra support for Veterans. Text the keywords URGE, STRESS or SMOKED to 47848.

- *Para inscribirse en SmokefreeVET en español, manda el texto VETesp al 47848.*

#### Take a moment

Take a moment to imagine your life without smoking. Then talk with your provider about which of VA's tobacco treatment options might best meet your needs and improve your life, health and future.

**va.alabama.gov**



**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF**  
**VETERANS**  
**AFFAIRS**



## CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT

Joe Dunn  
Post Chaplain



It's the start of the "Holiday Season," and for many, **Thanksgiving** is a joyous time. For many others, not so much. I understand. For years, I went through the motions of getting together with family when I did not want to; of smiling and laughing with others when I did not mean it at all; and of buying gifts at Christmas because I had to, even though for some relatives I did not want to spend money, because I did not even like them! Many of you, my fellow Vets, know exactly what I'm talking about, right? Such is the American culture.

That is a far cry from the Pilgrims who first landed on our shores. They truly were **Thankful** to even be alive, to give **Thanks** because so many others didn't make the voyage. How easy it is for us to forget what truly matters in life; but it wasn't for them for them to forget. They understood Psalm 92:1, "It is good to give **Thanks** to the Lord." I find that easier to do now that I am on the downside of a Bell Curve in the years that I have left. Frankly, I think being **Thankful** from the heart is becoming a lost art.

If you give a gift to someone, and they don't even say "**Thank You**," how do you feel? Did you know that God feels the same way? We are created like Him. God has emotions just like we do and He loves to be **Thanked**. See 2 Corinthians 9:15, "**Thanks** be to God for His incredible, unbelievable gift."

That gift is God the Son, who was sent to this earth and shed His blood with an offer of Divine Mercy and a home in heaven to any lost sinner who will believe Him and trust Him.

He wants us to be exceedingly **Thankful** in what He did for us.

I personally couldn't be more **Thankful** myself, during this holiday season, than to know that more of my fellow Vets come to know the reason for being truly **Thankful**. Jesus is the real "Reason for the Season."

Chaplain Joe



# POST 555 WORK AREAS

## Triple Nickel Riders



Hello to all Legionnaires:

It has been a *crazy last few weeks* for the Triple Nickel Riders. We did what we do best, show up and show out. I like to say sorry for last month's newsletter, I missed the deadline for my contribution to it.

In October we had our Annual Matthew Blount Memorial Charity Ride. It was a great success; we had a generous sponsor, Hoover Toyota, that donated \$500.00 to our cause. The ride, with Riders fee, 50/50 and donations, was able to collect \$1135.00 for Wreaths Across America. The Riders did not stop there. We joined the Regulators Motorcycle Club on the benefit ride. No! Not slowing down one bit, we continued the show of support and charitable kindness and joined up Riders Harley Davidson HOG Chapter for their Annual Teddy Bear Ride for Big Oak Ranch. The smile on the boys and girls as we rode up and laid out all the stuffed animals out for them was immeasurable!

We keep the wheel rolling on to Pelham Night Out. A few of my fellow riders and myself brought our bikes out and placed the motorcycles alongside the Post tent to show off one of the many aspects of the American Legion. Who doesn't like watching live hockey? The Birmingham Bulls had their Annual Military Appreciation Night. I joined up with a few of my fellow legionnaires and set up a booth to greet our fellow veterans as they came in. The Bulls won the game. The University of Alabama Hockey Team hosted Texas A&M University for Military Appreciation Night. The riders came out to show support for the Veterans.

The Riders and I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! Stay safe all.

Doug McDaniel  
Triple Nickel Riders Director



## Auxiliary Unit 555



I hope all had a great Thanksgiving. We are moving closer to a new year, with many possibilities to do some things. I really need people to help me come up with ideas. Even if you are not part of the Auxiliary, but you know of events coming up, please let me know.

Our Thanksgiving raffle brought in a tidy sum of \$141.00, and I want to thank everyone who participated in it.

I received our most current membership roster and we have 17 people on roll and 16 are paid for 2022. Thank you for renewing.

Caroline Culpepper,  
Post 555 Auxiliary President





MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555



**MEETS FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH.**

The next membership meeting will take place at the Pelham Senior Center on 2 December 2021. Dinner at 6 PM and meeting at 7PM  
Bring a friend, bring a Vet!

*We Welcome our new  
Public Relations Officer,  
Dorian Ross*

*Post Leadership 2021/2022*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Post Commander</b><br>Jeff Monday                                    | <b>Auxiliary President</b><br>Caroline Culpepper     |
| <b>1st Vice Commander</b><br>Bill Blank                                 | <b>Sons of Legionnaires</b><br>Bill Blank, Comm.     |
| <b>2nd Vice Commander</b><br>TBD  | Ron Koonce, Advisor                                  |
| <b>Adjutant</b><br>Nancy Waller   | <b>Legion Riders Director</b><br>Doug McDaniel       |
| <b>Asst Adjutant</b><br>Ron Koonce                                      | <b>Flag Team Coordinator</b><br>Ron McGriff          |
| <b>Judge Advocate</b><br>Tom Long                                       | <b>Boy Scouts Coordinator</b><br>David Coram         |
| <b>Financial Officer</b><br>Barry Blount                                | <b>Jr. Shooting Director</b><br>Darrell Lawley       |
| <b>Chaplain</b><br>Joe Dunn   | <b>Baseball Director</b><br>Jon Freeman              |
| <b>Sergeant-At-Arms</b><br>Derek Winters                                | <b>School Awards Program</b><br>Frank Lakotich, Chr. |
| Anita Bennett   | <b>Awards Program</b><br>Barry Blount, Chr.          |
| <b>Post Service Officer</b><br>Jerry McClain                            | <b>Webmaster</b><br>Ron Koonce                       |
| <b>Historian</b><br>Shauna Hadley                                       | <b>Triple Nickel Editor</b><br>Frank Chacon          |
| <b>Public Relations Officer</b><br>Dorian Ross                          | <b>Photography</b><br>Chic Cecchini                  |
| <b>Post Trustees</b><br>Frank Lakotich<br>Robert Horsley<br>Chris Combs |  |

*The Triple Nickel*

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50 Racquet Club Parkway  
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205-678-1375

[commander@ALpost555.com](mailto:commander@ALpost555.com)

Items for publication are accepted on Executive Committee approval and available space.

Submit articles prior to the 10th of the month for publication the following month. We reserve the right to edit any submissions for the purpose of publication.

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

Send email to: [Editor@alpost555.com](mailto:Editor@alpost555.com)

*Photos by Chic Cecchini, Post 555*

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## HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”



Soldiers of the 353rd Infantry near a church at Stenay, Meuse in France, wait for the end of hostilities. This photo was taken at 10:58 a.m., on November 11, 1918, two minutes before the armistice ending World War I went into effect.

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on

June 4, 1926, with these words:

*Whereas the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and*

*Whereas it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and*

*Whereas the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.*

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor Veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the Veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American Veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all Veterans, all Veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary

## HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY CONTINUES

planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."



President Eisenhower signing HR7786, changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day. From left: Alvin J. King, Wayne Richards, Arthur J. Connell, John T. Nation, Edward Rees, Richard L. Trombla, Howard W. Watts

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by cele-

brating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major Veterans service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's Veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

## Sons of The American Legion



Squadron 555 roster continues to grow with 2 new members, Tom & Michael Long, during the month of November setting the Squadron's roster total at fifty-Four to date that includes both active and inactive members. The Squadron has gained sixteen new members since July 1, 2021. Current membership is at 137% of the 2022 National goal.



The Squadron held the November 9, 2021, monthly meeting at the Pelham Library. **The December meeting has been suspended due to the Christmas Holidays.** The Next meeting will be January 11, 2022, 7:00 pm at the Pelham Senior Center. The Future regular meeting nights will be on the second Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Pelham Senior Center.

During the month of November, the squadron participated in Pelham Police National Night event, National Veterans Day Award Dinner, and the Birmingham Bulls Hockey Military Night along with other Post 555 Family units.



The Squadron is sponsoring Sgt. Tanner Aldridge while deployed overseas. The squadron has provided two shipments of requested food and other needed items. The squadron shared his needs with Hope Christian School. Their Key Club has shipped three additional boxes. Christmas cards to be sent to Tanner were distributed to those members attending the November 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.




Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. Hope to see a lot of our members at the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*For God & Country*

*Ron Koonce*

*Adjutant*

DECEMBER 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 Post 555 General Membership Meeting, Pelham Senior Center, 6:00 p.m. Fellowship Meal, Followed by Meeting	3	4
5	6 Pelham City Council Meeting, Pelham Senior Center, 7:00 p.m.	7	8	9	10	11 "A Pelham Hometown Christmas" Parade, Pelham Civic Complex, 5:00 p.m.
12	13	14	15 Arrival of Wreaths from Maine for Wreaths Across America at the Alabama National Cemetery; Put Up Avenue of Flags	16 Volunteers on Stand-By for Notification of the Delivery; Offloading of Wreaths; Put Up Avenue of Flags	17 Volunteers on Stand-By for Notification of the Delivery; Offloading of Wreaths; Put Up Avenue of Flags	18 Pre-positioning of Wreaths at the Alabama National Cemetery, 7:00 a.m.; Set-up Ceremony Area, 8:00 a.m.; Wreaths Across America Ceremony, 11:00 a.m.
19	20 Take Down Avenue of Flags at the Alabama National Cemetery (Time TBD); Pelham City Council Meeting, Pelham Senior Center, 7:00 p.m.	21	22	23	24	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL, A GOOD NIGHT!! Post 555 Newsletter Deadline to Editor Frank Chacon
26	27	28	29	30	31 HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!!	