



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

VOLUME IX, ISSUE X OCTOBER 2022

THE TRIPLE NICKEL

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Matthew Blount Post 555

THE SUPPORT COMMITTEE FOR THE ALABAMA NATIONAL CEMETERY PRESENTS



CONCERT FOR A CAUSE
SUNDAY • OCTOBER 23 • 3 PM
 BENEFITTING

WREATHS *across* AMERICA
INCREDIBLE MUSIC
FEATURING OLDIES, PATRIOTIC,
CHRISTMAS & HYMNS

FREE ADMISSION: A MINIMUM DONATION OF \$15 PER PERSON IS SUGGESTED & APPRECIATED
(THIS IS THE COST OF ONE LIVE BALSAM WREATH)

PLEASANT HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
4809 BELL HILL RD • BESSEMER/MCCALLA
EXIT #1 ON I-459

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SCALNC.ORG



IN GOD WE TRUST



COMMANDER'S CORNER



Jeff Monday
Post Commander



Riders' October Run for the Wall

The ride to the Veteran's Park in Tupelo, MS., which replicates the one to DC, to the Vietnam Memorial Wall

Hello Ladies and Gentlemen of Post 555,
I apologize for the long hiatus from posting my monthly article in the newsletter. Allow me to take the time to catch everyone up.

In May Ray Pata, Alan Farmer and myself (Doug McDaniel) met up with David Lee to participate in Run for the Wall. The ride was started to ensure our POW/MIA soldiers will never be forgotten and also healing for those who made it home from war.

June was a hot but great group ride with Jimmy Quebodeaux, Ray Pata, Barry Blount and myself rode to the Veterans Park in Tupelo MS. The park had a replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall, just a smaller scale. The park also had aircraft and military equipment on display.

Another hot month was July. That did not stop the riders from enjoying the day, Chris Watts, his wife Chris, Ray Pata and yes, myself took off and headed northwest to the town of Tuscumbia, AL; this is where The Rattlesnake Saloon is located. We had a great lunch and fantastic scenery.

The month of August was the American Legion Mid-South 19U Baseball Tournament. The riders participated in the opening ceremony. Later in the month the Triple Nickel Riders joined up with other post riders to participate in Keep the Spirit of 45 Alive at the Montevallo National Cemetery.

Hang on for the month of September, the riders are and will be wide open. We joined up for the Annual 21st District 9/11 Memorial Ride. The following Saturday the Triple Nickel Riders hosted their Annual Matthew Blount Memorial Ride. The riders were joined by the Central Alabama Miata Society. We were able to collect, with fees and donations, just over \$2900.00 for Wreaths Across America. We are not done! We will be participating in the Post 911 Veterans Suicide Awareness Ride and then "revin' up" for Research Breast Cancer Ride.

Plus, the many more small morning and afternoon rides, not to forget several other charity rides. Everyone have a great month and I will be back next month.

Doug McDaniel, 555 Rider's Director



At the Rattlesnake Saloon

Headin' out!



Riders lunch... of course



2nd Vice's Eldon Woodie

Congratulations to our Legion Riders for organizing and hosting an outstanding event. It was the seventh annual charity ride to honor the memory and legacy of 2nd Lieutenant Matthew Blount.

The ride traditionally occurs near 2nd LT Blount's birthday on the 18th of September. This year's ride dedicated the funds to support Wreaths Across America for the Alabama National Cemetery. Doug McDaniel partnered with Central Alabama Miata Society for this ride. There were 15 motorcycles and 15 Mazda Miatas participating in the ride. The weather for the ride was perfect and ride followed a scenic route to the Alabama National Cemetery.

At the Alabama National Cemetery, the program was brief and moving. Following TAPs, past Post 555 Commander Barry Blount introduced his son and fellow member, AJ Blount, to speak. AJ recounted memories of his older brother's positive impact on his life and the pride the Blount family takes in knowing Matthew's name is associated with an organization taking care of Veterans and making our community better.

Following the program, the ride continued and ended with an esprit building meal at Beef 'O' Brady's in Helena, Alabama. All total, this event raised \$950 from the participants and a generous \$2,000 donation from Mr. David Morrison, Chief Operating Officer, Tacala LLC (Taco Bell). This \$2,950 donation will significantly aid our efforts to make sure each burial site at the Alabama National Cemetery receives a wreath for the holidays.

Commander Jeff Monday thanked each person for their donation and participation. He closed with an encouragement to look after all of our Veterans and work to prevent suicide. Our Legion Riders are awesome! Thanks for leading this event. Thanks also to Post member, Chic Cecchini, for his exceptional photography skills. His photos of the event are posted at [9-17-2022 Annual Post 555 Memorial Ride - Chic Cecchini \(smugmug.com\)](https://www.smugmug.com/9-17-2022-Annual-Post-555-Memorial-Ride-Chic-Cecchini)

Eldon Woodie



Doug McDaniel and Jeff Monday feeling blessed to be part of the American Legion and the famed Matthew Blount Triple Nickel.



Frank Lakotich and AJ's kids man
Memorial ride registration



The Blount family

ADJUTANT'S AREA



Nancy Waller
Adjutant

Effective July 1, 2022, our new membership drive began. The Department of Alabama gave all Adjutants a list of goals to strive to reach or exceed between July 31, 2022 and May 31, 2023. Here is what they are asking us to do as far as membership numbers. The numbers I sent in the September 2022 Newsletter in the "Adjutant's Area" have been revised due to the Department calculating a different end total which is now 225 members.....so I adjusted the expectations of each of the upcoming monthly goals. Green highlighting means the goal was met or exceeded. If we don't make it, I will use yellow highlighting (let's hope we do not have any yellow!!!).

Cut-off Dates:

July 31st = 40% membership (need 90 members renewed/joined) – WE MET AND EXCEEDED THIS GOAL BY ACHIEVING 42.22% WITH 95 MEMBERS RENEWING FOR 2023—THANKS!!!

August 31st = 50% membership (need 113 members renewed/joined) – WE EXCEEDED THIS GOAL BY ACHIEVING 52.44% WITH 118 MEMBERS RENEWING FOR 2023—THANKS AGAIN!!!

September 30th = 55% membership (need 124 members renewed/joined) – AS OF THE WRITING OF THIS ARTICLE, WE HAVE 55.56% WITH 125 MEMBERS RENEWING FOR 2023—WE DID IT AGAIN!!!

October 31st (Happy Halloween) = 65% membership (need 146 members renewed/joined)

November 30th = 75% membership (need 168 members renewed/joined)

December 31st (Happy New Year) = 80% membership (need 180 members renewed/joined)

January 31st = 85% membership (need 191 members renewed/joined)

February 28th = 90% membership (need 202 members renewed/joined)

March 31st = 95% membership (need 213 members renewed/joined)

April 30th = 100% membership (225 members renewed/joined)

May 31st (Happy Memorial Day) = 103% membership (231 members renewed/joined)

To keep the ball rolling for October, we need 21 renewals to meet the total of 146 members (65%) needed. If you want to be one of those **VERY IMPORTANT** 21 members, **PLEASE** renew either by mail or on-line. I check the on-line renewals very frequently and would be **THRILLED** to

see several names on there for October.

In my August article, I mentioned these being "lofty" goals, but we are doing a great job in having our members renewing each month, so please continue doing so. The 23rd District Commander told us at our quarterly meeting on August 20, 2022 to "not focus on the monthly percentages, but to do our best to make it to 100% by December 31, 2022". There is a report that comes out at the end of each month from the Department and they are tracking these monthly percentages for everyone to see.....so to not focus on these monthly goals is not the way we are in Post 555. We are a GREAT group of Veterans and members and I want us to continue to **SHINE** by meeting or exceeding each monthly goal so that we can show everyone in the state that Post 555 is the BEST!!! Keep those renewals coming in either via USPS or on-line. I believe in **YOU!!!**

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 September when you come to the October 6, 2022 Post 555 meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, call me or send me an e-mail with your hours. I was given approval to report your hours with a notation that they were reported "telephonically". I don't want to miss any hours!! I submit the hours by the 10th of the month, so contact me before then. If you are not yet an R.S.V.P. member, the only criteria is that you are age 55+ years young, have a current driver's license that I can take a photo of on my phone to send to Pamela Raines, and complete an application. No paper copy of your driver's license needed anymore. 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.

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

 AMERICAN
LEGION

RETURN TO THE DUKE'S YARDWORK

Last month, Mrs. Kerry Richardson, daughter of Mr. Newton Duke, reached out for assistance with yardwork. Post 555 showed up and accomplished yardwork.

to like new condition and the pressure washer repaired. For many years, Mr. Duke has supported American Legion and POW functions as well as actively participating with Veteran Ceremonies at the Alabama National Cemetery.

During last month's yardwork event, A.J. Blount noted the safety risk posed by organic growth on Mr. Duke's long handicap ramp. Mr. Duke advised that his pressure washer was inoperative.

Approximately three hours were devoted to the event. Mr. Duke expressed his appreciation for the support. When asked why he brought his children to assist, A.J. Blount stated:

Taking the initiative, and on behalf of Post 555, members David Blount and A.J. Blount (and A.J.'s children) followed up on September 8, 2022. The ramp was returned

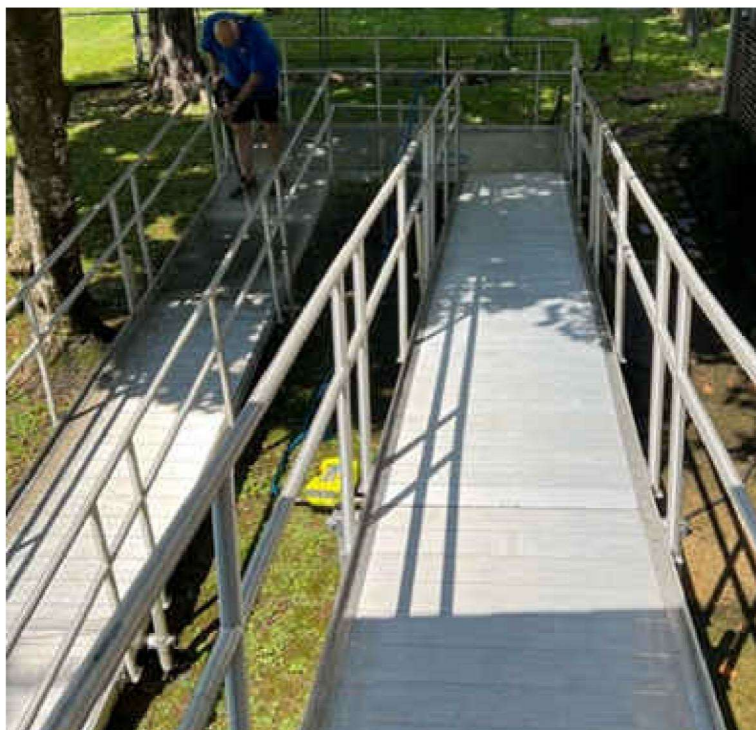


Duke's ramp as it looked last month

"Including youth in community services with American Legion efforts passes down selfless service characteristics the military taught regarding brotherhood."

Reported by Eldon Woodie

David Blount doing the final pressure wash shots



This month's look at the Duke's handicap ramp

CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT



Joe Dunn
Post Chaplain



It is a well-known fact that when we as men are hurting, we naturally want to be alone. When men are down or depressed, when they go through the normal struggles in life, or more than their fair share, the last thing they want to do is to look weak or in need. They think that no one else goes through the problems that they do, or that if others knew them as they really were, no one would want to be around them. Yet that is absolutely untrue.

Great is the natural "medicine" of getting outside of ourselves and getting involved in someone else's life. If we would do that, often we would see that 1) that there always those that have it worse than we do, and 2) as we take an interest in others, we really do have something to offer that can be a help to someone else. Just having a listening ear, an understanding heart, and perhaps a wise word of counsel from experience can go a long way

Yet is it not strange that often the last thing we want to do is to get outside of ourselves and be in the company of others? I realize that there can be things more deeply imbedded in our souls at times that require a greater degree of help, but for the most part, it is as the wise Job from the Bible said: "Man is born unto sorrows as the sports fly upward."

Job 5:7. When you stir a camp fire, the sparks fly upward one hundred per cent of the time. So, every one of us struggles because we are human.

I have in mind something that we could do to help men get together more often. I have seen this work in other places, and I thought we might try to do it ourselves. That would be a monthly get-together over lunch with other guys, called the "ROMEO's." Retired Old Men Eating Ot" together over lunch. I would like to talk about that in greater detail to see if there would be any interest in doing something like that with the Vets in our Post.

With You All in Mind and
For God and Country,

Chaplain Joe



Sons of the American Legion, Post 555

Members of the squadron were active during the month of September. Three members, Commander Bill Blank, First Vice Commander Donald Walker, Adjutant Ron Koonce, attend the September Detachment Executive Committee in Montgomery. The squadron’s First Vice Commander was appointed to Alabama Detachment Historian along with squadron Adjutant, Ron Koonce appointed as chair of the Detachment Americanism Committee.

Members of the squadron conducted a flag placement for Kathy Gassner, the widow of deceased Post member, Butch Gassner. The original flag was gifted to Butch by the Post a few years ago after becoming totally disabled. The Squadron’s facebook page

is



acquiring a large number of visitors. You are invited to visit and “Like” our page at www.facebook.com/alabamaSAL555 if you have not had the opportunity. The Facebook page share’s current events and activities of the squadron and the Alabama Detachment.

The Squadron’s 2022-2023 membership renewal campaign is progressing along to meet our early of December 31, 2022 goal of 41 paid members. Currently there are 22 paid for 2023., 53.7%. The 2022 membership will expire on January 1, 2023, so consider getting ahead of the curve and renew now. Annual dues remain \$20 payable to Matthew Blount Post 555. Mail to:

Sons of The American Legion
Squadron 555
50 Racquet Club Parkway
Pelham, AL 35124

We continue to recruit new members. Applications for membership to The Sons of American Legion can be found on the “Home” page of the Post website, www.Alpost555.com. Scroll down to the “join” section. Select “Join the Sons of American Legon”. Print the application and follow the instructions on the form.

We encourage legionnaires with eligible family members to join us. Legionnaires whose parent, grandparent, or stepparent is also a legionnaire or would have been eligible to join The American Legion but has passed is eligible to join also join SAL and get their dual-member pin.



Likewise, if you are a current legionnaire with sons, grandsons, or stepsons, they are eligible to join SAL and we encourage you to invite them to join Squadron 555 to instill the Sons of the American Legion five points of Patriotism, Citizenship, Discipline, Leadership, and Americanism. Visit the squadron’s webpage [Sons of the American Legion | Post 555 \(alpost555.com\)](http://Sons of the American Legion | Post 555 (alpost555.com)) for details. Next Squadron is October 11, 2022, at the Pelham Senior Center, 7:00pm.

For God & Country
Ron Koonce, Adjutant

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Everyone have a great month and I will be back next month.

Doug McDaniel
Director



At the Rattlesnake Saloon

MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555



Meets first Thursday of the month.

The next Membership Meeting will be at the Pelham Senior Center on 6 October 2022
Please come for dinner at 6:15PM followed by the meeting at 7PM

Post Leadership 2022/2023

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Post Commander
Jeff Monday</p> <p>1st Vice Commander
Bill Blank</p> <p>2nd Vice Commander
Eldon Woodie</p> <p>Adjutant
Nancy Waller</p> <p>Asst. Adjutant
Ron Koonce</p> <p>Judge Advocate
Tom Long</p> <p>Financial Officer
Andrew Blount</p> <p>Chaplain
Joe Dunn</p> <p>Sergeant-At-Arms
Derek Winters</p> <p>Post Service Officer
Vacant</p> <p>Historian
Shauna Hadley</p> <p>Public Relations Officer
Dorian Ross</p> <p>Post Trustees
Frank Lakotich (1 yr)
Chris Combs (2 yr)
Tom McDaniel (3yr)</p> <p>Auxiliary President
Caroline Culpepper</p> | <p>Sons of The American Legion
Bill Blank, Comm.
Ron Koonce, Advisor</p> <p>American Legion Riders-Director
Doug McDaniel</p> <p>Flag Team Coordinator
Vacant</p> <p>Boy Scouts Coordinator
David Coram Jr.</p> <p>Jr. Shooting Director
Darrell Lawley</p> <p>Baseball Director
Jon Freeman</p> <p>School Awards Program
Frank Lakotich, Chr.</p> <p>Awards Program
Barry Blount, Chr.
Nancy Waller, Asst. Chr.</p> <p>Webmaster
Ron Koonce</p> <p>Triple Nickel Editor
Frank Chacon</p> <p>Photography
Chic Cecchini</p> <p>23rd District Commander
Paul Gonther</p> <p>2nd Division Commander
Richard Kaster</p> |
|---|--|

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU,
OUR OCTOBER MEMBERS**

- Raymond N. Adams, 10/02
- Frank Chacon, 10/02
- Earl L. Austin, 10/03
- Nathan C. Waller, 10/03
- Stephen P. McGavin, 10/04
- Henry M. Smith, Jr., 10/04
- Melvin M. Grissett, 10/05
- Thomas J. "Tom" Halford, 10/06
- Eldon Woodie, 10/07
- Robert L. Sanders, 10/09
- Alan Phillips, 10/10
- Mark May, 10/11
- John E. Tompkins, 10/11
- Aubrey J. Johnson, 10/13
- Patrick E. Stewart, 10/16
- John A. Clopton III, 10/20
- Billy Crocker, 10/21
- James M. Dormuth, 10/21
- Phillip S. "Sparkie" Waller, 10/24
- Coy D. Cambron, 10/29



The Triple Nickel

is published monthly for members of Matthew Blount Post 555.
50 Racquet Club Parkway
Pelham, AL 35124
205-678-1375

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

Photos by Chic Cecchini, Post 555

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American Legion Post 555

Hello Auxiliary Family,

Yeah, fall is coming soon. I sure hope everyone is safe and well. Please let us know if you have any prayer requests or something that I can do for you. Our group is starting to get back on track. Our second time together was held on Sept 25th. We were not able to do any actual business since we did not have enough people to do so.

Linda Johnson and I have submitted the dues that have been given to us. If you still need to do so, my address is 1214 Bennett Circle, Alabaster AL, 35007. Checks are made out to American legion Auxiliary Unit 555. Dues are \$30.00 for seniors and \$6.00 for Juniors.

We are looking forward to getting out and being in the community. If you would like to join us, my phone number is 205-419-4549. We meet the Sunday before the executive meeting for the post. Our next meeting will be Sunday, Oct. 23rd, at Buck Creek Coffee in Pelham. It is across the street from the Pelham Post Office.

Sincerely,
Caroline J. Culpepper
Unit 555, President



14th Annual Wreaths Across America Campaign
Alabama National Cemetery
Montevallo, Alabama
Saturday, December 17, 2022



The cost to sponsor each wreath is \$15.00. This year we are hoping for at least 10,000 wreaths. 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 3, 2022**, 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 Dorian Ross, Post 555 WAA Chairperson @ 205-624-4548. Thank you in advance for your show of support to our Fallen Heroes and their family members during the 2022 Christmas Season.

-----CUT HERE-----

14TH 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: _____