



**AMERICAN  
LEGION**

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

VOLUME X, ISSUE X      NOVEMBER 2023

**THE TRIPLE NICKEL**

Join us for the  
**Veterans Day 2023 Ceremony**  
**Saturday, 11 November 2023 at 11:00AM**

Presented by  
**American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555**  
**at Texas Roadhouse**  
**60 Drivers Way Pelham, AL**

Featuring Presentation of Colors by Thompson HS AFJROTC,  
Pledge of Allegiance by Boy Scout Troop 404, Patriotic  
Presentation, Fallen Heroes table. Free meal for Veterans.

**AMERICAN  
LEGION**  
Matthew Blount Post 555

**TEXAS  
ROADHOUSE**

## **CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT**

I spent a lot of time with some of my kids and grandkids over the last several weeks in Hollywood, FL, and in Boston, MA helping them take care of some major needs they had in their homes. I was reminded of the saying, "You're never done parenting." I think there's a lot of truth in that statement!

Having spent so much time with them, I was reminded of a personality test that can be taken to discover three important areas of a person's life. They are, 1—What YOU

**THINK** you really are. **2**—What you want **OTHERS TO THINK** you really are. And **3**—What you **REALLY ARE**.

I never thought that I needed to pay for a test like that to discover the truth about myself. All I really needed to do was ask my kids! Even if my spouse might fudge a bit to protect me, I knew that my kids wouldn't especially when they became teenagers! Actually, they still tell me the truth about myself as they see it, but through it all, my wife and my kiddos have taught me much.

And now, seeing more clearly what I am really like deep down inside, am able to teach my co-workers in the ministry that "If your Christianity doesn't work at home, it DOESN'T work! And **DON'T** export it. The goal of that test is to help people mature to the point where those three areas become closer to being one and the same. That's true for all of us, and especially for those who are teaching others.

The greatest thing that I have found to help me in my maturing process as to how I treat people is called "The Love Chapter," in 1Corinthians 13 of the Bible. Here is my own interpretation and explanation of 1Corinthians 13, verses 4-7, and what I believe it is trying to say to help us.

**4** Love is patient and long-suffering with others. Love is kind toward them. It does not want what belongs to someone else. Love does not brag about itself, and it does not lift itself up by putting others down.

**5** Love is not rude toward other people. It does not look out for its own interests only, but is truly concerned for the interests of others also. Love does not easily or quickly become angry with people. Love does not keep track of the wrongs that others have done to it. Rather if at all possible, love just lets it go.

**6** Love is not at all happy with evil; but it is full of joy when the truth is spoken and love prevails.

**7** Love always protects others from any kind of harm. It always trusts people until it has a reason not to. Love always hopes for the best in others, and it never gives up on them.

**8** Love never fails others, because if you love someone, you will be loyal to them, no matter what the cost.

*Be Encouraged My Fellow Vets,  
Chaplain Joe*

## **ROVEO LUNCHEON LOCATION CONTINUES AT MARGARITA GRILL**

We had such a great time at Margarita Grill in Pelham on October 5<sup>th</sup>, we voted to return for the next ROVEO Luncheon on **Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.** Here is a photo of the great group who met in October, so let's keep the numbers growing!!!



**L/R: Ron Koonce, Eldon Woodie, Robert Sanders, Barry Blount, Chris Curry (Nancy's guest), Nancy Waller, and Bonnie Woodie.**



**Here is the group from November 7, 2023:**

**L/R: Barry Blount, Alan Phillips, Ron Koonce, Chuck Kiser, Kenneth Paschal, Mark May, Vashone Smith, Joe Dunn, and Nancy Waller**

The group decided to try a new restaurant for the December ROVEO Luncheon so put **Tues., December 12, 2023, 11:30 a.m., Shonos Japanese Grill** (highly recommended by Alan Phillips, and the lunches cost as little as \$9.00) located at 1843 Montgomery Highway, Suite 107, Hoover, AL 35244; close to Hobby Lobby as a landmark.

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



## Sons of The American Legion Squadron 555

The Barber Vintage Festival roared back into Barber Motorsports Park for a weekend of action from October 6-8, 2023. Members of the Triple Nickel Family once again volunteered as "Tram Safety Personnel" to help ensure the safety of festival guests as they made their way around the facility on the free trams. These Volunteers gave the tram operator "Go/No-Go" signals to either hold the tram at its stops or to proceed around the perimeter of the track once all riders were safely boarded and seated. Members who volunteered their time throughout the three-day event included **Andy Burell, Vashone Smith, Ray Pata, Bill Blank, Nancy Waller, Pete Williams, Curtis Orse, Donald Walker, Kenn Fox, and Skip Mize** – many of whom worked multiple shifts, which were divided into 0730-1230 morning shifts and 1200-1730 afternoon shifts.

Volunteers were provided with credentials that allowed access to the entire festival outside of their working hours, allowing them to participate in the fun with other vintage motorcycle fans from across the country and around the world. The festival featured flat-track and road racing for a variety of classes, a huge swap meet, demo rides, live music, and BMW Motorrad Days Americas activities to celebrate BMW's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Another part of the festival was the Fan Zone, which – along with a great view of the track – featured stunt shows, merchandise, food trucks, kids' activities, and The American Legion BE THE ONE truck. This mobile display featured a BE THE ONE wall that supporters could sign, BE THE ONE challenge coins and pins, name badge creation, and even the chance to test your balance skills on a portable slackline. A special "Thank You" to SAL member Kyle Phillips for facilitating this volunteer opportunity!

*Respectfully,  
Donald L. Walker  
Commander  
Squadron 555*



L/R: Ron Koonce and Nancy Waller.

The Sons of The American Legion, Squadron 555, donated \$203 towards the 2023 Post 555's Wreaths Across America Campaign. **SAL Advisor and Squadron Adjutant Ron Koonce** presents this check to Post 555's **Wreaths Across America Campaign Chair and Post 555 Adutant Nancy Waller** during the October 5, 2023 General Membership Meeting.

## PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

**Barber Vintage Festival AAR** – This event took place Friday through Sunday, October 6-8, 2023 at Barber Motorsports. This is the event that highlights motorcycles, and they were EVERYWHERE!!! I want to thank the Volunteers who were “Tram Safety Volunteers” for one or more days: **Bill Blank (worked three shifts), Andy Burell (worked three shifts), Kenneth Fox (worked two shifts), Skip Mize (worked one shift and felt badly so he stayed home for his second shift, but he is doing fine now), Curtis Orse (worked one shift), Ray Pata (worked three shifts), Vashone Smith (worked two shifts), Don Walker (worked two shifts), Nancy Waller (worked three shifts), and James “Pete Williams (worked three shifts)** . The shifts were 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and 12:00 – 5:30 p.m. all three days and our Volunteers did the best they could to cover a lot of these shifts. A suggestion was made at a recent Executive Committee Meeting to have the Volunteers choose where their portion of the donation from Zoom Motorsports should go. The check was **\$1,200** (HOOAH), which ended up having each shift that was worked equal to \$50. The Volunteers wanted to give the Post General Fund \$775, the Riders received \$100, and the Sons received \$325. We will continue to do this whenever an organization offers us a check for anything we do in the community. Thanks to each of these Volunteers!!!



**L/R: Don Walker, Nancy Waller, James “Pete” Williams in the back, and Bill Blank.**



**L/R: Unknown female friend with Kyle Phillips.**



**Motorcycles were everywhere!!!**

# LEGION RIDER'S UPDATE

It is I, Doug (3D) McDaniel, your Rider's Director for the Triple Nickel Riders, here to pass on the latest happenings of the Riders. Due to personal obligations, Jeff Monday stepped-down as Director, so please join me in thanking Jeff for all that he did for the Riders along with his mentorship. Commander Barry Blount appointed me to the position of Rider's Director.

On to business. I have to go back to catch everyone up. In August, the Riders joined up with other Post Riders for the opening ceremony for the Regional Baseball Tournament. I would like to say a great big THANK YOU to all who participated. In September we had our next event which was the 21<sup>st</sup> District Annual 9/11 Remembrance Ride. The Triple Nickel Riders showed-up in fine fashion.



**L/R: Ray Pata, Vashone Smith at the end of the table, Doug McDaniel, and Jimmy Quebodeaux. Not sure of the other folks; sorry.....**

A couple of weeks later the Revin for Research Breast Cancer Charity Ride took place at the Heart of Dixie Harley Davidson dealership. The Riders came out big time to show their support; hats off to all the Riders and passengers who participated. Onward to October where we had our Annual Matthew Blount Memorial Ride. Due to some scheduling conflicts, this event was moved to Sat., October 21, 2023 starting at Heart of Dixie Harley Davidson, registration at 10:00 a.m. and KSU (kick stands-up) at 11:00 a.m. The ride went to the Alabama National Cemetery to honor Matthew Blount and spend some time together with a common bond. After this visit, the ride continued to Beef O'Brady's for food and fellowship, which included a 50/50 drawing and door prizes. Riders Director Doug McDaniel wanted me to report that this event raised **\$1,400** for Wreaths Across America!!! Enjoy some of the photos below. Thank you to all who participated and helped our Wreaths Across America Campaign!!!



**L/R: Barry Blount and Tom Long sharing a prayer or just time together remembering Matthew Blount, our Post's namesake.**



**Headstone of Matthew Blount resting in peace in Section 8.**



**Great group of Riders and guests in support of Barry Blount as everyone honors the passing of Matthew Blount every year.**





**A true patriot, Roy Brook, joining the group in the background. It is an honor to have him with our Riders and guests.**

Here are a couple of upcoming events I planned. On Sun., November 5, 2023, the HOG Riders of Harley Davidson hosted the Annual Teddy Bear Ride. We met at the Heart of Dixie at 11:00 a.m. with KSU at 11:15 a.m.

On Veterans Day, the day that is devoted to men and women, past and present, in the military. We met at the Warrior Convenience Store on Highway 119 in Alabaster at 10:00 a.m. with KSU at 10:15 a.m. We rode to Texas Roadhouse for lunch, then hopped back on the bikes to ride to the Barber Motorsports Park for a stroll through the museum. That place is absolutely amazing!!!

*Sincerely,  
Doug (3D) McDaniel  
Post 555 Rider's Director*

**Texas Roadhouse "Trunk or Treat"** – Vashone Smith coordinated this event to include asking Post 555 members to bring candy to our October General Membership Meeting (which appeared to be a success by the huge pile I saw) as well as getting a few Volunteers to help her hand-out the candy on Tues., October 31, 2023 (Halloween). Thanks to **Mac Braid, Bill Blank, Curtis Orse, and of course, Vashone Smith** for making this event happen.



**L/R: Mac Braid, Bill Blank, Curtis Orse, and Vashone Smith.**

**Birmingham National 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. Post 555 filled three tables of eight with Post members, Junior Shooters, and their parents and coaches. The Junior Shooters will be honored by The American Legion National Vice Commander Charles D. Aucoin with their silver medals and plaque for being the runner-ups at the National Championships. I am so glad that we have three full tables, especially with Chic Cecchini being able to join us to take the superb photos that he always does; thanks, Chic. I will be sure to put photos of this event in the December edition of the Post 555 Newsletter.

**Thanksgiving Dinner/Meeting** – The November 2, 2023 Thanksgiving Dinner/Meeting was a huge success!! The room was packed with Post members, several Department representatives (including Jr. Vice Commander Willie Rogers and his wife Sherrie), and VIPs from throughout our community. Commander Barry Blount and I felt that it was a great event for everyone, including welcoming Mr. Mike Waller as the new Manager at Texas Roadhouse. Commander Barry Blount presented Mr. Waller and Ms. Williams, Marketer at Texas Roadhouse, with a plaque thanking them for all of their support for Post 555. When Mr. Waller checked-in upon his arrival, he and I had an instant connection with us having the same last name, and no, we did not think of anyone with whom we had in common. He really appeared to enjoy the evening and we had a good time with us having the same last name!!! I will wait until Chic has the photos edited, so I will make sure they are in the December edition.

**2023 Wreaths Across America Campaign** – This campaign came to an end at the end of the November 2, 2023 Thanksgiving Dinner/Meeting with a total of **\$3,584** collected!! Adding this total to the amount already in the WAA account, that brought our total donation to Blue Star Salute Foundation, Inc. to **\$6,000!!!** We didn't meet our goal, but it was a tremendous effort on the part of all the members and guests/VIPs that donated to this great cause. ***This money will go toward 353 wreaths, so THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED!!!***

**Flag Placement at the Alabama National Cemetery** – If you are able and have time to help with flag placement at the ALNC, it is scheduled for Thurs., November 9, 2023, 10:00 a.m. Go to Committal Shelter #3 for a short ceremony (with Post 555 member **Conrad Stempel** laying the Veterans Day Wreath), then move to any section you prefer (we usually take care of Section 8 due to Matthew Blount resting in peace in that section). So far, I only have a few Post 555 members who volunteered to help, so thanks to **Eldon Woodie, James "Pete" Williams, Jim Darden, Karla Reagin-Young, Nancy Waller, and Chic Cecchini**. Be sure to find Chic for a Post 555 photo!!!!

**Flag Removal at the Alabama National Cemetery** – Again, if you are able and have time to help with flag removal at the ALNC, it is scheduled for Tues., November 14, 2023, 10:00 a.m. No ceremony, so just go to any area. You might want to bring some cleaning cloths to wipe off the ends of the sticks, and perhaps some rubber bands to bundle them together; just a thought.

*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 142 members (65%) for October, 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*

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAY WISHES

Anderson, Karryl K., 11/01  
Kane, Marion M., 11/01  
Lowe, Neil M. "Marcus", 11/01  
Curtis, Wayne C., 11/02  
Sawyer, Mark R., 11/04  
Seaward, Vincent H., 11/04  
Louis, Marc T., 11/06  
Smith, Jerry, 11/06

Inglis, David W., 11/07  
Miller, James I., 11/11  
Blue, James R. "Jimmie", 11/13  
Maxwell, Matthew B., 11/16  
Long, Thomas A. "Tom", 11/18  
Carter, James F., 11/22  
Shinbaugh, Robert L., 11/26  
Watts, Christopher R. "Chris", 11/28



***If your birthday is in November 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 **December 7, 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. Mrs. Valerie Sawyer and several members of her law firm will update us on the requirements of the “free wills” clinic, so be sure to be there to hear what they have to say. See you then!!! Happy Thanksgiving!!!

## 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 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***

#### ***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***