



**AMERICAN
LEGION**

Published exclusively for the members of

AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555

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THE TRIPLE NICKEL

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Matthew Blount Post 555

In the February 2022 Newsletter, we published an error regarding our American Legion Logo. It was stated the old logo had been replaced by a new one. As you see below, the "new logo" is a "Marketing" face of our organization. The old one remains as the "official" logo. *Editor*

Here is our new American Legion **MARKETING** Logo which does not replace the **OFFICIAL** logo



Our "OFFICIAL" logo below, remains in use for all official publications such as your newsletter



IN GOD WE TRUST



1ST VICE'S COMMENTS



Bill Blank

1st Vice Commander



Another month has come and gone-by and spring is rapidly approaching. There are a couple of events coming up which require volunteers to help support them. There are many things that enter my mind as I write this note to the post.

There will be the few that read this, but there will be many more who will not. I have this grand idea of developing a committee to do some of the footwork required to staff our events and to help see it through. I have found that it takes many hours on the phone to get a few people to help out with these events. The question that I have on my mind is why? After all, are we not an organization to support our community and our brothers and sisters who are serving and have served? I do know there are many of our young folks who are working and have families at home. I can relate. However, you only have to volunteer once or twice to make an impact. If enough members will consider this there will not be such a huge demand on your time. Please give this some thought and reply to me either by phone or E-mail. My Phone number is (214) 476-7074 my e-mail address is bhbpac@yahoo.com. I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

A couple of events coming up that I can recall

are the Pelham Palooza and baseball.

For baseball we will only be working the home games and we only require two people per game. The big one is the South Eastern Tournaments which will require a little more staffing. Your efforts will always be appreciated and your personnel rewards will be far greater.

Events, just to name a few, are Fire on the water, Oratorical, Pelham first responder night out, Boy's state and girls state, (contributions are a huge help), Bulls Hockey, Alabama Hockey and more.

Your support for these events is needed so please give it some thought and give me a call or an e-mail and let me know that you're interested in helping us.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I look forward to working alongside you.

Bill Blank,

First Vice Commander,



“Acting” Second Vice Commander Nancy Waller

As far as February is concerned, Punxsutawney Phil unfortunately saw his shadow which means there are six more weeks of winter—YUCK!!! Hang in there; spring will be here “soon”, but not soon enough for me.

The 23rd District Oratorical Scholarship Contest was held on Sat., February 12, 2022 at the First Baptist Church in Alabaster. There were two tremendous participants, Ms. Emma Noble, a junior at the Birmingham School of Fine Arts (Math and Science); and Ms. Carrington Mills, a senior at Pelham High School. Both young women did a superb job with their orations, but Emma was chosen by the three judges to be the top contestant. Both Emma and Carrington received a beautiful certificate and a medallion that will be personalized as a demonstration of our appreciation for their efforts. It never ceases to amaze me how they do what they do! Their first oration has to be between eight and ten minutes which is a LONGGGGG time (no notes at all); the second oration is one out of four options which means they have to know a little bit about each of the four articles of the Constitution (of which they are made aware) so they can speak between three and five minutes on the article that is selected for them that day. Both young women did a great job. They were invited to join us at the March 3, 2022 General Membership Meeting to have a surprise presented to them, so if you are at the meeting, let them know how much you appreciate them.

Since Emma won the 23rd District contest, she moves on to the 2nd Division Oratorical Scholarship Contest on Sat., February 26, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at the Shades Crest Baptist Church in Birmingham. Even though this article is needed this evening by Editor Frank Chacon, the results will have been reported to me before the March 3, 2022 General Membership Meeting, so you will know the results that evening if you join us.

Also in February, quite a few members supported our Junior Shooters’ Fundraiser by purchasing “Butts and/or Brisket”. Sixteen members purchased either one or more butts, and one or more briskets, or perhaps both which resulted in 13 butts and 10 briskets being purchased totaling \$1,160.00 being raised—thank you to all members who either have enjoyed or are continuing to enjoy their butts and/or briskets!!! Also, a big thank you to Past Commander Barry Blount for coordinating the orders and the pick-up on Sat., February 12, 2022 at the Pelham Senior Center, as well as meeting us at the First Baptist Church in Alabaster after the Oratorical Scholarship Contest to make sure that the Post 555 Volunteers who

ordered meat received their order. That is what I call “taking care of Veterans”!!!

Let’s talk about March. I will be sending the March 2022 Calendar of Events with the MailChimp e-mail before the March 3, 2022 meeting, so you will see everything that is currently scheduled. Right now, there are several meetings as well as Past Commander Barry Blount hoping to attend one or both City of Pelham Council Meetings to make sure that everyone on the council knows that Post 555 is alive and well and “out there in the community.

One thing I can let you know about is the Department Oratorical Scholarship Contest scheduled for Sat., March 12, 2022 at the Alabama Department of Archives and History, in Montgomery, or if there are too many restrictions due to COVID, etc., it will be held at the The American Legion Department of Alabama in Montgomery. Let’s hope that Emma does well at the 2nd Division contest so that moves forward to the Department contest.

As events develop, I will certainly keep you posted via e-mail so please check your e-mail fairly regular so you do not miss out on something that might interest you.

At the 23rd District Quarterly Meeting on Sat., February 19, 2022, we learned about the Mid-South Regional Baseball Tournament being hosted by Post 555 again, August 03-07, 2022 at the Pelham High School baseball field that has been totally re-done with turf and it absolutely beautiful!! The “ribbon-cutting” took place on Tues., February 22, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Commander Monday is facilitating a “Baseball Committee” to help Bill Blank cover all requirements for ticket sales throughout the baseball season, as well as the HUGE event in August. Let Commander Monday or Bill Blank know of your interest to be on this committee. WE NEED YOU!!!

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



ADJUTANT'S AREA



Nancy Waller
Adjutant

AMERICAN
LEGION

In past newsletters, I have provided the numbers of members we have had at specified times at the Department's direction, and want to let you know that as of February 15, 2022, Post 555 was at 85.32% of our goal of 218 (total of 186 current members paid for 2022) so we met the 85% that we needed—**THANKS TO THOSE WHO HELPED US REACH THE 85% GOAL!!**

Here are the next set of goals set by the Department for 2022 renewals:

- March 9, 2022 = 90% (196 members)
- April 13, 2022 = 95% (207 members)
- May 11, 2022 = 100% (218 members)

There are two ways to renew with one being to mail your \$45.00 check made payable to **Matthew Blount Post 555** to 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!!!

The second way to renew is to pay with a credit/debit card. Please go to legion.org and join online. 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. I just pulled-up a report from MyLegion.org and there are six members who renewed, so THANK 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 February when you come to the March 3, 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. 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!!

For God and Country,
Nancy J. Waller
Adjutant



SERVICE OFFICER NOTES



Jerry McClain
Service Officer

Enhanced pension benefits can help eligible wartime Veterans, surviving spouses increase income.

February 17, 2022

If you are a wartime Veteran who meets certain income, net worth, age or disability requirements, or you are a surviving spouse, then you may be eligible for VA's pension benefits. But did you know that VA's Aid and Attendance and Housebound benefits, or enhanced pension, can boost your pension payments? If you need help with daily activities, or if you are housebound, you may qualify for an increased monthly pension.

What are Aid and Attendance (A&A) benefits?

In addition to your monthly VA pension payment, A&A benefits help cover the cost of in-home care, assisted living or a nursing home. Benefits are available to qualifying low-income and net worth, wartime and disabled Veterans, as well as their surviving spouses who are in nursing homes or who need help with everyday tasks, like dressing, bathing or eating.

You may be eligible for this benefit if you have a VA pension and:

- You need to stay, or spend, a large part of the day in bed because of illness, or
- You are in a nursing home due to the loss of mental or physical abilities related to a disability, or your eyesight is limited even with glasses or contact lenses.

Get more information by visiting va.gov/pension/aid-attendance-housebound/, or call 1-800-827-1000.

Article Source: <https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/94273/enhanced-pension-benefits-help-eligible-wartime-veterans-increase-income/>

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  Ranger J. Mc

va.alabama.gov



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
**VETERANS
AFFAIRS**

CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT



Joe Dunn
Post Chaplain



Post members and friends: Please pray for Joe Dunn, his wife Joannie and the rest of the family!

I just talked with Joe who allowed me to explain to y'all about his situation and his not participating in our Post activities.

As you have noticed, we have been missing Joe Dunn, our chaplain, from our membership and executive meetings. This is because Joe has been very sick with a bad case of COVID19, on top of an earlier issue with Lyme disease. He ended up in the hospital for many days followed by more time in rehab recovering from pneumonia and a blood poisoning. He is now at home on Oxygen trying to become more active.

In addition to Joe's own health problems, his wife Joannie, also had a stroke while driving not far from home. Fortunately, she did not have an accident, although it happened near enough their house when Joe noticed her erratic driving. Thanks to it, he called 911. The EMTs took her to the hospital where she was treated immediately, with the result that she has not had any long-term impairment from the experience.

Buddy calls:

We have not had much activity with the monthly "Buddy Calls" due to Joe's absence, although Nancy Waller did get some volunteers to make calls for February. This is a great caring activity for our membership, both callers and receivers, so I will help Joe by sending the lists of members to call. But I need you to tell me you want to volunteer to do the calling, about 20 names per. If interested, please send me a note at frakchacon@gmail.com and I will e-mail you a page of the roster to call.

Thanks and God bless y'all!

Frank Chacon, editor

Sons of The American Legion



Squadron 555

Membership

Squadron 555 roster continues to grow with forty-one paid members. This translates to 151% of our 2022 goal.

Squadron Activities

The Squadron continues to work on filling 2022-2023 Officer nominations for 7 officers' positions.

Positions to be filled:

- Commander
- 1st Vice Commander
- 2nd Vice Commander
- Adjutant/Financial Officer
- Chaplain
- Sgt-AT-Arms
- Historian

Interested parties contact Ron Koonce, Adjutant, at ron.koonce@alpost555.com

Next Squadron meeting is March 8, 2022, at the PSC, 7:00pm. **All active members are encouraged to attend this important meeting.**

For God and Country

Ron Koonce

Adjutant

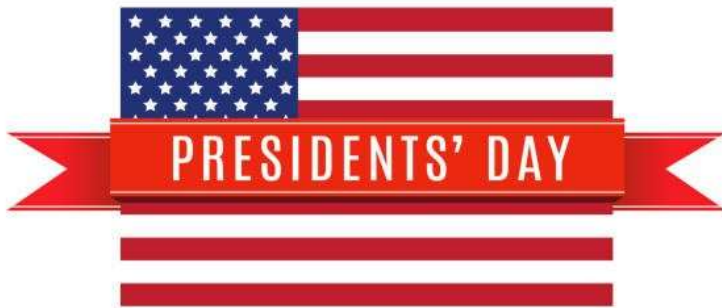
MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555



MEETS FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH.
 The next membership meeting will take place at the Pelham Senior Center on 3 March 2022.
 Come for Dinner at 6PM, Meeting at 7PM and bring a friend or member

Post Leadership 2021/2022

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



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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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