



# DISTRICT 23 DISPATCH

Published specifically for the members of Department of Alabama District 23

Winter 2024

Volume III Issue 1

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## Post Everlasting

*Robert (Bob) Barefield*

*September 24 1946-December 22, 2023*

### Member Posts

- Post 6 -Clanton
- Post 17 -Talladega
- Post 45 -Sylacauga
- Post 47 -W. Blockton
- Post 68 -Childersburg
- Post 105 -Goodwater
- Post 131-Columbiana
- Post 138 -Alabaster
- Post 195 -Sterrett
- Post 216- -Clanton
- Post 343 -Clanton
- Post 555 -Pelham



Robert (Bob) Barefield, US Army Colonel (Retired), aged 77, passed away in the presence of his family on December 22, 2023. Born on September 24, 1946 in Paducah, Kentucky, he graduated from Murray State College. Bob married the love of his life, Nancy Bridges on May 12, 1973, and together they were blessed with three children.

Following service in Vietnam with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division from 1969-1970 he completed a 30-year career in the United States Army. Bob's profound love for his country and the Soldiers he served alongside translated seamlessly into retirement, where he and Nancy devoted themselves to aiding veterans and their families, demonstrating tireless and unwavering commitment in the service of others.

Bob's affection for his family and friends mirrored the passion he held for Soldiers and Veterans. His contagious warmth, humor and kindness had a transformative impact on those around him. Whether leading a significant project with the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery (SCALNC), including the Scenic Overlook, or helping someone in a time of need or loss, he was a source of gentle strength and authentic generosity.

Bob is survived by his devoted wife Nancy, Pinson, Alabama, his children: Michael and daughter-in-law Kerri Barefield, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, Christy Barefield, Winter Haven, Florida and Robert Barefield II, Huntsville, Alabama; grandchildren, Drew Barefield, Steubenville, Ohio, Audrey Barefield, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Paxton Barefield, Satellite, Florida; sister Susie Smith, Symsonia, Kentucky. He was preceded in death by his parents Paul and Viola Barefield, brother, Paul Barefield and grandson, Jacob Barefield.

On Friday December 29, 2023, visitation will be held at Hope Community Church (formerly McElwain Baptist Church) 4445 Montevallo Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35213 from 10am until 12pm, followed by a Celebration of Life ceremony from 12pm until 1pm. He will be laid to rest at the Alabama National Cemetery at 2:45pm.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery at [Donations SCALNC](#).

[Charter Funeral Home](#) is handling the services and any comments for the family may be left on their website.





## Alabama Department Mid-Winter 2024 Tom Long , Judge Advocate

The Mid-Winter conference of the Department of Alabama American Legion was held at the Marriott Renaissance Hotel in Mobile on Thursday Jan 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday Jan 14<sup>th</sup>. It was fairly well attended by representatives from across the state. Multiple sessions were held on various topics including but not limited to 2024 convention, Membership, Investing post monies, organization structure and life cycle, Legion baseball, Yellowhammer College, legion finances, officer training, New member training, defining a great post and how to achieve that goal, National Convention in New Orleans July 2024 and AL Riders meeting. SAL, Auxiliary, Boys & Girls state meetings were also held. The DEC also met to discuss pressing issues of the department. It was also announced a \$5.00 increase in dues has been directed by the National office. See Page 9 for form to report your new dues amount by April 1, 2024.

Four legionnaires submitted their paperwork for 2024-2025 offices. They were Don Madden, Commander, James Bryant, Jr. Vice Commander, Willie Rogers, Sr. Vice Commander, and Paul Gonther, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division Commander.

From an education perspective I personally felt there were many very good subjects to attend and gain insight into those issues. I feel every legionnaire who attended had ample opportunity to gain knowledge in many areas. The instructors were well informed and optimized a give and take atmosphere with those in attendance. The hotel is a first-rate facility and I believe we will be back there in the next couple of years if I'm not mistaken. Finally, the meeting is well worth attending and I encourage all those who wish to grow in the legion attend in the future.



*Fall District 23 Meeting  
Post 555 Pelham, Alabama*



*Message From the Commander's Desk*  
*Charles Duncan*



I HOPE everyone had a Safe and Happy New Years and it was a joyous occasion.

As a reminder of our next District meeting is on Saturday, Feb. 10th at 9:00 AM. The meeting is hosted by Post 131 and will be held at the Columbiana Recreation Center. I expect all of you to be there unless you had a prior

engagement that you have told me about or due to health issues.

District 23 has enjoyed a good year so far thanks to your hard work. It looks like we didn't make our 100% by years end with the exception of two posts. We also have no posts below charter strength.

Our goal is still to have every post at or over 100% by end of March. This month the goal for February is 85%.

As of January 25, 2024, District 23 is in 8<sup>th</sup> place in the state , at 83.67%, 3 posts at 85% or better, 2 posts at 100%, No posts below charter strength. We need 9 renewals to reach the goal. Keep on working on your present members for renewals and start working the 1983 list and people in your area. There are a lot of veterans out there.

Finally, take advantage of this time to do buddy checks. We all know veterans that are alone at this time of the year. It is especially important to contact them. Make a visit if possible. Also local nursing homes with veterans. They would appreciate a visit.

Thank you for your efforts. Let's keep it up. See you at the next District meeting on Feb. 10, 2024 in Columbiana, Post 131. Check further down in the newsletter for location information.

If you are having problems, just ask for assistance. We are more than willing to assist you any way we can.  
*See you at the meeting*

*Charles Duncan*  
*23rd District Commander*  
[cduncan67@yahoo.com](mailto:cduncan67@yahoo.com)  
1(205) 910-3258

*Blue Star Salute Charity Ride*



**Blue Star Salute Foundations 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
Joel Adkins Charity Ride.**

*Open to the public*

Saturday Starts at Pelham Heart of Dixie Harley-Davidson  
May 4, 2024 9 AM  
Motorcycle Ride to raise funds for the Joel Adkins Veterans Assistance Fund providing assistance to Veterans & their families in need.

Contact Tom Long for any questions you may have.  
[TLongAmericanLegion@gmail.com](mailto:TLongAmericanLegion@gmail.com)

*The District 23 Dispatch* Is published quarterly for the members of American Legion Alabama District 23. Items for publication are accepted on the Executive Committee approval and available space.

Submit articles prior to the no later than 14 days for publication the prior to the monthly quarterly meeting. 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 re- quest.

Send email to: [ron.koonce@gmail.com](mailto:ron.koonce@gmail.com)

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American Legion Alabama District 23



## Public Relations Update

### DISTRICT 23 DISPATCH

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The District 23 Quarterly welcomes articles from Posts within the District to be published.

Recommended subject matter is past and future activities of your Post or any American Legion or Veteran-related subject matter.

The articles need to be proofed and “print ready” prior to sending to the editor for publication. If the article includes graphics or photos, it is helpful to include additional separate photos in Jpeg format along with your article.

The newsletter will be published on the first of the quarter prior to the meeting month. Deadline for articles will be two weeks prior to the publishing date. A reminder will be sent to each Post prior to deadline.

Items for publication are accepted on Executive Committee approval, available space and American Legion regulations. Please submit articles via email to Ron Koonce, Editor at:

[americanlegion.ala.23@gmail.com](mailto:americanlegion.ala.23@gmail.com)

For God & Country  
Ron Koonce  
Public Relations Officer

Follow the District 23 news on Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/alabama23district>

## Next District Meeting

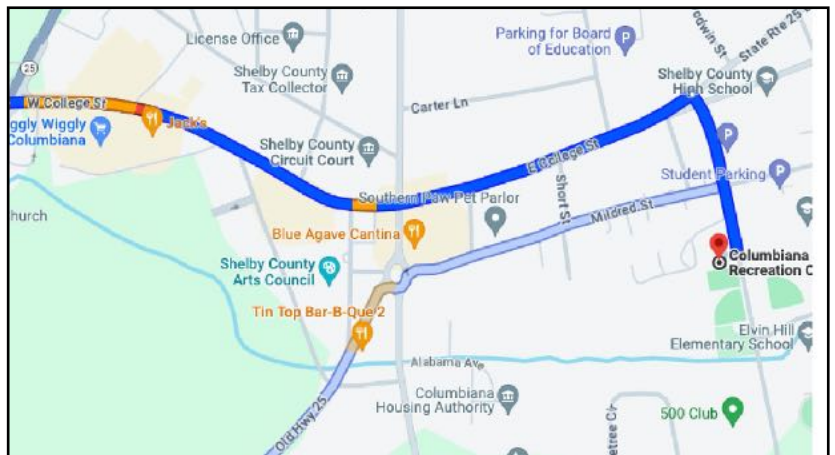
### Winter District 23 Meeting 2024

**When:** Saturday February 10, 2024

**Where:** Post 131 at Columbiana Recreation Center  
194 Washington Street, Columbiana, Alabama

### Directions to Meeting Location

**The American Legion Post 131 - Columbiana Recreation Center - Follow East College Street to Washington Street- Turn onto Washington Street .Follow Washington for a couple blocks. Recreation Center will be on the right.**



*Matthew Blount Post 555  
Pelham, AL Alabama*

*SAL Squadron 555*



The Sons of The American Legion, Squadron 555, donates \$203 towards 2023 Post 555's Wreath Across America Campaign. SAL Advisor and Squadron Adjutant, Ron Koonce presents check to Post 555's Wreaths Across

*Post 555 RSVP Award*



Adjutant Nancy Waller accepts RSVP award from Shelby County Director, Heather Laney for achieving over 5,00 hours of volunteer service to veterans and

*Flag Retirement Ceremony*



Boys Scouts of America Troop 404 (Pelham Troop 404) conducted a Flag Retirement Ceremony at the City of Pelham Cemetery. Local Scouts and leaders, neighboring Scouts, parents, and members of The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555 gathered around a fire pit to observe how to properly retire a worn-out (faded, torn, or otherwise unserviceable) American flag. Matthew Blount Post 555 is the Charter Sponsor of Troop 404.

*VA Christmas Caravan*



Members of the Post 555 family distributed 100 Christmas gift bags to patient of the VA Medical Center as part of the annual VA Christmas Caravan.

*Student Character Awards*

*American Village*



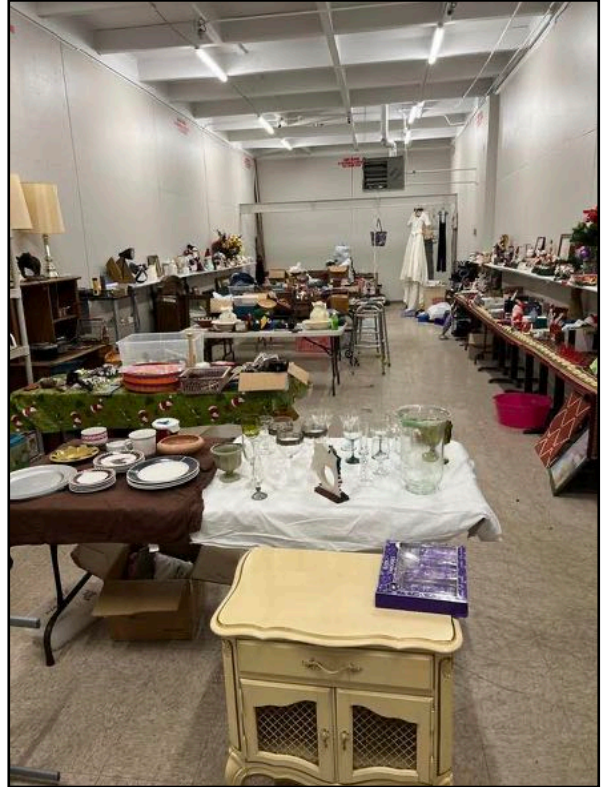
Post 555 held its Student Character Award Banquet to recognize Shelby County students with high academic achievements and displayed high character during the year.



*Military Appreciation night hosted by Alabama hockey.*



*Post 45  
Sylacauga, Alabama*



Next next Yard Sale will be November 4th due to Veterans Day falling on the 2nd Saturday. Yard sale's regular time is 2nd Saturday each month. Come by and check it out.



Post 45 will host the Veterans Day parade in Sylacauga on November 11, 2023. The parade will begin at the Sylacauga High School and follow a route through downtown Sylacauga. There will be a BBQ at the American Legion Post 45 following the parade. *(Photos from previous parades)*



Squadron 555 members attended the [Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Alabama Mid-Winter Conference](#) in Mobile this past weekend. Guest speakers included [American Legion Department of Alabama Sr. Vice Commander Don Madden](#) & [Jr. Vice Commander Willie Rogers](#), and [Legion Riders Assistant Director Bo Thompson](#).

In addition to attending Alabama Yellowhammer Legion College Alumni Association and Detachment Executive Committee meetings, our Squadron Commander delivered an SAL training session to a well-attended Conference that not only filled the original meeting space but also the adjacent room (big shout out to the American Legion Store and [Renaissance Mobile Riverview](#) for helping accommodate the big crowd by sharing the additional space!).

It was great seeing everyone and coming together to support all of the great things that [Sons of The American Legion](#) is doing. If you aren't a member yet, send us a message or visit the Sons page at [www.ALPOST555.com](http://www.ALPOST555.com) to learn more or join!





The American Legion, Department of Alabama  
P. O. Box 1069  
Montgomery, AL 36101  
334-262-6638 or 800-234-5544  
[www.legional.org](http://www.legional.org)

Dear Post Commanders,

National Headquarters raised their dues by \$5.00, so as of July 1, 2024, the cost of each member's dues will then be \$44.00.

The Department Executive Committee voted at the Mid-Winter Conference to increase our dues by \$2.00, and if this passes at the annual Convention in June, then each member's dues will be \$46.00. This has ***not*** been approved yet, and must be voted on by the Post delegates at the Convention.

National Headquarters needs to know if you are planning on increasing your membership dues by April 1, 2024, to make sure the renewal notices that are mailed out in July have correct information on them.

***Please fill out the information below and return it to the Department by March 29, 2024. Thank you all!!***

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Department Headquarters.

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Post #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_