



DISTRICT 23 DISPATCH

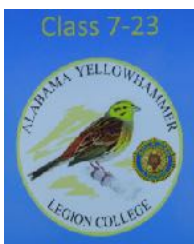
Published specifically for the members of Department of Alabama District 23

Summer 2023

Volume II , Issue 3

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Alabama Yellowhammer Legion College - Class 7-23

Yellowhammer American Legion College (YALC) is the highest level of education offered by The American Legion Department of Alabama. The course is intended to the the principles and techniques necessary for effective leadership at all levels of The American Legion Department of Alabama. The successful graduate will possess the education and skills necessary to provide program and command leadership at all levels of the Department of Alabama. Congratulations to the five graduates of District 23.

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



Shannon Layton Post 138



Tom Long Post 555



Dennis Murphy Post 17



Michael Hall Post 216



Preston Bell Post 131





From the Commander Charles Duncan's Desk

Welcome to a new 2023-2024 year for District 23. A new year starts with new challenges and new goals.

I would like to thank all of you that have supported the District 23 organization in the past and welcome the officers for the coming 2023-2024 that will lead the district through to coming year.

District 23 Officers 2023-2024



Charles Duncan
Commander



Charles Knight
1st Vice Commander



Holly Boslet
Adjutant



Tom Long
Judge Advocate



Shannon Layton
Finance Officer



Ron Koonce
Public Relations Officer



Bill Blank
Sargent-at Arms



Shane Layton
Chaplain



Dennis Murphy
DEC Representative



Michael Eshenbaugh
Shelby County Cmdr



Mike Hall
Chilton County Cmdr

I would like to thank you for allowing me to serve as your District Commander one more time. I have a few main topics that I am going to emphasize this year.

First, I am going to push membership. I want to continue the gains we made last year. You all found out that with a little work a 100% or better goal is possible. Now you know how to do it so, let's exceed our gains last year. My staff and I will do whatever we can to assist you in meeting this goal but we are not going to do the work for you.

Second is communications. I want to see good communications between District and Posts, between Posts and within your Post. I will try to communicate what I need, expect and any direction from Department but, I am not going to run your Post. *Continued on Page 13*



Judge Advocate Message

Hello fellow Legionnaires. In this space I normally provide information on administrative or operational matters that potentially impact your Posts, primarily from the Judge Advocate perspective.

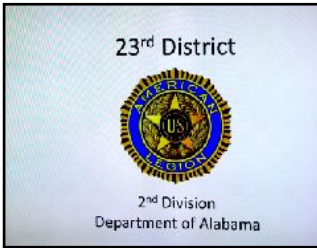
However, in this edition I wanted to very briefly offer my personal opinion and experiences related to the American Legion of Alabama's Yellowhammer College I just completed. To be very honest I have to admit that when this was announced early last year, 2022 was the inaugural year, I was not interested at all. After all, I have completed many years of undergraduate and graduate school already. In matters related to the legion I had what I considered "mentors" I could go to if I had questions or concerns. So why commit to a long weekend of my time to attend? Fast forward to early this year. I received feedback from Legionnaires I respect about their experiences at the first seating of the college last year. It was all positive so with the curiosity I have been afflicted with my whole life, I signed up and was accepted.

We met at the Department of Alabama headquarters on July 21st for two and a half days of classroom instruction. Ron Bradstreet was the College's Chancellor and James Bryant the Dean of the College. Let me say at this point my early inclinations towards the college were all wrong. I, and my 24 other classmates, were instructed by many experienced Legionnaires on various subjects, some of which were Bylaws & Rules of Order, Community Outreach, Reports, Uniforms & Etiquette, Growing Membership, and many others. All of which were very well presented and applied in real-world scenarios. What I very much enjoyed was the way the faculty encouraged interactions between the students. Posts from very large to very small and in rural and urban locations alike were represented. All of which were represented, each with their own set of challenges. Many of those challenges, such as growth of membership, were shared and discussed with remedies debated by all.

I can attest this was an excellent experience. After that experience with the college, I highly recommend each of you give serious consideration to attending when possible. I can assure you it is very well worth the time.

Take care and God Bless America.

Tom Long
District 23 Judge Advocate
Assistant Judge Advocate Department of Alabama

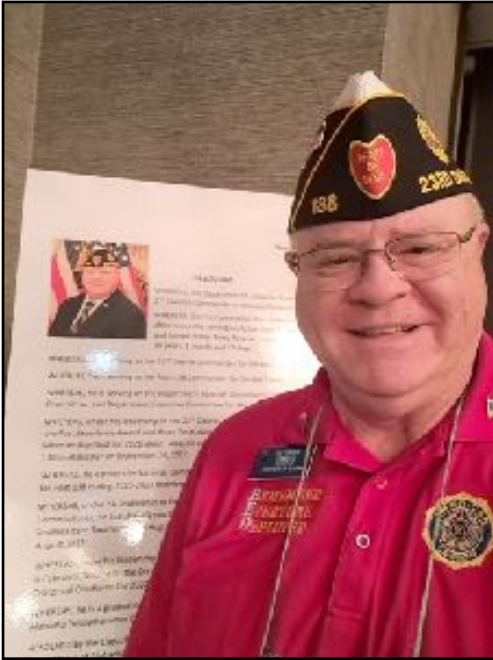


District 23 Winter Meeting Post 138 Alabaster AL



*Alabama Department
Convention 2023
Montgomery, Alabama*

Post and Sons of The American Legion members from District 23 attended the Alabama Department Convention on June 21-24, 2023 held at The Embassy Suites Hotel in Montgomery AL where Posts from District 23 received a number of rewards.



Paul Gonthier, District 23 Past Commander was elected to 2024 Alabama Department Division 2 Commander at the 2023 Convention. 2024 Div 2. Paul served two terms as District 23 Commander and Past Commander of Post 138.



Post 131, Post 216 and Post 138 receives recognition for their membership accomplishments.



Eagle Scout of the Year was awarded to Jack Combs, Troop 404 from District 23, chartered by Post 555.



Members of District 23 Sons of The American Legion attended the convention. L-R- Donald Walker, Bill Blank, Ron Koonce, Tom Long



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 10th of the month for publication the prior to the month

of the 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@alpost555.com@gmail.com



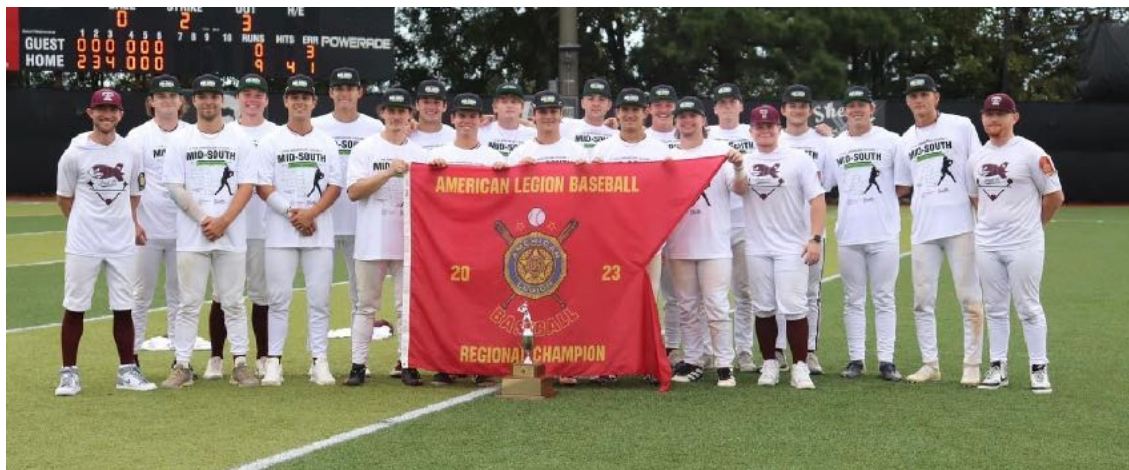
Before the action got underway in the American Legion Mid-South Regional Tournament, American Legion Post 555 hosted a patriotic opening ceremony at Pelham High School on Tuesday, Aug. 1. Legionnaires welcomed players, coaches and families of the visiting baseball teams to Pelham with a ceremony that was a unique celebration of America and its national pastime.

“It’s important to show that American Legion baseball is more than just baseball,” Post 555 Baseball Director Kyle Phillips said. “It’s about connecting our veterans to our players. And what better way to do that than showing off what our veterans put their lives on the line for us to be patriotic and just love our country?” The ceremony included a motorcycle parade by the Legion Riders around the Pelham baseball field, as well as an aircraft fly-over and a flag ceremony presenting the history of the American flag. Legionnaires from each post represented at the Regional Tournament escorted the teams onto the field for the proceedings. The night was highlighted by a reenactment of the famous flag raising at Iwo Jima by Marine veterans.

The tournament includes state champions from Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Kansas as well as the host team, the “Triple Nickel” Matthew Blount Post 555 Shelby team.

The eight-team double-elimination tournament will be held from Aug. 2-6 at Pelham High School, and the winner will claim a spot in the historic American Legion World Series in Shelby, North Carolina later in August.

The tournament resulted in Troy Post 70 again winning the Mid South Regional for the second consecutive year and will advance to the 2023 American Legion World Series .



Mid-south Regional Champions

Post 70 Troy Alabama



Public Relations Update

DISTRICT 23 DISPATCH

Published specifically for the members of Department of Alabama District 23

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

For God & Country
Ron Koonce
Public Relations Officer

Follow the District 23 news on Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/
alabama23district](https://www.facebook.com/alabama23district)

Next District Meeting

Summer District 23 Meeting 2023

When: Saturday August 19, 2023
9:00 am-12:00 pm

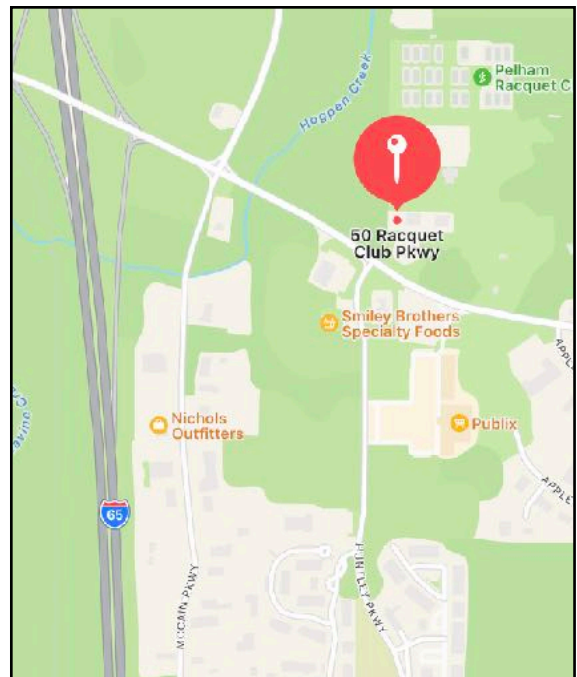
Where: Matthew Blount Post 555
Pelham Senior Center.



Directions to Meeting Location

The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555

Exit I-65 at 242 on to County Rd 52 West to Racquet Club Parkway . (CVS Drugs at this intersection) Take Racquet Club Parkway the first parking lot on the right. Watch for Senior Center sign.



Future Scheduled Meeting

October 28, 2023 - Sylacauga Post 45

Talladega Post 17

On Monday, May 29th, Post 17 Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons and Riders participated in the Talladega County Memorial Day Commemoration. Col Chuck Keith USA (Ret) Post 17 was the event MC. 260 names of the known Talladega County military killed in the line of duty from WWI through present day were read aloud by various retired members. Brigadier General David Brown USA(Ret) was the keynote speaker with inspiring words reminding us of our military heritage. Following the program, a wreath was laid at the monument in the Talladega County Courthouse Square next to the USS Talladega plaque and memory wall inscribed with all 260 names. Taps were played by retired educator, Jeff Woods. Everyone was then invited for refreshments and a tour of the Talladega Hall of Heroes.



Goodwin-Lee Post 138

Post 138 was represented at Yellow Hammer Legion College (YLC). Post Adjutant Holli Boslet provided essential admin support, District 2 Commander, and Post 138 past Commander, Paul Gonthier, provided instruction, and Post 138 Commander Shannon Layton graduated and became an alumni of YLC. They are pictured below.



Shannon Layton

Paul Gonthier

Holly Boslet

Post 138 was also in attendance for the Opening Ceremony of the American Legion Mid-South Regional Baseball Tournament and tournament games in support of Legion Baseball and Post 555.



SAL/BSA Flag Box Project



Sons of American Legion Squadron 555 and Scout Troop 404 worked jointly to donate a flag retirement depository to the Pelham Senior Center.

SAL Squadron 555 Commander at Yellowhammer Legion College



Donald Walker, Commander, SAL Squadron 555 presented a session on the Sons of The American Legion at the 2023 Alabama Yellowhammer Legion College

First Responders Honored

The First Responders Recognition awards for 2023 were presented by Commander Blount at the July 6, 2023 Post meeting. I was a special event with many VIP's and guests. Texas Roadhouse provided the meal to over 60 in



Shelby County Deputy Matthew Sulenski,



Shelby County Deputy Nicholas Lemoine



Pelham Officer Iliana Hayakahua.



Alabaster Corporal John St. Pierre



PelhamFire/Medic Brent Rejonis



Telecommunicator David Fuentes

2023 AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE AND AUXILIARY GIRLS STATE

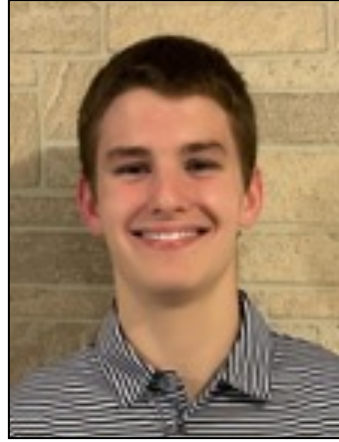
The 86th Annual Alabama American Legion Boys State was held at Troy University from May 28 to June 3, 2023. The delegates from Post 555 were Conner McDonald and Sloan Bridges from Pelham High School, Owens Hodges from Mountain Brook High School, and Christian Monk from Hope Christian School.



Conner McDonald



Sloan Bridges



Owens Hodges



Christian Monk

The 2023 Session of ALA Alabama Girls State took place June 4-9, 2023 on the campus of Troy University in Troy, Alabama. Auxiliary Unit 555 in The Matthew Blount Post 555 sponsored Ms. Anna Mann. During her time, she was elected District Judge and City Clerk.



Anna Mann with her dad and legionnaire
Jimmy Man



Anna Mann at Troy State University

American Legion Sylacauga Post 45

American Legion Post 45 in Sylacauga hosts an indoor flea market on the second weekend of the month. Space is available for vendors and of course buyers. From 7-3 each day.

Contact the legion phone for more information.
256-369-2934



Post 45 serves legionnaires breakfast every Tuesday morning at 7:30 am. Come by and enjoy the great fellowship and good food.



Shirley-Holloway Post 131

Columbiana, Alabama

Post 131 is trying to stay busy as the new year starts.

At the July meeting, the Post awarded a \$500 scholarship to Kayla Mitchell from Montevallo HS, who is going to Jacksonville State to study nursing.



The Post flag detail performed a flag folding and presentation at the funeral of a local veteran. They also will be performing a flag raising and lowering at some local High School football games.

The Post Riders provided a cookout for men in a private veterans home in Chilton County. They have been taking meals and other items to them for a couple of years. They really enjoy the visits

An information booth is setup the first Saturday of each month at the Shelby Iron Works trade day and pancake breakfast in effort to gain new younger veterans and female veterans as we continue working on repeating our over 100% membership goal for this year.

Commander's Message continued from page 2

If you need anything don't hesitate to contact me and I will do my best to get you an answer.

Third is training. We will have some type of training at all of our District meetings. You, as a Post should have some type of training at your meetings. Maybe not every meeting but enough to slt new members know what we are about. Again, my staff and I will be willing to help anyway we can.

Lastly but most important is **Be The One**. This is like our old buddy check but is aimed at those veterans who are hurting, We have many veterans who just need someone to talk to. Call your members, find out if there are veterans who are not members but are struggling. Reach out to them.

We are planning some very informative meetings that should help you to grow your Post. Also, all of you need to be working on membership now, don't wait till the last minute. My goal is all posts to be 100%. Your District will be available to help you and no way except do the work for you. See you at the first meeting.

August 19,2023 Post 555_ 50 Racquet Club Pkwy,
Pelham, AL 35124

October 28, 2023, Post 45, 8 Hammett Dr., Sylacauga,
AL 35150

February 10, 2024, Post 131, 110 Mildred St.,
Columbiana, AL 35051

May 11, 2024 Post 138, 127 1st Street SW, Alabaster, AL
35007



KEEP THE LEGION
STRONG



BE THE ONE

TO **ASK** VETERANS IN YOUR LIFE HOW THEY ARE DOING.

TO **LISTEN** WHEN A VETERAN NEEDS TO TALK.

TO **REACH** OUT WHEN A VETERAN IS STRUGGLING.