



*Published exclusively for the members of*  
**AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555**  
**PELHAM, ALABAMA**

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*In God We Trust*



*Post 555 Member Spotlight*

**Marion Kane: WAC Veteran**

*By Nancy Waller, Second Vice Commander*

Marion Kane enlisted in April of 1954, not long before the Korean War ended; therefore a Veteran of the Korean War, but not a participant in Korea. Marion was at Fort Lee, Va., for Basic Training, and was then sent to the newly-built WAC (Women's Army Corps) Center at Fort McClellan in Anniston. She was in the first OCS/WOBC (Officer Candidate School/ Women's Officer Basic Course) class to graduate from the WAC Center in January 1955. As a second lieutenant, she was assigned to troop training for a year, and then sent to Fort McPherson, Ga. After a month there, Marion was made commanding officer of the WAC Detachment which was a captain's slot. She made first lieutenant in July, but even so, was bumped in February by a captain who returned from service in China/Burma/India and wanted an assignment in her home state of Georgia. Marion went back to Fort McClellan, where she set-up the Field Training Unit for the basic training program. She was discharged in April 1957.



Marion said she served for three years and loved every minute. She had great assignments, great opportunities, and responsible positions. She stated that she was always very busy, and very proud of her service to her country and all that she was able to do. Marion's last remark was that she made lifetime friends, and has fantastic memories.



# COMMANDER'S CORNER



*For God and Country!*  
Barry Blount  
Commander



## Officer of the Year.

Deputy Gremillion received the American Legion Officer of the Year Award, presented by Post Commander Barry Blount from the American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555, in recognition of his service. Deputy Gremillion was nominated by his supervisors for his outstanding professional achievement in the superior performance of his duties, while serving the citizens of Shelby County. Also present were American Legion Post 555 Adjutant Ronald Koonce and Sgt.-At-Arms Anita Bennett, Sheriff John Samaniego, Chief Deputy Burchfield, Patrol Division Captain DeHart and Patrol Lt. Myrick. Congratulations Deputy Gremillion, we're proud of you!

From: [Shelby County Sheriff's Office](#)  
[Sergeant Shane Plyler](#)



Nany Waller

RSVP Post 555 Station Manager for RSVP

## Second Vice Commander

Summer is here as of June 20, 2020!! I don't know about you, but even though we have some hot, humid days in the summer, I would much rather have that than the cold. I was born and raised on Long Island and loved the season changes and snow and all those fun things you do as a child. When we get older and have to walk and drive in the snow, the fun ceases (especially when you are at the mercy of other drivers who are not used to driving in snow...).

I checked with Oak Mountain State Park recently and yes, "Fire on the Water" will not be held this year. Yet **ANOTHER** great event that will be missed. That doesn't mean that you cannot celebrate the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday in your own way though. You can purchase firecrackers and sparklers (I still think sparklers are the best), you can have a cook-out in your backyard, you can have family over to enjoy the holiday together, or you can do absolutely nothing and stay inside your nice, cozy home if you want to continue self-quarantining for COVID-19. I am sure there will be fireworks on TV that night, so check them out.

Commander Blount is working with the award recipients for the Firefighter, Policeman, and Deputy Sheriff of the Year who will be receiving their awards at their own locations. That is always a nice event for all Post members to observe, so it will be missed for this year, but the awardees will still be honored.

Until the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, there are no events scheduled as of right now, but Past Commander Paschal is working with the University of Alabama for the November 14, 2020 Military Appreciation Night at the Pelham Civic Complex. Put that on your calendar in hopes that restrictions have been eliminated and we can get back to doing what we love to do—interact with each other and members of the community.

Take care and enjoy the summer! If you prefer the cold weather, head for the A/C. HOOAH!!!

R.S.V.P. NEEDS YOU!!!

**NOTE: All current R.S.V.P. members: Please make sure I get your June hours either during the July 2, 2020 General Membership Meeting on "Zoom" Video/Teleconference, or I will be sending an e-mail on which you can reply with the hours you served, how many people you served, and how many Veterans you served. If you would like to call me with your hours, my cell is 251-554-6986.**



*Nancy Waller  
2nd Vice Commander*

## R.S.V.P. NEEDS YOU!!!

The Shelby County R.S.V.P. (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) needs YOU!!! If you are 55+ years "young", you can become our newest members and record your Volunteer hours for Post 555 every month. The Volunteer hours can be from anything you do as a Volunteer as long as that organization (called a "Station") does not already record the volunteer hours. There are already several Post 555 members who fit into this category and record hours from many outside activities in which they participate as Volunteers.

I am the Post 555 Station Manager and would be happy to send you an application to complete and get back to me along with a copy of your driver license (shows proof of age). You can then report your monthly Volunteer hours to me during every General Membership Meeting, and I in turn report them to Mr. Marvin Copes with "Positive Maturity" who is in charge of this program.

The reason Post 555 participates in this program is to have the most Volunteer hours we can possibly get from our members, and at the end of every year, there is a "Volunteer Recognition" event (usually around Christmas which includes a wonderful brunch that is all paid for by this program) and all of the "stations" throughout Shelby County are recognized for their hours. We are on our way to 10,000 hours (we surpassed 5,000 hours this past year) which is our next goal.

So, please let me know if you are interested in becoming an R.S.V.P. member and I will get you an application either via e-mail or U.S.P.S. I would love to have every single Post 555 (55+ years young) member on my Monthly Station Form!!!

***NOTE: All current R.S.V.P. members: Please make sure I get your June hours either during the July 2, 2020 General Membership Meeting on "Zoom" Video/Teleconference, or I will be sending an e-mail on which you can reply with the hours you served, how many people you served, and how many Veterans you served. If you would like to call me with your hours, my cell is 251-554-6986.***





## ADJUTANT'S AREA



We have had another successful year in exceeding our 100% goal ending the 2020 campaign with 106%. Thank you, the membership, for supporting Matthew Blount Post 555's programs and activities.

monthly meeting scheduled for July 2, 2020. Access links will be e-mailed to members. Share the link with a Veteran guest.

Hope to see you on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

July 1, 2020 begins our 2021 membership campaign with ten Legion renewals, one new Sons of American Legion member, and three renewals. This is a good start to meet our 100% goal by December 31, 2020. However, this goal cannot be met without your support and not waiting to submit your 2021 membership renewal. The 2020 memberships expire January 1, 2021. The annual fee remains \$45 payable to "Matthew Blount Post 555" and mailed to The American Legion, 50 Racquet Club Drive, Pelham, AL 35124. You can also renew online at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

The Post has received its 2020 Post Excellence Award Certificate. It is viewable in the Post display case.

Since there was not a State convention this year, the Department has suspended the History Journal competition. Many thanks to Post Historian, Shauna Hadley for her excellent work in maintaining the Post's History Journal.

Post 555 would like to thank State Adjutant, Greg Akers for his ongoing support to Post 555 from the very beginning in 2014. Greg has submitted his resignation as State Adjutant effective July 6, 2020 to pursue a new opportunity in Montgomery. However, he will continue to be a supporting member of The American Legion.

The National Baseball Program has been suspended for the 2020 season. Thanks to Alan Phillips, the Alabama American Legion Baseball Program has received approval from the Alabama Department to continue the 2020 season in Alabama under the Alabama State COVID-19 guidelines. Games began on June 16, 2020 and are scheduled to complete in late July.

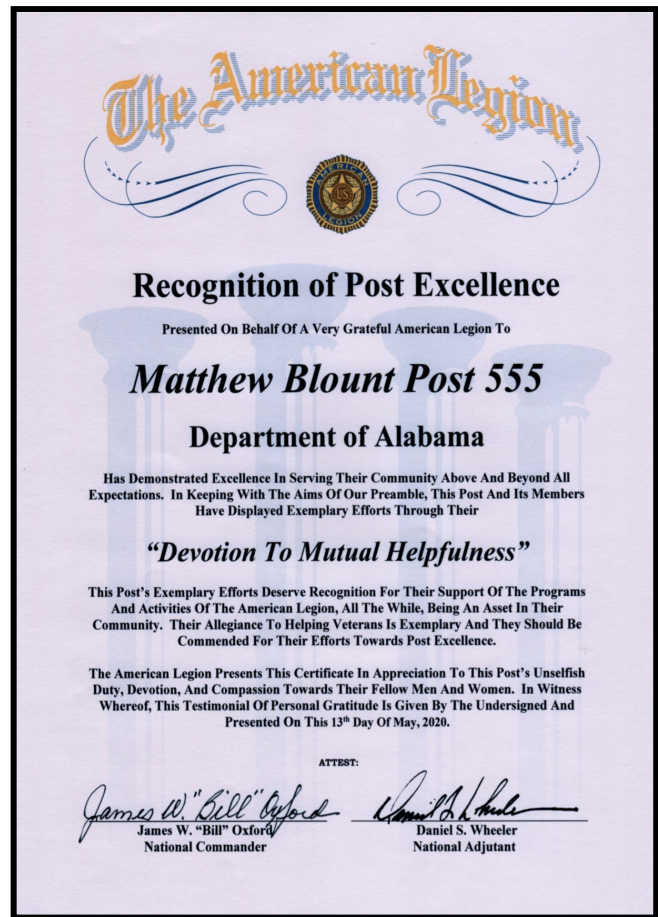
The Post continues to be obligated to support the baseball program during Post 555 games by manning the main gate during the games. Your support is especially important for the continued success of the Post's baseball program. Please contact Bill Blank, Baseball Game Coordinator by phone at 214-476-7074 or email [bhbpac@yahoo.com](mailto:bhbpac@yahoo.com) for additional details and schedules. Thank you in advance for your support.

The Post meetings held via ZOOM Video/Teleconferencing has been a success. The last two meeting had over thirty participants. Join us for about one hour for our next

*For God and Country*

*Ron Koonce*

*Adjutant*



## Alabama Legion Department Veteran of the Year



The Alabama Department of The American Legion has named Post 555 Past First Vice Commander and Post 555 Service Officer its Veteran of the Year.

Previously this year McClain was named Post 555's Legionnaire of the Year for his support and accomplishments working with Veterans, community and Post 555 projects. Jerry McClain has been an enthusiastic member of The American Legion and is a strong advocate of all Veterans for insuring VA benefits are provided to those that qualify. He is your "Go To" person.

McClain is the first Post 555 member to graduate from the National American Legion College in 2019-2020.

**va.alabama.gov**

## *Post Service Officer's Update*

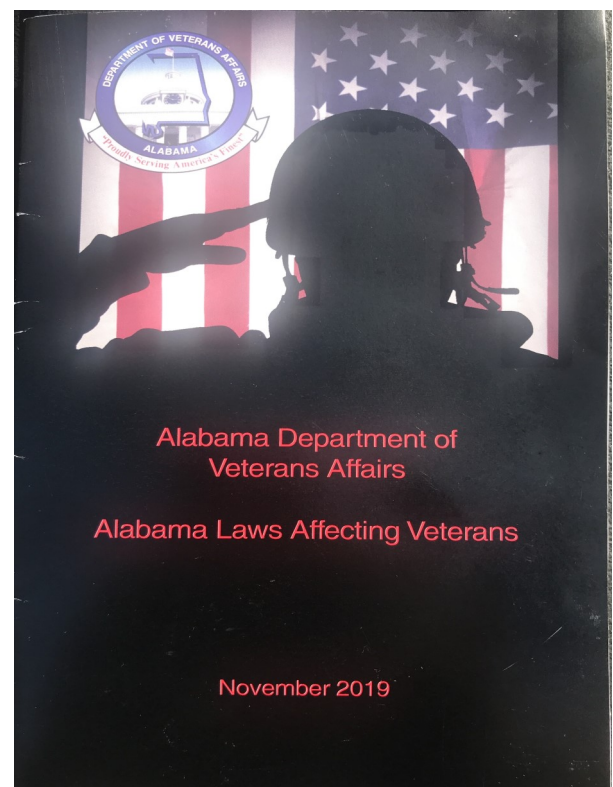
### Alabama Laws affecting Veterans

Pictured below, The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs has published a multi-page bulletin, listing and explaining Alabama Laws Affecting Veterans.

Jerry McClain will explain it's contents during our July 2, 2020 Zoom meeting.

To download the bulletin, go to:

<https://va.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/AL-Laws-Affecting-Veterans-.pdf>



## CHAPLAIN



**Tom McMahon**  
*Post Chaplain*



When seeing a Veteran whose gait may be slow and halting or whose back is bent, we only see the cover or the housing of a man or woman. If you take time and sit down with that Soldier, listen and look deep into his eyes, you can almost visualize a 'call to duty.' You might see devotion, stability and steadfastness. That old Sailor, that Marine holds close inside a heart of gold and a deep sense of loyalty. That Airman holds fast his memory of service and consecration to the Oath taken to defend the Constitution of these United States. Perhaps she was just a teenager when joining the armed forces. No matter. The emotions felt and kept inside will remain.

You may be fortunate enough to meet a young Veteran now come home from his duties for Country. He or she may appear very strong and have a gleam in their eyes. His body may look terrific and full of life. Deep inside her memories, her Oath taken, her duty will

be the same as the older gentleman Soldier. That young man just might be torn apart in his mind; his decisions and actions erratic. Deep inside he will share the brotherhood of all Veterans, a lasting comradery with all who gave some or gave all. It is our duty for life to take time, listen and look deep into the eyes of our fellow Veterans and recognize their inner memories, devotion and emotion spent; for God and Country.

We are happy to report that our volunteers made 96 calls, 74 contacts or messages left and only 1 in need of prayer and comfort. I do not have to tell you that there are many more than that one needing fellowship. You can tell from a voice or felt spirit that many of our Veterans long to see and talk with you. Thank you for being a true Veteran's friend every day.

May the Lord bless and keep you.  
Chaplain Thomas McMahon

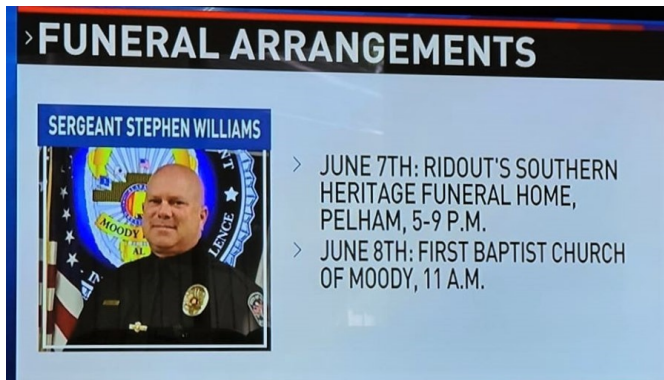






## Triple Nickel Riders

## Auxiliary Unit 555



Today, ALA members across the country are helping military families cope with the effects of multiple deployments. The toll on our all-volunteer force and their families has been enormous. The Auxiliary's efforts are focused in three primary areas Veterans/Military Support & Advocacy, Family and Youth Development.

### Mission Statement

In the spirit of Service, Not Self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our Veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for Veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

Contact Caroline Culpepper, Unit 555 President, for membership information.

carolinejculpepper@gmail.com -205-419-4549



Post 555 Triple Nickel Riders hosted a flag line to honor Lt. Stephen Williams at Heritage Funeral Home on June 7, 2020.

The Triple Nickel Riders membership is open to any member of the Post 555 Family. They meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at Harley Davidson HOG Club House 6:30 pm. Some activity follows most meeting. Guests are welcome.

Visit Riders Webpage at: <https://www.alpost555.com/american-legion-riders>



## Sons of The American Legion

Squadron 555 was represented at the quarterly Alabama Detachment Executive Committee teleconference meeting on June 20, 2020.



### 2020-2021 Squadron Leadership

Bobby Horsley-Commander  
Ron Koonce- Adjutant/Financial Officer  
Ron McGriff- Sgt.-At-Arms  
Jeff Monday - Chaplain

The Squadron is twenty eight member strong and always open for new members. Any son or grandson of a The American Legion member is eligible or any son, or grandson of a deceased Veteran is also eligible. Both requires appropriate documentation. Annual membership fee is just \$20.

Visit the Post website [www.alpost555.com](http://www.alpost555.com) for information about the Sons and to print membership application.



## MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555



Meets first Thursday of the month.

**July 2, 2020 Meeting**  
**will be held**  
**via Video/Teleconference**

### *Earn Commanders Recruiting Pin*



*Recruiting is a personal assignment for every American Legion member.*

*Contact Jeff Monday, Membership Chair, for leads for contacting eligible individuals.*

[jhmonday@gmail.com](mailto:jhmonday@gmail.com)

### *Post Leadership*

<b>Post Commander</b>	Vacant
Barry Blount	<b>Post Trustees</b>
<b>1st Vice Commander</b>	Bill Blank
Jeff Monday	Frank Lakotich
<b>2nd Vice Commander</b>	Robert Horsley
Nancy Waller	<b>Auxiliary President</b>
<b>Adjutant</b>	Caroline Culpepper
Ron Koonce	<b>Sons Commander</b>
<b>Asst Adjutant</b>	Robert Horsley
Shauna Hadley	<b>Legion Riders Director</b>
<b>Judge Advocate</b>	Doug McDaniel
Larry Strayer	<b>Flag Team Coordinator</b>
<b>Financial Officer</b>	Ron McGriff
Joe Starnes	<b>Webmaster</b>
<b>Chaplain</b>	Ron Koonce
Tom McMahon	<b>Triple Nickel Editor</b>
<b>Sergeant-At-Arms</b>	Frank Chacon
Derek Winters	<b>Photography</b>
Anita Bennett	Frank Chacon
<b>Post Service Officer</b>	Ron Koonce
Jerry McClain	
<b>Historian</b>	
Shauna Hadley	
<b>Public Relations Officer</b>	

### *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](mailto: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](mailto:Editor@alpost555.com)

*Photos by Frank Chacon /Ron Koonce  
Post 555*

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American Legion Post 555

**THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY**

**Matthew Blount Post 555**  
**Alpost555.com**  
**205-678-1375**

1st Thursday each month at 7pm  
Meeting Location: Pelham Senior Center

*Supporting our veterans and our communities.*

## Alabama American Legion Baseball



In spite of the COVID-19 we will be having American Legion Baseball in Alabama under the state COVID-19 guidelines.

The nation baseball program has been suspended for the 2020 season; however the Alabama Department has given permission to play ball under the guidelines of Governor Ivey.

Play began June 16, 2020 with all age levels playing.

There is an ongoing need for volunteers to help man the main gate during the first few innings of each Post 555 home games. Contact Bill Blank or Robert Horsley, Game Support Coordinators, for details and schedules.

Email:

Bill Blank - [bhbpac@yahoo.com](mailto:bhbpac@yahoo.com)

Robert Horsley - [roberthorsley@aol.com](mailto:roberthorsley@aol.com)



Robert Horsley, Post 555 Trustee, at opening of the 2020 AL baseball season.

Branden Brown at bat!



View more photos : <https://alpost555.smugmug.com/post-555-baseball-june-19-20-2020/>



## Honoring our Flag Flag Day June 14th

Our country has endured periods of hardship, tragedy and division in our history. Our country has also known great joy, triumph and great achievement. One of the most visible symbols of our country is our Nations' flag.

The carrying of banners has been a custom among peoples in all ages. These banners usually contain some concept of the life or government of those who fashion them.

I wanted to share a video clip that you may find encouraging that was sent to me by a US Army Major General. It takes place in Normandy, France. "There are no gimmicks, special effects, famous folk or a large production budget...just a young boy with a flag, a big heart filled with respect and an incredible love for the United States of America."

<https://pinearts.smugmug.com/The-Boy-on-the-Beach-Omaha-Beach-2014/>



I hope that each of you have a wonderful day. God's blessings of joy and mercy be with you.

*Alan Phillips*  
AL Department  
Baseball Commissioner



Colby Thacker 'n Jackson Snyder

## Wreaths Across America

This month, Post 555 kicks off its annual campaign for 2020 to raise funds through donations in support of the Wreaths Across America (WAA) program.

First, some background may be helpful.

The Wreaths Across America program is a part of the Blue Star Salute Foundation, Inc. (BSSFI), not the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo (ALNC). The BSSFI is responsible for seeking and gathering donations from individuals and organizations to fund the annual purchase of wreaths to be placed at National Cemeteries. The total purchase is made by BSSFI for the annual ceremony.

In 2016, the Executive Committee of Post 555 made a commitment to consolidate donations and forward them to the BSSFI feeling that a larger contribution, while still acknowledging individual contributors and memorial designations, would follow the American Legion commitment to support Veterans and their families.

That is the basis for the Triple Nickel program. However, any donor can choose to join in the Post consolidated donation or to donate individually. We do not become involved with or handle individual donations where the donor does not wish to participate in the consolidation program; those must be handled directly with the BSSFI by the donor. Any individual or organization may make a donation to purchase wreaths directly to the BSSFI and I have forms to accomplish that if the donor so desires.

### Post 555 WAA 2020 Campaign

Commander Blount asked me to head up the 2020 campaign as I have since inception. The campaign effort this year will be even more of a challenge than in the past due to the significantly increased need and the unknown impact of COVID-19. In order to enhance our effort this year, I am blessed to have two super co-chairs, Nancy Waller and Eldon Woodie, to assist me.

Wreaths required for the 2020 WAA are estimated to be between 7,500 and 8,000 versus the 6,475 used last year. Using the mid-point of the estimate, the increase is just under 20%.

In 2019, the Post gathered donations totaling \$2,955. Since 2016, when the Post began this annual effort, we have contributed over \$6,500 to WAA.

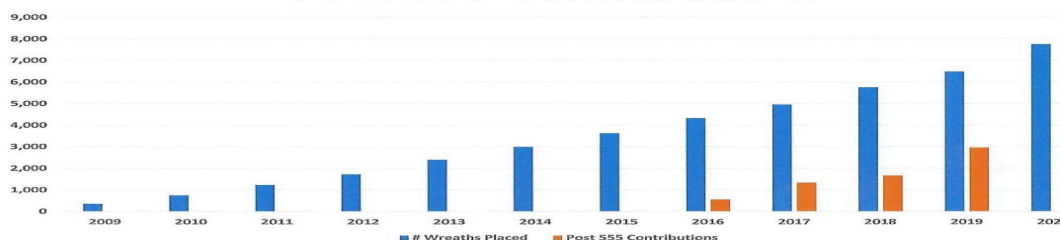
Included in the newsletter is a copy of the Post WAA donation form as well as a graphic showing the growth in the number of wreaths required at the ALNC and our Post donations.

Please consider making a donation this year. Wreaths cost just \$15.00 each. Complete your donation form and return to me along with your cash or check and I will see to it that your donation is properly recorded and processed.

If you have any questions, please contact me. Thanks in advance for your thoughtful donation!

*Chuck Kiser*  
Chairperson, Post 555 WAA Campaign

**Number of Wreaths Placed at ALNC & Post 555 Contributions**





Matthew Blount Post 555 will again offer to consolidate donations and forward them, along with all memorial designations, to The Blue Star Salute Foundation. Checks should be payable to Matthew Blount Post 555 with Wreaths Across America written in the memo line. Donation forms and checks should be sent to: American Legion Post 555, 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham AL 35124.

***Twelfth Annual Wreaths Across America – 19 December 2020  
Alabama National Cemetery  
Montevallo, Alabama***



*Remember - Honor - Teach  
Updated 18 Jan 2020*

The Blue Star Salute Foundation, Inc., (BSSFI) needs sponsors for our 12th Annual Wreaths Across America project – a nationwide fundraising endeavor to provide a live Maine Balsam Wreath for each Veteran's grave each Christmas season. Wreaths sponsored by this BSSFI endeavor are for Veterans graves in the Alabama National Cemetery (ALNC), located on HWY 119 in Montevallo. The 2020 Remembrance Ceremony will be held at 11AM on December 19, 2020. The cost to sponsor a wreath is \$15.00. In 2020, we will need approximately 7,500-8,000 wreaths for our Cemetery. All wreath sponsors as well as family members of those buried within ALNC are invited and strongly encouraged to attend and participate in the wreath-laying ceremony.

To sponsor wreaths for the ALNC, please complete this form and return it with your payment to American Legion Post 555, 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124.

For names to be included on the BSSFI "in Honor/Memory" display for 2020, forms must be received not later than November 5, 2020. Wreath sponsorships are accepted throughout the year. Each sponsorship is tax deductible. For sponsorships of \$250 or more, a donation acknowledgement will be sent to the e-mail address indicated below, if requested. For more information, please visit [www.bluestarsalute.org](http://www.bluestarsalute.org)

**Wreaths Across America - Sponsorship Form  
The American Legion, Matthew Blount Post 555**

Please print clearly

Printed Name of Individual/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsorship Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of (living): \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of (deceased): \_\_\_\_\_

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