



The Triple Nickel

Published Exclusively for the Members of American Legion & Matthew Blount Post 555

Volume 8 Issue 4
April 2020

“In God We Trust”

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Post Activity Schedule Modified Due to Current Community Health Concerns



Monthly Meeting for April 2020 Has Been Cancelled

Information for the following monthly meetings will be provided based on the future status of the current health risks.

The Pro Rodeo fundraiser has been postponed to a to be determined date.

Other April activities that are scheduled could be subject to cancellation.

**Any questions please contact: Commander Kenneth Paschal
email: Commander@alpost555.com
phone: 205-807-7252**



Adjutant Area

We are in the home stretch as we begin the fourth quarter of The American Legion fiscal year. Work continues to finish up our membership campaign in meeting our goal of 100% by the end of April. We need only few more 2020 paid members to reach our goal. Many thanks to you, the members and the Membership Committee for efforts in meeting our goal.



If you still have not renewed your 2020 membership, now is the time to get it done. Your membership is very important to The American Legion and Post 555 even though you may not be able to participate in ongoing events and activities. You are still a part of the Post 555 Family. The Post is here for you.

Check your American Legion Membership Card to confirm you have renewed for 2020. If not, you can renew either online at www.legion.org or mail your renewal fee of \$45 payable to "Matthew Blount Post 555". Mail to *American Legion, Matthew Blount Post 555, 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124*.

The current health threat has slowed our activities, but we are still here doing what we can to virtually support our veterans. We encourage you to follow the protocols set by our local and state government leaders and protect yourself as well as others by avoiding crowded areas when you must venture out.

The Post Executive Committee will continue to manage Post business via conference calls, however, for the best interest of our members, **the April Post meeting has been cancelled**. We will keep you informed of the status of future meetings as decisions are made.

You can always contact me at ron.koonce@alpost555.com if you have questions about any of the above.

*For God and Country
Ron Koonce,
Adjutant*



American Legion Baseball



The American Legion 2020 Baseball season is rapidly approaching. Post 555 expects to continue its success as in the past years which each one of its members have an opportunity to support and participate in some manner. There will be times that Post 555 members will be called upon to assist in support of home game operations.

Alabama American Legion baseball will have three age divisions in 2020. Player registration is available at www.alabamaamericanlegionbaseball.com.

Divisions:

- Junior Varsity Division is a Junior program players are current 9th grade and younger.
- Varsity Division is a Senior Division 2 (II) program players must have at least one year of high school eligibility remaining
- 19U Division is a Senior Division 1 (I) program players must be born on or after January 1, 2001

The season is slated to begin after Memorial Day weekend. The state tournaments are mid to late July with the 19U Regional tournament held in Montgomery, AL August 5-9, 2020.



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*Matthew Blount Post 555
Auxiliary Unit 555
Sons of The American Legion
Legion Riders*

visit our website

*alpost555.com
[facebook.com/alpost555](https://www.facebook.com/alpost555)*

*Contact
Ron Koonce, Adjutant
Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com*



Tom McMahon

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”
John 14:27

Care for Legionnaires during the COVID-19 crisis.

As veterans, we know life brings seasons and times of good and bad, victories and losses. We possess our heart and soul with patience. Every one of you on the roster has been prayed for and by name. We do not know the deeds of each one, but our Heavenly Father does. It is my duty and desire to pray for and visit the sick and shut-in members of Post 555. Please keep me informed about needs of yours, your spouse or other members.

POST 555 BUDDY CHECK PROGRAM: Wellness check-ins with veteran.

Our Buddy Check program is not to increase membership, but to check on our member’s wellbeing. We use the Post phone directory and make calls to our Post members, particular to those whom we have not heard from in some time. Matthew Blount post appreciates your volunteerism in all aspects.

March 12th Buddy Check summary:

- Phone calls made: 107
- Phone calls answered: 59
- # of members requested assistance/prayers: 4

Thanks to the following volunteers for helping me make Buddy Check calls: Bill Blank, Melvin Grissett, and Ron McGriff.

The next scheduled monthly Buddy Check is April 9th at 9:00 am. If you’re interested in volunteering or have questions, please contact me. We will likely make calls from our homes.

If you and or a family member need assistance, prayers, or help please contact me at upward@bellsouth.net and (205) 482-1319.

Being anxious about the coronavirus is natural. Remember God gives peace and calm for every situation.

- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;” Proverbs 3:5
- “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who [or what] can be against us.” Romans 8:31

Recruit three new members for a “Foundation for the Future” pin



American Legion National Commander Jame W. “bill” Oxford will award his national commander “Foundation for the Future” incentive pin to any Legion Family member who obtains three new members into the American Legion.

A new member is any eligible person joining for the 2020 membership year who was not a member of The American Legion during the 2019 membership year.

Submit your completed member application with payment of \$45 dues payable to “Matthew Blount Post 555. Mail to Matthew Blount Post 555
50 Racquet Club Parkway
Pelham, AL 35124

Applications are available on the post website www.alpost555.com
Select the “Join Button” to print application.

Be the one that drives the Post over the 100% mark.

Post 555 Member Receives Award



Chic Cecchini receives Seven Seals Award from The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve organization presented by Nancy Waller, ESGR District 6 Chair, for his outstanding photography work for the organization.

American Legion Blood Drive



Post 555 Legionnaires receive recognition for their participation in The American Legion 2020 Post 555 Blood Drive Program.
L-R: Kenneth Paschal, Nancy Waller, Bobby Horsley, Larry Strayer, Jeff Monday, Ronnie McGriff, Derek Winters, Marc Louis not pictured

Blue Star Salute President Guest Speaker at Post 555



Post 555 Legionnaire, Tom Long, Alabama Blue Star Salute President, was the guest speaker at the March Post meeting. He provided a great presentation that gave good insight to the background, purposes and service to the families of those serving or lost in combat. Seen here with Post 555 commander, Kenneth Paschal.

Past Commander Recognized for Recruiting Efforts.



Past Commander, Tom McDaniel, receives Post 555 Commander's Recruiting Pin in recognition for his efforts in recruiting members for Post 555.

Commander's Corner



For God and Country! It's also that time of year again. On March 5, 2020, the Post Nominating Committee and Post membership nominated the following Slate of Officers to serve the Matthew Blount Post 555 for the 2020-2021 term:

- a. Commander – Barry Blount
- b. First Vice Commander – Jeff Monday
- c. Second Vice Commander – Nancy Waller
- d. Three Year Trustee – Bill Blank

The election of officers normally would take place at our April post meeting. However, due to the current Corona Virus situation, **Post 555 April Post meeting has been CANCELLED**. Status of future Post meetings will be provided as more information becomes available.

In the meantime, congratulations to the above candidates, whereas they will be elected by unanimous consent of acclamation. Installation of the Newly Elected Officers above is scheduled for May 7, 2020.

March at a glance:

- Congratulations to Past Commander Tom McDaniel for receiving the Post 555 Commander's Membership Award lapel pin during our March 5th Post meeting. Membership is the key ingredient to our success. Also, we appreciate our March special guest speaker Comrade Tom Long and President for the Blue Star Salute Foundation.
- Congratulations to the eight Post members recognized for their participation in the 2020 American Legion Blood Drive Program during our Open House in February. Nancy Waller, Bobby Horsley, Larry Strayer, Jeff Monday, Ron McGriff, Derek Winters, Marc Louis, and Kenneth Paschal.
- Triple Nickel Pro Rodeo outpour of community supporters and sponsorships. Special thanks to Jerry McClain, Triple Nickel Pro Rodeo chairperson and entire Planning Committee Team.
- March 7, 2020 American Legion, Department of Alabama Commander's Cup. Triple Nickel Shooter - job well done. (2nd place precision

team and three members advanced to final round of competition).

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and postponement of the Triple Nickel Pro Rodeo.
- March 12, 2020, monthly Buddy Check spearheaded by Chaplain Tom McMahon. Thanks for the following volunteers: Bill Blank, Melvin Grissett, and Ron McGriff.
- March 14, 2020 American Legion, Department of Alabama Oratorical finals. Representing Post 555, William Sawyer, a senior at Oak Mountain High School, took third place at the American Legion Department of Alabama Oratorical Contest held Saturday (March 14) at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Special thanks to Richard Kaster, Post 555 Oratorical and Department Oratorical Commission member for facilitating a great turnout.
- March 19, 2020, assisted the local Post Office in properly displaying of their POW flag by providing them with a missing snap hook to properly secure their POW flag.
- Membership Committee renewal campaign. 97% of renewal.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Please continue to stand with the American Legion in supporting fellow veterans, today's service members, their families, communities and our nation.



Matthew Blount Post 555
50 Racquet Club Parkway
Pelham, AL



Meets first Thursday of the month.

Meeting Cancelled for
April 2020

Welcome to Post 555
New Family Member

Will Tryee Moore II
Mark Rubino
Wayne Fitts
Linda Robertson
Chris Jeffcoat
Bruce Bates

Programs at Upcoming General Membership Meetings

- April 2nd:** Cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions on the use of the Pelham Senior Center
- May 7th:** Installation of Newly Elected Officers (no guest speaker or program)
- June 4th:** Law Enforcement and Firefighter of the Year Awards (no guest speaker)
- July 2nd:** Ms. Erin Garzelli, Case Manager with Volunteers of America: Veteran Homelessness

Post Leadership

Post Commander Kenneth Paschal	Post Trustees Bill Blank
1st Vice Commander Jerry McClain	Frank Lakotich
2nd Vice Commander Nancy Waller	Robert Horsley
Adjutant Ron Koonce	Auxiliary President Caroline Culpepper
Judge Advocate Larry Strayer	Historian Shaun Hadley
Financial Officer Joe Starnes	Sons Commander Jon Freeman
Chaplain Tom McMahan	Legion Riders Director Jeff Monday
Sergeant-At-Arms Derek Winters	Flag Team Coordinator Shauna Hadley
Post Service Officer Jerry McClain	Webmaster Ron Koonce
Historian Shauna Hadley	Triple Nickel Editor Yolanda Rancher
Public Relations Officer Vacant	Photography Frank Chacon Ron Koonce

The Triple Nickel

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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 submission 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

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Post 555

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First Vice Commander / Post Service Officer Comments



Triple Nickel Pro Rodeo

- Thank God for the Legionaries of Post 555 who made the effort to help raise over \$19,000+ for the Triple Nickel Pro Rodeo.
- Thank God for the businesses that agreed to become sponsors.
- Thank God for the City of Pelham for arranging and supporting this event.
- Thank God for the Leadership Shelby Team of Leaders.
- Thank God for Deb Navez of Dream Gate Events.
- Thank God for Buffy Murphy who created our Eventbrite online ticketing system.

Triple Nickel Membership 2020

- Thank God for the Post 555 Recruit one Team members.
- Thank God for the Adjutant who make the transfers, process the paperwork, print membership cards, sends out mailings and keep the headcount.
- Thank God for the Good Samaritans who paid from their own personal funds to keep members active on the rolls of our Post. Hooah!
- Membership Goal for renewals/transfers/New Recruits for 2020 is 218. We are currently at 212 members and counting! We could use your help in getting across the 100% finish line. Please recruit one new member.

Service Officer Comments

List of the Top 10 Most Common VA Disability Claims

- #1 Tinnitus
- #2 Hearing Loss
- #3 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- #4 Scars, General
- #5 Limitation of Flexion, Knee
- #6 Lumbosacral or Cervical Strain
- #7 Paralysis of the Sciatic Nerve
- #8 Limitation of Range of Motion of the Ankle
- #9 Migraines

#10 Degenerative Arthritis of the Spine
The #1 Easiest VA Disability to Claim: Tinnitus
According to the 2018-2019 disability claims data, Tinnitus was the number one most common VA disability claims for all Veterans with 157,152 compensation recipients. 93.6% of Veterans were rated at 10%

Jerry McClain

First Vice Commander/Post Service Officer

UPCOMING EVENTS APRIL AND MAY 2020

Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 8:30 a.m.

What: Shelby County Character In Action and American Legion School Medal Program

Where: Family Connection, 2 Walker Run, Alabaster, AL 35007

Chairperson: Past Commander, Barry Blount
Co-Chairperson: Comrade Alan Miller

Volunteers Needed: No, but everyone is welcome to attend the event to see these wonderful students throughout Shelby County.

Thursday May 7, 2020

What: Scheduled May Post meeting. (**It is undetermined that this meeting will take place depending on health risks**)

Where: Pelham Senior Center

Saturday, May 16, 2020, Time TBD

What: 6th Annual Pelham Palooza in the Park

Where: Field behind the Pelham Recreation Center, 300 Ball Park Road, and Pelham Park Middle School.

Chairperson: TBD

Co-Chairperson: TBD

Volunteers Needed: In past years, we have had our information table with travel flags and our Riders' motorcycles which always draw visitors to our area. When the details are available and a chairperson steps forward, I will put more details out for Volunteers needed.

Second Vice Commander

Nancy Waller



First and foremost, I hope everyone reading this newsletter is doing well and taking care of yourselves and your family members in regards to the COVID-19 situation. I heard from one member that he is going stir-crazy, so hang in there!!! There hopefully will be an end to this in the not-so-distant future so that we can safely go back into the working world (for those of you who have been told to remain at home or perhaps have the capability to "telework" from home) and return to some normalcy with our daily activities. Not fun being limited to what we can do outside of our homes, so when you get up every morning, say a big thank you to the Lord above that you woke up and are still healthy, then plan a productive day to keep occupied. How about spring cleaning? Spring came in on March 19, 2020 with a beautiful day, but has been followed by a lot of rain that is still keeping us inside **BUT** you can spring clean inside, too, so **NO EXCUSES!!!** Throw out old over-the-counter medications, and check expiration dates on canned goods and spices (I found a spice **WAY** in the back of my cabinet that had an expiration date of 2005--HOLY COW)!!! Continue to re-evaluate your paper products and food supplies to ensure that you and your family can continue functioning on a day-to-day basis without too much discomfort and inconvenience. I went to Publix about a week ago and there was not **ONE** chicken to be found. I have never seen that in my entire life. At that point, my casual stroll around Publix became a race to get what I needed before it was gone, too, like eggs. I got the last two dozen. No milk, but went to Dollar General and they were good-to-go. My husband, Sparkie, had been stockpiling toilet paper and paper towels so not an issue there for now. Hang in there and do the best you can, and take care of your family and neighbors who might be in need of help.

As far as my **REAL** mission for Post 555 is concerned, the May events will remain on the calendar but are at the mercy of the restrictions due to COVID-19, so keep an eye on the e-mails that Ron Koonce sends out as well as this and future newsletters. One thing that I do want to mention again is the 6th Annual Pelham Palooza still

scheduled for Sat., May 16, 2020. I am looking for a chairperson and possibly co-chairperson to take on this event which for us includes setting-up our tent and other display items (to include our travel flags and hopefully some motorcycles from our Legion Riders--they are like magnets) to let the community know that we are alive and well and there for them.

We will be looking into the future with other May events such as the Memorial Day events at the Alabama National Cemetery and Pelham Cemetery, and will continue to keep in touch with the Pelham City Leadership for their direction on Pelham events, and Pam Nichols at the Alabama National Cemetery.

Check "**Upcoming Events**" for dates and other information, and if there is something that interests you as far as you and a "buddy" working together as the chairperson and co-chairperson, let me know. That would make the event a lot more fun for everyone.

Take care to all, and stay safe inside your homes if at all possible, but if you need to be out-and-about in the community for whatever reason, take all necessary precautions to keep you and your family members healthy and ready to enjoy the spring and summer of 2020.

Thank you for your service to this great country!!!

Nancy Waller
Second Vice Commander

American Legion Souvenir Patriotic Cup



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\$10