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AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555 PELHAM, ALABAMA

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THE TRIPLE NICKEL NEWSLETTER

INSIDE	
Commander's Corner	2
1st Vice's Comments	3
2nd Vice's Comments	4
Adjutant's Area	5
Service Officer Update	6
Chaplain	7
Post Work Areas	8
Post Leadership»	9
Birth of the Coast Guard	10
Eldon Woodie, WAA	11
WAA donate form	12
MERICA.	

IN GOD WE TRUST



Matthew Blount Post 555

American Legion Alabama Department Mid-Winter Conference

This year's Conference will be held at The Admiral Hotel in Mobile. The dates are January 14 - 17, 2021. The room rates are \$119.00 a night. Self-parking is \$15.00 and valet is \$20.00. Each room will receive two breakfast vouchers also. Please call the reservation line at 855-680-3239 or hit the below reservation button below. All reservations need to be made by December 1, 2020 to receive The Legion's room rate. Agenda and more information will be provided at a later date.

https://www.hilton.com/en/book/

reservation/rooms/?cid=OM%2CWW%2CHILTONLINK%2CEN%
2CDirectLink&hmGUID=c15d5980-6ea3-44a6-bd3a-fba6e2f346ea



COMMANDER'S CORNER



Barry Blount
Post Commander

Shelby County Shooting Sports Association
NRA YOUTH BASIC RIFLE COURSE

SCSSA is pleased to announce our NRA Youth Basic Rifle course. The course will be in our new format this Fall. It will meet on three Saturday mornings. The course will begin on Saturday, September 12, 2020. We will meet from 8 AM - Noon on the 12th and 19th and 26th.

The course covers rifle safety, rifle parts and function, ammunition, and fundamentals of marksmanship, as well as the 5 common shooting positions. Common rifle types will be covered. Most of the live fire will be completed using target air rifles, but, we will also shoot rifles chambered for 22LR. This course is a prerequisite for joining our youth rifle club.

Classroom and range time will be at our range at 574 Elvira Rd; Helena, AL 35080. Everything needed for the course is provided. Cost this year for the course will be \$65. Space is limited.

To register for the course go to: https://www.nrainstructors.org/CourseDetails.aspx? Courseid=602684&seats=25&State=y&SearchState=AL&i d=1&bsa=&youth=&women=

or go to www.mynrainstructors.org and search for NRA Basic Rifle Course in Alabama

As shared by Sam Richardson of SCSSA: Shelby County Shooting Sports Association is a nonprofit 501c3 organization. Our mission is to teach firearm safety and promote shooting sports primarily for children in Alabama.

We do this by offering youth basic safety and marksmanship courses like the one in the announcement you received. We also have youth rifle and pistol teams that train regularly and compete with other youth teams across the country. We frequently hold various youth competitions such as the Dixie Challenge and Junior Olympic Qualifiers. And, we offer shooting sports programs for Boy Scouts and other youth oriented groups.

When we offer adult training it is generally focused on training adults to work with youth shooting sports programs similar to ours or at SCSSA.

Our affiliation with American Legion Post 555 Triple Nickel comes from our goal of promoting youth shooting sports and operating a youth air rifle team. American Legion has an air rifle program at the Local, State, and National levels. Our goals and the Legion's goals through the local Post are compatible and together make a stronger program for our youths.

We are always in need of trained and committed adults to help implement our programs. More adult leadership would allow us to do more to further our mission and mutual goals. We would be happy to have Triple Nickel members helping to do this and we offer the training necessary. Volunteers will get to see and assist kids growing in safety skills, marksmanship, and learning life skills. Adult volunteers are encouraged to participate in shooting activities and training in order to improve their skills to be better coaches as well as just to have some fun. However, the range is not open to the general public for use.

1ST VICE'S COMMENTS



Jeff Monday
1st Vice Commander

Hope this finds everyone doing well, I know it seems this will never end. However, please let us not lose sight of what we do to keep Post 555 and The American Legion rolling on for years to come.

Work is still going on, we may not be meeting in the building, and the work is still there. I would like to thank Ron Koonce for the support and hour of help to keep the membership moving on. We are adding new members daily. We can bring some back home.

Remember to renew your membership, when you do reach out and bring a new member in to The American Legion Family.

Jeff Monday

First Vice Commander

For God and Country

Thanks to the State and Ron here is something to think about: Depending on whose numbers you use, around 7.5% of the State of Alabama populations are Veterans. That means in the most populated 19 counties there are 300,000 Veterans. With everyone's help, we can reach out to each one of these American Veterans; I want to thank each one of you for being part of this.

Please stay safe and I really hope to see most of you very soon in person not behind a screen.



2nd Vice-Commanders Report

Nancy Waller 2nd Vice Commander

If you do not like the hot weather (like a lot of us...), hang in there! September is coming and with that comes the start of autumn on the 22^{nd} —YEA!!! I definitely do not like cold weather, but it is almost welcomed after how hot this summer has been this year. Hopefully we will have a gentle transition from summer to fall, then fall to winter.

Even though we are still under COVID-19 restrictions, I hope you are all doing well and trying to get out and about to keep your sanity. Fortunately for the Wallers, Sparkie and I have been visiting National Guard units in the state for the past few months and making sure that our members of the National Guard are being taken care of with all of the things we do as Retirees and Volunteers. The unit members are taking all of the recommended precautions, and it is great to be back with our brothers and sisters in the National Guard. Between Sparkie and I, we served for over 50 years in the Alabama Army National Guard so we love to visit units because most of the time, we see someone with whom we served and can reconnect. I know I am preaching to the choir when I tell you this but the military is a family that you can depend upon to do whatever is needed to take care of each other. I am proud to have served for 29 years and as far as I am concerned, I continue "taking care of Soldiers and Airmen" in a Retiree/Volunteer status. Good times for

sure!!

As far as Post 555 events are concerned, the one event that was hopefully in the pipeline has been canceled. Past Commander and Chairman Kenneth Paschal updated me that the University of Alabama Hockey Military Appreciation Night was canceled recently, so you can scratch off the November 14, 2020 date from your calendar. We will just have to continue entertaining ourselves with our friends and family members under we can gather together in large groups.

I want to thank the Chaplain's helpers making the "Buddy Check" phone calls. I received one today from Eldon Woodie who was able to get credit for three Post 555 members with one phone call (Sparkie and Nathan Waller are my husband and son). Thank you, Eldon, for checking on all of us!!!

Stay safe and healthy and play some calming music if you get anxious about the COVID-19 situation. I have Channel 66 (Watercolors) on Sirius XM in my car which is contemporary jazz. Wonderful, relaxing music to listen to while driving. If you are from the disco days, go to Channel 54 (Studio 54 Disco) and be careful you don't start speeding!!! That music is GREAT!!!!!





ADJUTANT'S AREA

Ron Koonce

There is a lot going on. The summer is almost gone, schools are trying to get started for the fall semester, and we are still facing COVID-19. However, Post 555 is busy processing 2021 membership renewals/new members and preparing the budget for 2021.

We look forward to hopefully in the near future that we can return to our monthly face-to-face meetings. At this point, the City of Pelham has not reopened their facilities for use. Until we determine it is safe for everyone to meet in person, we will continue the Zoom Video/Teleconference meetings as we have in the past several months.

The 2021 membership renewals are going well for the first two months of the membership period as we approach the 100 mark towards an official goal of 258 paid members. Our goal of 100% by December 31, 2020 is possible if the renewals and new member count continues at the same rate during the past two months. Many thanks to you that have been early in submitting your renewals and recruiting new members.

For God and Country Ron Koonce Adjutant Join me in welcoming our new members and transfers during the months of July and August:

Curtis Orse, Robert Genry, Joseph A. Dunn, James R. Mann IV, and John A. Clopton III.

Let us keep up the momentum in meeting 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, mailed to American Legion, 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124. You can also renew online at www.legion.org.

The September General Membership Post meeting will be held via Zoom Video/Teleconference on September 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Access links will be emailed to members and guests. Share the link with a Veteran guest.

Hope to see you (or hear you) on September 3, 2020.



SERVICE OFFICER NOTES



Jerry McClain Service Officer

NEW! VA to award more than 425 grants, \$279 million to help prevent and end Veteran homelessness

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it will award more than 425 grants to community organizations totaling approximately \$279 million under the Grant Per Diem (GPD) program. (8/19/20)

NEW! VA partners with OnStar to bring suicide prevention services to Veterans with the push of a button –

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it is partnering with On-Star's emergency services to improve access to suicide prevention resources for Veterans. (8/17/20)

NEW! VA decreases mail processing time for claims intake –

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has improved procedures by incorporating an artificial intelligence (AI) solution to reduce the time it takes to process in-coming mail from 10 days to just one day. (8/13/20)

NEW! VA prepares to welcome volunteers back to health care facilities –

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today plans to gradually and safely reintroduce volunteers to its health care facilities. (8/11/20)

VA to award more than \$400 million in grants to end Veteran homelessness -

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it will begin awarding more than \$400 million in grants under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF) to 266 non-profit organizations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands on Oct. 1 of this year. (8/7/20)

VA, Elizabeth Dole Foundation to offer respite relief for Veteran caregivers –

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in partnership with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (EDF) today announced the launch of a new foundation program granting family caregivers access to nocost, short-term aid to help those caring for wounded, ill or injured Veterans or service members in their homes during the coronavirus pandemic. (8/5/20)

VA, America's Adopt A Soldier partner to help Veterans at risk of or experiencing homelessness stay connected –

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today it is collecting laptop and mobile phone donations through an established partner non-profit organization, America's Adopt A Soldier, to help Veterans at risk of or experiencing homelessness stay connected to their health care providers, case managers and loved ones. (8/3/20)

va.alabama.gov



PAGE 7 THE TRIPLE NICKEL

CHAPLAIN



Tom McMahon Post Chaplain



"BE ENCOURAGED FOR GOD AND COUNTRY."

Summer of 2020 is fast coming to a close. We as Veteran survivors are holding our own and will not succumb to evils and threats to life, health and happiness. We have persevered and we will continue to persevere and be conquerors within Woodie, B. Blank, and my wife Jean. [Anyone ourselves.

So many people worry needlessly about concerns outside their control. Many things are outside our purview and may cause anxiety and distress. A good soldier knows his responsibility with a disciplined discernment that keeps him/ her focused on the battle at hand. American Legion Posts are to uphold the Four Pillars of our commitment to serve: Veterans, Defense, Youth and Americanism. If we hold tight to these concerns, if we support these high ideals, we will have won our battle and will not be distracted by forces outside which strive for our attention.

As you think of the many ways our responsibilities may affect your home, family, church and unique heritage, remember that you may be the Capstone of influence for many others.

Let me commend our Buddy Check Volunteers once again on reaching out to Post 555's membership. Special thanks to: M. Grissett, R. Koonce, R. McGriff, F. Chacon, J. McClain, E. else wishing to make calls during the month or on our special days, please let me know and we'll assign a few great Vets to a list for calling.]

Counting up to 8.24.2020, we made 228 total attempted calls, 195 were completed or at least left a message. There were 7 members requesting a prayer or expressing other concerns for follow-up.

If I may, please allow me to leave you with this closing thought from a man named Paul who wrote a letter to a group in Rome about 2000 years ago. He said: "Now we who are strong have an obligation to bear the weaknesses of those without strength, and not to please ourselves. Each one of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please Himself..." (CSB 15:1-3a)

Chaplain Thomas McMahon

POST 555 WORK AREAS

Alabama American Legion baseball

In spite of the COVID-19 Alabama American Legion Baseball season was a great success. Post 555 was able to field teams in all age groups.

Many thanks to post 555 Baseball Director Jon Freeman and his coaches: Heath Haskins, Danny Coleman, Brooks Freeman, Jacob Murchison, Chris Williams, Joshua Wright, Kyle Phillips and Hunter Orr.

We look forward to our 7th. Season in 2021

Triple Nickel



Triple Nickel Riders meet the second Tuesday of the month at the meeting room behind the Heart of Dixie Harley Davison dealership, at 6:30 PM. Please join us!

Upcoming events: Matthew Blount Memorial Ride, November 14; location to be announced. Funds raised will be donated to the Wreaths Across America . Also, see the invitation below.



ALABAMA COMBINED ANNUAL

September 11th - Meet and Greet on the farm (13753 E Capitol Dr. Lawley AL)

September 12th- 911 ride (registration from 10 to11am @ Veterans Park Montevallo (7305 Hwy 119 Alabaster) 2pm- 4pm music performed by Whiskey Dix on the farm 4PM UNTIL- FOOD MUSIC GAMES KARAOKE AND MORE

> Host hotel information: Windwood Inn 2923 Main St Brent Al 35034

CALL AND MAKE RESERVATION BY CARD LET THEM KNOW YOURE WITH THE CLUB OUR RATE IS \$45 CASH ON ARRIVAL, 205,926,4833

Auxiliary Unit 555

Hello Legionaries and Auxiliary,



I Pray this note finds all of you in good health and Great Spirits. We are still in our membership drive, so Auxiliary members please submit your membership renewal to my address at 1214 Bennett Circle, Alabaster, 35007. Our adult membership is \$30.00 and our Junior membership is \$6.00.

Please know that I am praying for all of you and if there is anything I can do, please do not hesitate to email or call me. My phone number is 205-419-4549.

Caroline Culpepper

In God we trust!

Sons of The American Legion Membership update:



2021 Pair Members—14 (20% of target)

2021 New Members—1

Current Roster is 38; squadron 2021 goal is 103%

(37 paid members). 10 Non renewals expected.

National renewal targets: 10% by 9/10, 25% by 10/15,

35% by 11/12.

Renewals 2020/2021 are due; Dues remain at \$20 Mail renewal to:

Sons of American Legion, Matthew Blount Squadron 555, 50 Racquet Pkwy, Pelham, AL

MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555



Meets first Thursday of the month.

September 3, 2020 Meeting

will be held

via Video/Teleconference

Welcome to Post 555 New Family Members

> Curtis Orse Robert Genry Joseph A. Dunn James R. Mann IV John A. Clopton III



 4 v	ways to be a member of our Legion family
	American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555
	American Legion Matthew Blount Fost 353 American Legion Auxiliary
	Sons of the American Legion
	American Legion Riders (must be members of one of the 3 above)
	Contact Information (Please Print)
NAN	ME:
CIT	Y:
CEL	L PHONE: HM:
EMA	AIL:
MIL	ITARY BRANCH:
REF	ERRED BY:

Post Leadership

Post Commander Barry Blount 1st Vice Commander Jeff Monday 2nd Vice Commander Nancy Waller Adjutant Ron Koonce Asst Adjutant Shauna Hadley Judge Advocate Larry Strayer Financial Officer Joe Starnes Chaplain Tom McMahon Sergeant-At- Arms Derek Winters Anita Bennett Post Service Officer Jerry McClain Historian Shauna Hadley **Public Relations Officer** Vacant

Post Trustees Bill Blank Frank Lakotich Robert Horsley Auxiliary President Caroline Culpepper Sons Commander Robert Horsley Legion Riders Director Doug McDaniel Flag Team Coordinator Ron McGriff Webmaster Ron Koonce **Triple Nickel Editor** Frank Chacon **Photography** Frank Chacon Ron Koonce

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

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 Frank Chacon /Ron Koonce Post 555

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THE BIRTH OF THE COAST GUARD

First of a series on our US Armed Forces



By William H. Thiesen, Coast Guard Atlantic Area Historian

A few armed vessels, judiciously stationed at the entrances of our ports, might at a small expense be made useful sentinels of the laws.

— Federalist Paper #12 (27 November 1787)

In the above quote, author Alexander Hamilton described a fleet of Federal vessels that he believed the newly created United States required to enforce tariff laws and interdict smuggling.

Considered the father of the United States Coast Guard, Hamilton played an integral role in the formation and development of the government of the United States. When the new government got under way in 1789, Hamilton was appointed the first Secretary of the Treasury. He began at once to place the nation's disorganized finances on a sound footing. In a series of reports, he presented a program not only to stabilize national finances but also to shape the future of the country as a developing industrial nation. He proposed establishment of a national bank, funding of the national debt, assumption of state war debts, and the encouragement of manufacturing. In addition, he was the driving force behind Congress' creation of a revenue marine service, the precursor to the Coast Guard.

Born in Charlestown on the West Indian island of Nevis on January 11, 1757, Hamilton immigrated to New York in 1772. Although not yet twenty years of age, by 1774 he authored many widely read political publications. Not long after the start of the American Revolution, Hamilton received the captaincy of an artillery unit and fought in the principal campaigns of 1776. In 1777, he advanced to the rank of lieutenant colonel, joined the staff of General Washington as secretary and aide-de-camp, and soon became Washington's close confidant. Hamilton ended the war as a lieutenant colonel commanding an infantry regiment, which he led with great success during the siege at Yorktown. he led with great success during the siege at Yorktown. Already in 1787, Hamilton had articulated the need for the revenue marine in the Federalist Papers. As the fledgling nation sought to combat smugglers seeking to avoid payment of import tariffs, .

Hamilton advised Congress to build a fleet of ten cutters to help direct ships to specific ports of entry along the East Coast of the United States. Hamilton's small fleet proved the basis for establishment of a revenue marine, later known as the Revenue Cutter Service. Congress adopted Hamilton's plan on August 4th, 1790, which the Coast Guard celebrates as its birth date. Since the Continental Navy and marines disbanded following the conclusion of the American Revolution, this revenue marine was the nation's only sea service in the early years of the new republic.

Hamilton assigned revenue cutters to the East Coast's ten major seaports, allowing for import tariff collection, critically important to the economic viability of the nation. In addition to their law enforcement role, the fleet of cutters rendered aid and assistance as needed "for the protection of lives and property at sea," a humanitarian life-saving role that defines the Coast Guard to this day.

Hamilton resigned from the cabinet in January 1795 and never returned to public office. His two last major political acts came in 1800 and 1804 and both targeted aspiring political leader Aaron Burr. When Burr and Thomas Jefferson tied in the 1800 presidential election. Hamilton used his influence in the House of Representatives to secure Jefferson's presidency. In 1804, Hamilton also maneuvered to defeat Burr's chances of becoming governor of New York. In response to Hamilton's political moves against him, Burr challenged Hamilton to a duel on the pretext that the latter had expressed a "despicable opinion" of him. The duel took place in New Jersey, on Wednesday, July 11th, 1804. Burr mortally wounded Hamilton, who died the next day. Hamilton was laid to rest at Trinity Church in New York City.

In 1790, Alexander Hamilton established a service that has stood the test of time to become the modern Coast Guard. He was the first member of an unbroken long blue line that has marched forward for over 225 years. Today, Hamilton's name graces the hull of the newest National Security Cutter, CGC Alexander Hamilton (WMSL-753), the sixth Coast Guard cutter to bear his name.

UPDATE REPORT FOR "WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA CAMPAIGN"

Eldon Woodie. On behalf of Chairperson Chuck Kiser and Co-Chairperson Nancy Waller

As of August 18th, our total donations were \$1025.00 which equates to 28.47% of our goal of \$3,600.00. The majority of this total was donated by a small group of members.

We are looking for our leadership and all Post members to come through with their donations. Historically, we have collected between 40% and 50% of our goal during our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner/Meeting in November, but without that event this year, we need everyone to pitch in.

To help out, we plan on store-front fund raising with appropriate masks and social distancing in September and October. We have submitted written requests to the Pelham and Alabaster Walmart stores to have two people at their sidewalk giving folks the opportunity to participate. If you know of another good opportunity for fund raising or of a corporate sponsor that you would like to share with us, let me know and we will make the contact on your behalf.

The donation form is in this Post 555 Newsletter and is also available on our website, but if anyone does not have access to the Internet and would like to make a donation, let Nancy know @ wallernj@gmail.com or 251-554-6986 and she will mail one to you.

Chuck, Nancy, and I really need the Post's help to meet our goal. Chuck met with the Shelby County Exchange Club this month and will have an update at the Membership Meeting.

Our Post's reputation for supporting our Veterans and their families is unmatched. WAA means so much to the families. The completely decorated cemetery is a visible sign to them that our community respects their Veteran's service. Family members often say that the WAA event brings them close to their loved one's memory, they "feel like I am celebrating their life and the holiday with them." The Matthew Blount Post 555 will make it happen, it is for our Veterans!!! Thank you all.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DONATION FORM

Twelth 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, along with your payment to

For names to be included on the BSSFI "In Honor/In Memory" display for 2020, forms must be received no 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 acknowledgment will be sent to the email address indicated below, if requested. For more information, please visit our website

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

Please print clearly

Printed Name of Individual/Org	anization:	
Mailing Address:		
Email address:		
Phone Number:	Sponsorship Amount:	
In Honor of (living):		
In Memory of (deceased):		1
Signature:	Date:	36

2020 Wreaths Across America						
Post 555 Donation Campaign Summary						
Data as of 8/18/2020						
Year	2019	2020	Change			
Wreaths used/needed	6475	7750	19.7%			
Post 555 donations total	\$2955	\$1025	-63.3%			
2020 Donations goal	00	3600				
Percent goal received to date		28.5%				
Donations received over/(under) goal		(\$2575)				

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

www.bluestarsalute.org.