



# The Triple Nickel

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

## *Post 555 holds 4th Annual Military Appreciation Night*

Volume 5- Issue 2  
February 2018

*“For God & Country”*

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Matthew Blount Post 555 welcomed over 60 veterans, military active duty personnel and hockey fans at the the 4th annual event that recognized those that have and are serving our county. Members of twelve local youth organizations participated in the event. Gifts were presented by youth participants to veterans and military personnel expressing our appreciation for their service. The event was Co-hosted by the University of Alabama Hockey team and Post 555.

See photos at <https://alpost555.smugmug.com/1-19-2018-Military-Appreciation-Night/>

*Continued on page 8*

February 2018



## *Ad Adjutant Area*

Congratulations to the Events committee for an outstanding and successful 4th annual Military Appreciation Night. Over sixty veterans and military active duty were recognized and thanked for their service.



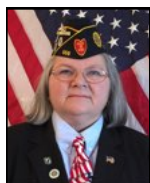
The Post received recognition at the 2018 Alabama Department of The American Legion Mid-Winter Conference for accomplishing 110% renewal goal by December 31, 2017. Many thanks to the members of Post 555 for your continued support. However, there are still about 30 Post members whose 2017 membership expired on December 31, 2017. Do not wait. Send your 2018 renewal in as soon as possible.

The Pelham High School Scholarship Oratorical Competition sponsored by the Post was also a success with eleven students in competition for scholarships. Many thanks to Richard Kaster, Oratorical Chairman, and the members that were on hand to support the event. The District 23 competition will be February 3, 2018 at the First Baptist Church Pelham in the ground floor choir amphitheater, 9:00 am. Thank you in advance for your support of this event by attending and supporting the Post's representatives.

In January the Post welcomed James Richardson to our Post Family.

*Ron Koonce,  
Adjutant*

## *Second Vice Commander*



January has been very busy already for our Post! We have held or participated in many events including the Alabama Department Mid-Winter Conference. I was honored to address the general assembly at the conference, to share some points on how we recruit members. We must be doing something right! I want to thank Comrade Kenneth Paschal for putting together a very last minute outline to share with the conference attendees. And please, if you are able to attend the upcoming events, even as a spectator, support your post, other veterans, our children and communities.

*Anita Bennett  
Second Vice Commander*

## *Free online American Legion Training*

*A new mobile-friendly online training program for members of The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion and Auxiliary is now available free of charge, replacing the former American Legion Extension Institute.*

*"Basic Training" is a five-part lesson housed on the The American Legion Education Institute site at [www.legion.org/training](http://www.legion.org/training). Topics covered are History & Organization, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.*

*A 40-question exam is provided. Graduates can download and print a certificate of completion and order a Basic Training Graduate pin from Emblem Sales.*

*All officers and members are encouraged to complete the training.*



*Join the American Legion Family  
Helping Veterans and Troops  
Serving the Community and Youth*

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

*visit our website*

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

*Contact  
Ron Koonce, Adjutant  
[Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com](mailto:Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com)*

*February 2018*

## Chaplain's Thoughts



Are you at peace with God? Pause and consider your day. If Jesus Christ split the heavens and called our days on earth done, is there anything you wish you would have done yesterday? Anything you wish you wouldn't have done yesterday? Yeah, me too.

Get really quiet with God and ask Him to look at your life and point things out that shouldn't be there. Then ask Him to forgive you and give you the strength to turn from those sins and walk with Him.

Psalms 85 is a beautiful truth and picture of God's children being forgiven, falling back into sin, repenting and finding God's loving response. God is not mad at you; talk to Him. He wants you at peace with Him. Look at the extremes He's gone to to make sure we could be at peace with Him.

Turn your eyes to the Cross of Jesus Christ comrades, we are one day closer to home! 2 Peter 3:8-15

*Chris Vonderau*  
Chaplain

## Commander's Corner



It's January and sometimes we are guilty of resting on the laurels of the previous year and saying to ourselves, we need a break. Let me assure you, this is not the case with Matthew Blount American Legion Post 555. We have been busy. Our mission is service to veterans and the community we live in and we are off and running.

On January 10<sup>th</sup> we competed the local Oratorical Contest at Pelham High School and it was very successful thanks to 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander Richard Kaster. Richard has been the chair person for this event for the past three years. Each year, through doing and learning, this program has been very successful. This year we had 11 participants from Pelham High School and the top three were selected. You can read more about this in Richard's comments under 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander. The District Oratorical Contest will be held February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 at the First Baptist Church of Pelham starting promptly at 10:00 am. All post members are encouraged to attend and support these students and Post 555.

On Friday night January 19, Post 555 along with the University of Alabama Hockey team, sponsored Veterans

Recognition Night. This is the fourth year this program has been presented. Many thanks go to Kenneth Paschal and co-chair person Stephanie Monday for a superior program. Of course there were other members from the post who helped and contributed to the success of the program. The program takes a lot of preparation, follow up and hard work. Thank you to all that were involved. I understand that this was the largest turn out for a University of Alabama Hockey game this year. Our goals were met by presenting gift bags to over 60 veterans in attendance and recognizing their service. You can read more about this program in the post newsletter.

I would like to mention that members from the post attended the Winter Training and Educational Session on January 18, 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> in Decatur, Alabama. This program is put on by our State of Alabama Department to train and educate our members to better serve the Department, veterans and our local community. Thanks to the group of five from our post who attended.

You can see we have not stopped, nor will we, in achieving the goals set forth by The American Legion and our local Post. Those who would like to be more involved in our programs, please call me or any of our officers. Your help would be greatly appreciated. I will look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting.

*Tom McDaniel*  
Commander

## 2018 Boys State May 27- June 2, 2018

**Location: University of Alabama**

**Tuition : \$225**

**\*Registration Deadline:**

**April 15, 2018**

**Contact:**

**Matthew Blount Post 555**

*Ron Koonce, Adjutant*

*Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com*

*\* Student must have completed junior year of High School*

*February 2018*



# Triple Nickel Riders



The year has started out with new faces and great warm rides, well not so warm, but great rides with a great group of fellow Riders.

We started off the year with a ride with the Southern Cruisers Riding Club, as they hosted an annual Polar Bear Ride to Montgomery, AL.

Jeff Monday and Johnny Ryan left out in 27-degree great warm weather to fellowship with SCRC. Jeff and Johnny both received their Polar Bear Ride patches.

The 13th was a very busy day. Fellow Riders Will Hayes and Josh Vandiver made a 29-degree ride around the mountains looking for snow, guess what, they found it before making stops around the area and some local stops in Birmingham.

The 18th was the Monthly Riders meeting and proud to say we are starting off the year right with more than 75% of the riders attending. Keep it up Riders!!

On the 20th, Jeff Monday and Johnny Ryan made the trip to attend the Mid-Winter Conference Riders meeting. A lot of great things coming in the 2018 year for the Riders, so keep up with us on Facebook, Triple Nickel Riders.

We ended the weekend with some good riding friends, Alan Farmer, Nolan Farmer, Will Hayes, Todd Erwin and Jeff Monday made the trip to Natural Bridge, AL. It was a great ride and we had the youngest member of the Post 555 Legion Riders with us, Nolan Farmer loves to ride and hang-out with the guys. Keep it up Nolan, you are the future sir. As you can see we stay busy. We are proud to be the Riders of this great post!!



Nolan & Alan Farmer



Jeff Monday



Johnny Ryan



**WE ARE PROUD TO RIDE!!**  
**AND WE**  
**RIDE FOR THOSE THAT CAN'T.**

# First Vice Commander Comments



## Membership management report :

Post has a total of 201 members on the active roster as of January 23, 2018.

We have 137 2018 Renewals paid & processed that exceeds the February goal of 110%. There was one transfer from Montgomery Post 1983. There were no new Legion members in January.

## High School Oratorical update:.

We completed the Pelham High School Contest on January 10<sup>th</sup>. The Judges selected 1<sup>st</sup> place winner Mason Herrington, 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner Addison Fuller, 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner Dylan Kirk. All three will move forward to the 23<sup>rd</sup> District Oratorical competition. Each of the winners were awarded a scholar medallion and will receive a monetary Scholarship in May at the Pelham High School Awards Night. Addison Fuller will be a guest speaker at Post 555 General Membership meeting February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to share her experiences with Girls State and the Pelham High School Oratorical contest this month

The 23<sup>rd</sup> District Oratorical Contest will be held on February 3, 2018 at the First Baptist Church of Pelham. The 23<sup>rd</sup> District Commander Barry Blount is the event Chairman and Richard Kaster will coordinate the event with the assistance of Post members. We still will need additional assistance for timekeeper, escorts. We also would encourage Post members to attend to show their support for the Post's participants.

## New fundraiser for the High School Oratorical Scholarship contest- Blue Rain Car Wash

As many of you already know that our Post does not have an ongoing revenue stream or income. We do not have a café, bar or restaurant to depend on financially, therefore what operating funds there are for our many activities are attained through donations and fundraisers. Examples are the annual Bessemer Airport Hangar events, Beach Bash and items purchased from the Post Store.

To assist in funding the 2018 Oratorical Scholarship event, the management of Blue Rain Car Wash in

Pelham has offered to the Post discounted car wash coupon cards with a value of \$7 for resell at a discounted price of \$5 as a fundraiser. These coupons are available to American Legion Family members and the public. All proceeds will go directly to supporting the High School Oratorical scholarship contest fund. This card can be applied towards an upgraded car wash with a higher value and has no expiration. So, if you want to help fund our High School Oratorical Scholarship Fund, please visit the Post Store after the General Membership meeting or contact me directly to purchase a couple car wash cards and help support the Youth Scholarship Fund.

*Richard Kaster*

*1st Vice Commander/Oratorical Chair*

**American Legion  
District 23 Oratorical Scholarship  
February 3, 2018  
First Baptist Church Pelham  
9:00 AM**



Winners of the American Legion Oratorical Contest pose after receiving their medallions. From left are: junior Dylan Kirk, third place; senior Mason Herrington, first place; senior Addison Fuller, second place; Richard Kaster, post first vice commander and contest coordinator.



Tom McDaniel, left, post commander of American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555, congratulates Pelham High School senior Mason Herrington for winning first place in the American Legion Oratorical Contest held at the high school Jan. 10.





**Matthew Blount Post 555**  
**50 Racquet Club Parkway**  
**Pelham, AL**

**Meets first Thursday of the month.**  
**Next Meeting February 1, 2018**  
**Meal served at 6:15pm**  
**Meeting at 7:00 pm**

## Post Leadership

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Post Commander</b><br>Tom McDaniel       | <b>Post Trustees</b><br>David Coram, Jr.       |
| <b>1st Vice Commander</b><br>Richard Kaster | Frank Lakotich                                 |
| <b>2nd Vice Commander</b><br>Anita Bennett  | Ray Adams                                      |
| <b>Adjutant</b><br>Ron Koonce               | <b>Auxiliary President</b><br>Stephanie Monday |
| <b>Judge Advocate</b><br>Chuck Kiser        | <b>Sons Commander</b><br>Will Hayes            |
| <b>Financial Officer</b><br>Ron Gofourth    | <b>Legion Riders</b><br>Director               |
| <b>Chaplain</b><br>Chris Vonderau           | Jeff Monday                                    |
| <b>Sergeant-At-Arms</b><br>Ron McGriff      | <b>Honor Guard</b><br>Commander                |
| <b>Post Service Officer</b><br>Robert Davis | Jerry McClain                                  |
| <b>Historian</b><br>Jackie Lucas            | <b>Webmaster</b><br>David Blount               |
| <b>Public Relations</b><br>Officer          | <b>Triple Nickel Editor</b><br>Ron Koonce      |
| Jim Billings                                | <b>Photography</b><br>Chic Cecchini            |
|   | Jim Billings                                   |
|   | Ron Koonce                                     |
|   | Eric Fort                                      |

## Coming Activities

### District 23 Oratorical Scholarship Competition

2/3/2018  
 First Baptist Church Pelham  
 9:00 am

### Military Armed Forces Veterans Appreciation Day

2/24/2018  
 Ward Chapel A.M.E. Worship Center  
 765 West St Street  
 Montevallo, AL

### Boys State

May 27- June 2, 2018  
 University of Alabama  
 Registration Deadline  
 April 15, 2018

## Welcome to Post 555 Newest Family Members

### Post 555

James Richardson

## 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.

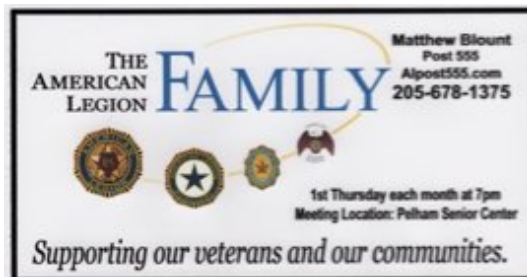
Submit articles prior to the 10th of the  
 month for publication the following month.  
 We reserve the right to edit any submission  
 for the purpose of publication.

Letters to the Editor must include name,  
 address & telephone number. Names will  
 be withheld upon request.

**Send email to:**

Nolan & Alan Farmer

[Editor@alpost555.com](mailto:Editor@alpost555.com)



## *Mid-Winter Conference Decatur, Alabama*

Ten members of the Post Family attended the Alabama Department of the American Legion Mid-Winter Conference in Decatur, AL on January 18-21, 2018.

The focus of the meeting was on membership and training for both the leadership and the Legion members.

Second Vice Commander, Anita Bennett, addressed the assembly during the Membership session sharing how Post 555 utilizes Post events to grow the membership and demonstrate its mission to the community.

The Post had representatives from the Legion, Sons of The American Legion and Legion Riders participating in respective meetings.

The Post was recognized during the membership session for achieving 110% membership renewals prior to December 31, 2018.



L-R - Richard Kaster, Frank Lakotich, Ron McGriff, Anita Bennett, Barry Blount, Ron Koonce



The American Legion invades Bob Gibson Bar-BQ for food & fellowship



2nd Vice Commander, Anita Bennett, addresses the assembly during Membership session.



State Commander, Donna Stacey, recognizes Post 555 for their accomplishments in membership renewals for 2018. Ron Koonce, Adjutant, accepts Certificate on behalf of Post 555.



Barry Blount, Past Commander, Ron Koonce, Adjutant, Ronnie McGriff, Sargent-At-Arms



## *4th Annual Military Appreciation Night*

There were an estimated 60 plus veterans/military in attendance with 12 youth groups that participated including approximately 40 youths from various local youth organizations.

Bama Frozen Tide won over Illinois State: 4 – 3 before the largest crowd for Bama hockey this season

There was a special unexpected presentation to Matthew Blount American Legion Post 555 with the “Shelby County RSVP Volunteer Achievement Award 2017” by the Retired Services Volunteer Program and the Mayor of Pelham, Gary Waters.

The Thompson High School Air Force JROTC Color guard presented the colors with the Pelham High School Choir singing the National Anthem. The ceremonial puck was dropped by US Naval Special Warfare member, Rik Doggett.

Participating youth presented gifts to all veterans and military that attended. Winners of the door prize drawing were Russell Cavanaugh, US Navy, winning a large gift basket from Pelham Cracker Barrel and the winner of the eagle wood carving was Jessica Strickland.



Thompson High School JROTC Color Guard



Pelham High School Choir



Ron Jefferson, Jessica Strickland



Russell Cavanaugh, Robert Davis



Ward Chapel AME Church YPD Youth Group

**Acknowledgements**



**ARMY | MARINES | NAVY | AIR FORCE | COAST GUARD**

★★★★★ **MILITARY** ★★★★★

**APPRECIATION**

**NIGHT**

**Friday, January 19, 2018**

On behalf of the Planning Committee we would like to thank the following individuals and sponsors for volunteering, donating, and contributing to the “Military Appreciation Night”.

- American Legion Department of Alabama
- American Legion, Matthew Blount Post 555
- American Legion, Matthew Blount Post 555
- Legion Riders
- American Legion, Matthew Blount Unit 555
- Auxiliary
- American Village – Veterans Register of Honor
- Chubbfather Restaurant
- Cracker Barrel Old Country Store in Pelham
- David Lindsay Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution
- Erik Hudson, Pelham Director of Hockey
- Exchange Club of Shelby County
- Golden Rule BBQ
- McAlister's Deli
- Minuteman Press of Central Alabama
- Pelham Civic Complex and Ice Arena
- Pelham Fire Department
- Reagan Henderson, skater
- Robert Robinson, Jr.
- Sons of American Legion Matthew Blount Squadron 555

- Texas Roadhouse - Pelham
- University of Alabama Hockey Program
- Woodlot Artisans LLC
- Youth programs
- American Heritage Girls FBC Pelham
- American Legion, Matthew Blount Post 555 Junior Shooting Sports Program
- American Legion, Matthew Blount Unit 555
- Auxiliary Juniors, Emalee Monday
- Bessemer Composite Squadron Civil Air Patrol
- Boy Scouts Pack 404
- Calera High School Navy JROTC
- Cub Scouts Pack 404
- Girl Scouts Troop 30921
- Hope Christian School Key Club
- Pelham State School
- Pelham High School American Legion
- Oratorical contest 2 place winner, Allison Fuller
- Pelham High School Choral
- Thompson High School AF JROTC
- Thompson High School Girls Varsity Soccer
- Ward Chapel AME Church, YPD



Left: Students delivering gifts to veterans Rt: Fallon Acker, UA Hockey Communications, Kenneth Paschal, Post 555



## Judge Advocate

### ANNUAL ELECTION OF POST OFFICERS



As outlined in our Post Constitution and Bylaws, we will name a three-person non-Officer, Nominating Committee for the 2018 cycle at the February Post meeting.

If you are interested in serving on this Committee, please contact me at (678-6479 or [cfkiser@aol.com](mailto:cfkiser@aol.com)) either prior to the Post meeting or at the meeting.

I will meet with the Committee following the February Post meeting to provide information and guidance. The Committee will discuss and develop their slate of candidates during the month of February. They will report their recommended slate of nominees to the Judge Advocate prior to the February Executive Committee meeting.

These candidates will be announced at the March Post meeting. The Committee's nominations, along with any nominations from the floor, made in accordance with the Post documents, will be voted on at the April Post meeting and the new Officers will be installed at the May Post meeting.

We will elect persons for the following positions in 2018:

Commander

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander

Trustee – Three Year Term

*Chuck Kiser*  
*Judge Advocate*

## Veterans Recognition Committee

**February 2018**

**Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery (SCALNC) and Blue Star Salute Foundation**



Visit the websites of The Blue Star Salute Foundation <http://www.bluestarsalute.org> and the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery <http://www.scalnc.org> for information and activities. Please look them over and try to participate in at least two activities during the remainder of 2018



SCALNC & Blue Star Salute Meetings –Held monthly at the American Village in Montevallo.

Thanks to all who donated to the 2017 Wreaths Across America drive to purchase wreaths for this important. In December 2018 we will have an even steeper hill to climb as it is expected that we will need to raise sufficient donations to purchase nearly 6,000 versus the 4,950 we needed in 2017. This year we will again receive and consolidate donations during the year and remit a total check from the Post to the Blue Star Salute Foundation. Details will be released in the coming months.

Your assistance and participation in Veteran's Recognition events during 2018 would be appreciated.

*Chuck Kiser, Chair*  
*Veterans Recognition Committee*

*Join the American Legion Family*  
*Helping Veterans and Troops*  
*Serving the Community and Youth*

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

*visit our website*

*[alpost555.com](http://alpost555.com)*

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

*Contact*

*Ron Koonce, Adjutant*

*[Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com](mailto:Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com)*

## 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.*

*February 2018*

# Post 555 Store

## Drop by at Monthly Meeting

American Legion  
Souvenir Patriotic Cup



Help Support  
Matthew Blount Post 555  
Veterans and Youth  
Programs  
Limited Number Available

**\$10**



## CAR WASH Fundraiser

**\$5 /COUPONS**

Proceeds goes towards Youth Program Scholarships.

Boys State and Oratorical

## American Legion Centennial Pins

Limited pins are now available in the Post  
Store for \$5.00 each at the January 4th  
meeting.

Proceeds will go toward the Alabama War  
Memorial Renovation Project.



## Triple Nickel T-Shirts

Matthew Blount Post 555 are selling custom designed Patriotic T-Shirts to provide a way to take pride in our American Legion Post Family and raise funds in support of Wreaths Across America and other Post projects, Military Deployment Support Program, VA Medical Center Christmas Gift Program, Oratorical and Boys State scholarships.

**ORDER YOURS TODAY. COST IS ONLY \$20, PRE-PAY OR PAYABLE AT THE TIME THE SHIRT IS DELIVERED.** Get one while you can and help support our Active Duty Personnel, Veterans and Youth Programs.

**100% Cotton Color: White Graphic on Navy Blue**

TRIPLE NICKEL T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ SIZE: [ ] Small Qty \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] Med Qty \_\_\_\_\_

[ ] Lrg Qty \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] XLrg QTY \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20 each

[ ] XXLrg Qty \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] XXXLrg Qty \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$22 each

Standard Sizes Qty \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20 Total \_\_\_\_\_

Extra Large Sizes Qty \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$22 Total \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Due \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Paid \_\_\_\_\_



Back



Front Pocket

American Legion Uniform Cap Order Form - American Legion Flag & Emblem

5/6/15, 9:28 PM



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Patriotic American Legion Auxiliary Sons (SAL)

Resources

Click here for cap etiquette guidelines

### American Legion Uniform Cap Order Form

Please allow up to 8 weeks for delivery!

- For help ordering uniform caps, click [here](#).
- For info about cap prices, click [here](#).
- For a list of Departments that require mandatory insignias, click [here](#).
- When you purchase a cap from a Department that requires an insignia, that Insignia is automatically added to your cap and included in the price of your cap.

#### STEP ONE

Please select your Department:

Alabama

A cap for a starred Department requires a mandatory insignia.

#### STEP TWO

Please select your style: ☐ State

☐ City

☐ County

☐ District

