



THE TRIPLE NICKEL



Published exclusively for the members of

AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555

PELHAM, ALABAMA



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IN GOD WE TRUST

APRIL 2019

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Triple Nickel shooters display skills

Chris Vonderau
Triple Nickel Shooters

Sam Richardson, the coach of our very own Triple Nickel shooters, presented at our last Post 555 meeting. He had several shooters with him and demonstrated a variety of shooting disciplines available through the

Shelby County Shooting Sports Association. The shooters displayed the hardware needed to shoot, from beginner all the way through the highest level of shooting, including the guns and equipment needed.

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BE SURE TO ATTEND OUR APRIL POST MEETING!

COMPLEMENTARY MEAL
PROVIDED BY
CHUBBFATHER'S



DINNER BEGINS AT 6:15 P.M.

MEETING AT 7 P.M.

PELHAM SENIOR CENTER

50 RACQUET CLUB PARKWAY, PELHAM

COME JOIN YOUR FELLOW LEGIONNAIRES!

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



Tom McDaniel
Post Commander

It's that time of year again. New officers for the coming year have been nominated and the election of officers will take place at our next post meeting on April 4, 2019. This is the first year we have two individuals running for Post 555 Commander. It is encouraging to me, as it shows that we are growing in the right direction, we have two qualified individuals running for this office. Let me encourage you to be sure to be present at our next meeting to cast your vote for the individual you would like to direct our post for the next year. As they are showing their desire to make our post better, please show your desire to support the post and the person you would like to be our next commander by casting your very important vote. Remember social time and dinner starts at 6:15 p.m. and our meeting will start at 7 p.m. sharp. See you all there.



Reistad recognizes post excellence

To qualify for American Legion National Commander Brett Reistad's Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: membership, submission of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR), sharing of post history, and community activity. The award is a banner, as seen in the above photo.

The purposes of this award are membership growth, exposure of American Legion values to the youth of the community, and increased visibility of the American Legion Family through service projects. A post achieving this qualification will have had numerous post members involved in planning and achieving these goals. Many posts are most likely already active in these areas and will qualify without extra effort. Others, however, will need to increase

their efforts in one or more areas to qualify for the award.

The following are the standards that must be achieved in each area to receive the Post Excellence Award:

Membership. Post membership must be at least one member greater than the previous year. At least one post officer attends district meetings.

Consolidated Post Report. CPRs must be submitted by July 1. The American Legion's federal charter requires the submission of an annual report to Congress on activities for the year.

Sharing of post history. The American Legion's Centennial web page (www.centennial.legion.org) allows posts to convey their legacy by sharing historical photos, videos and print material.

Community activity. The post must conduct an event that connects the local community with The American Legion post.

1ST VICE'S COMMENTS



Richard Kaster

1st Vice Commander

As we enter into April and into our on-going activities. One of my additional duties is Oratorical Chairman for our Post. The actual Oratorical Scholarship Contests start in January and end in March every year for the State competition.

As you know, we already conducted successfully three Oratorical contests. (1) the Pelham City High School on Jan. 16 and (2) the 23rd District level on Feb. 9 and hosted the third level of competition, (3) 2nd Division Oratorical Contest on Feb. 23rd, with the winner Tramaine eligible to participate in the Department Oratorical contest.

Post 555 members conducted the contests. This Event Purpose is for Pelham City High School students discuss how the amendments and US Constitution apply today in competition. The American Legion Post 555, sponsor of the 2019 High School Oratorical Scholarship Program; A Constitutional Speech Competition at Pelham City High School was held on Jan. 16. The Post 555 has approved for the 1st place winner Isabella Bass and 2nd Place winner Tramaine Moore, 3rd Place winner Chidin Eke.

The Post 555 Commander will present scholarship compensation to the Tramaine Moore and Chidin Eke, to be scheduled at a later date at the Pelham City High School Awards night.

Post 555 members conducted the 23rd District and the 2nd Division contests. The 1st place winner of both contests was Tramaine Moore. The 23rd District Oratorical Contest level was on Feb. 9th at the Pelham City Senior Center. The winner of this contest was Tramaine Moore and she competed in the 2nd Division level on Feb. 23rd that was held at the First Baptist Church Pelham, and won 1st Place again.

Tramaine Moore went on to participate in the American Legion Department competition against the other two American Legion Oratorical Division winners in Montgomery on March 9. Unfortunately, Tramaine took 3rd Place and earned \$2,000. Scholarship funds toward the college of her choice.

The following American Legion Post 555 members provided valuable assistance and deserve special thanks during these three contests: Post Commander **Tom McDaniel**, 1st Vice Commander **Richard Kaster**, Escorts **Larry Strayer**, **Kenneth Paschal**, **Bill Blank**, **Jerry McClain**, **Leroy Raymond**, Timekeeper **Frank Lakotich** and **Joe Starnes** and Moderator **Frank Lakotich**.

The 1st place winner received \$5,000. 2nd place winner received \$3,000. 3rd place winner received \$2,000. The Scholarship funds can be used anywhere and offered separately, a 4-year scholarship to the University of Alabama as long as he/she can maintain 3.0 GPA and pass the entrance exam. Also, the 1st Place winner will be eligible to participate in the National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis, Ind. April 5-7th. The 1st Place winner receives \$18,000. 2nd Place-\$16,000. And 3rd Place-\$14,000. All contestants will be paid \$1500. each time they give their speech. All expenses paid for contestant and parents or chaperones. Travel, hotel rooms, meals.

Don't forget about supporting our Blue Rain car wash fundraisers for Oratorical Scholarship winners. \$5 coupon for a full car wash.

2ND VICE'S CORNER



Nancy Waller
2nd Vice Commander

I hope everyone who was present for the March 7 General Membership Meeting enjoyed the presentation by Mr. Sam Richardson and the Triple Nickel Shooters. I was thoroughly impressed by everyone and now understand even more about what they do, and appreciate their expertise. Great program!! I would like to thank Chaplain Vonderau for helping me with the contact information for Coach Richardson.

Since several Post members requested to hear about state legislative issues, Rep. Matt Fridy has agreed to address our Post at the April 4 General Membership Meeting. If you have some questions to ask, please do so if/when he gives us the opportunity, which he probably will, but be sure to show him the respect he deserves as a member of our state government.

By the time you see this newsletter, the March 30 Pelham Cemetery Clean-up already happened, so hopefully it went well and the Post members who said they were going to volunteer showed-up (and maybe some more)!! Thanks to everyone who participated and represented Post 555.

The members of the Events Committee are working hard on upcoming events, and need to ask for Post members to step forward as Chairperson or Co-Chairperson of events scheduled through May. The "Great American Cookout" is scheduled for Saturday, May 11, 2 p.m. until dark (set-up at 1 p.m.) at the Bessemer Airport and with Ron Koonce stepping down as the Chairperson, we are looking for someone to take the reins. A lot of the coordinating has been initiated by him, and Ron said he would remain as a "consultant" for this year's event, but will be stepping down after it is over. WE NEED YOU!!!

Shooters learn firearm safety, marksmanship skills

(continued from page 1)

The younger children begin their shooting career taking the NRA Basic Rifle Course. Sam offers this class 2 - 3 times a year. At the class, they will be taught firearm safety and marksmanship skills. This is a good class for anyone considering owning a gun to take. If the shooter is interested in furthering their participation, Sam helps them join the team. They begin

with a BB Gun with specialized sites. From there, they work themselves into a Sporter Air Rifle. Once they have mastered this discipline, the shooter can advance to the Precision Air Rifle Team, Precision Small Bore Team or the High Power Rifle Team or any number of disciplines within the shooting community.

The Shelby County Shooting Sports Association has

produced Junior Olympic qualifiers, Champions at the State, Regional and National levels and has sent shooters off to shoot at Division 1 colleges with scholarships. This sport is not a male or female dominated sport. It is an equal playing field across the board. If you are interested in more information, please contact Sam Richardson at (205) 565-6104.

ADJUTANT'S AREA



Ron Koonce

Post Adjutant

The Post renewal submittals are coming in very slowly. At this point our major concern is that we need twelve 2019 renewals and/or new members to qualify for the Post Excellence Award application. The Post has fulfilled all the other requirements.

If you have renewed your membership for 2019, you can still contribute by bringing in new members. Three new members will earn you a National Commander Recruiter Pin.

Members that attend meetings will be given card that contains American Legion and Post information that can be used to help recruit new members. Carry these cards with you and if you see a veteran, ask if they are a member of The American Legion. If not start a conversation by giving them one of these cards and invite them to the next Post meeting.

We have a number of members that are close to qualifying for their pin that need just two more recruited members: **John Atwell, Bobby Averett, Bobby Horsley, Richard Kaster, Justin Runyan, Chris Vonderau, and Nancy Waller** have each recruited one new member.

We can do this if we put our mind to it!

For God and Country,

Ron Koonce

Adjutant



THE TRIPLE NICKEL

*is published monthly for members of
Matthew Blount Post 555.*

*50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124
(205) 678-1375*



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**

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 2019

Thursday, May 2

7 p.m.: Swearing-in Ceremony for Officers

Where: Pelham Senior Center

Saturday, May 11

2 p.m. until dark: The Great American Cookout (fundraiser for Post 555)

Where: The Hangar @ the Bessemer Airport

Chairperson: TBD

Co-Chairperson: TBD

Date / Time TBD

What: Flag Placement Ceremony for Memorial Day

Where: Pelham Cemetery

Chairperson: TBD

Co-Chairperson: TBD

Monday, May 27

9 a.m.: Memorial Day Observance; Firing of a Civil War Cannon @ ALNC

Where: Alabama National Cemetery, 3133 Highway 119, Montevallo, AL

35115

Chairperson: Kenneth Paschal

Co-Chairperson: TBD

Date / Time TBD

What: American Legion Baseball Starts!!!

Chairperson: Jon Freeman

Guest Speakers / Programs at General Membership Meetings

April 4th: Alabama Representative Matt Fridy

May 2nd: Memorial Day Remembrance theme

June 6th: D-Day Program and Surprise Medal Presentation to Post 555 Member

JUDGE ADVOCATE'S CORNER



Chuck Kiser

Judge Advocate

One of the most important meetings in the life of Post 555 will occur on Thursday, April 4th. At this meeting we will elect officers for the coming year.

Candidates for election are:

Commander

Richard Kaster and Kenneth Paschal

1st Vice Commander

Jerry McClain

2nd Vice Commander

Nancy Waller

3-Year Trustee

Bobby Horsley

In accord with the Post Constitution and Bylaws, no nominations from the floor will be accepted at the April meeting.

The new Commander, once elected, will be seeking members who would like to serve on various Post committees or as committee chairpersons. If you are interested in being involved in the life and missions of the Post, please let one of the following individuals, the new commander, the Post Adjutant – Ron Koonce, or myself know and we will pass the word. All officer and committee positions, other than those noted, are appointed by the incoming Commander annually.

Standing Committees

Americanism

Finance

Children & Youth

Membership

Legal

Service

Communications

Veteran's Affairs

AdHoc Committees

Boys State

Events

Newsletter Editor

Photography

Documents

Girls State

Oratorical

Legion Baseball

Nominating

Veteran's Recognition

Fund Raising

Social Media (Facebook)

Social Media (Website)

Veteran's Employment

We need your involvement to continue the vibrant tradition of accomplishment that Post 555 has developed in its first years.

Get involved in the life of your Post!

Military Appreciation Night Gift Basket Winners

Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by American Village is the American Legion National Vice Commander Jack Milburn (Navy).



Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by Kai's Koffee House is Comrade Frank Lakotich (*Kai's Koffee House* offers Vets and Service members a 10% Discount)

Military Appreciation Night Gift Basket Winners



Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by KATs Delivery is Alton McMullen – Army.

Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by Mary Lou's Team at Remax Advantage is Sammy Shelnutt – Army.



CHAPLAIN'S THOUGHTS



Chris Vonderau

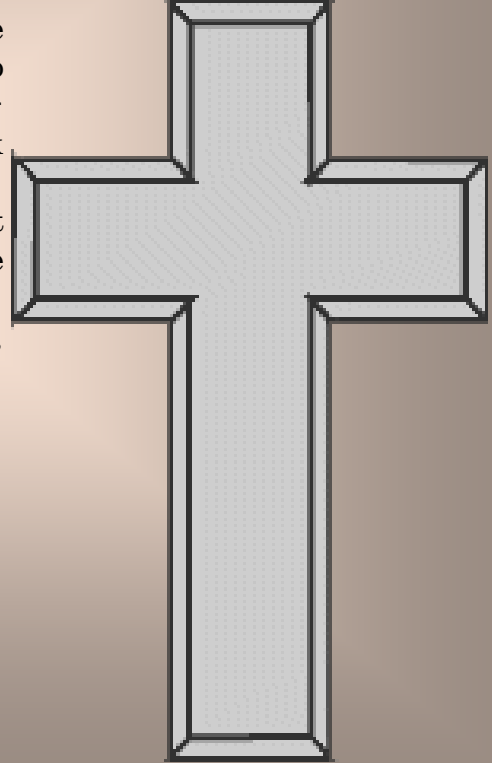
Post Chaplain

Joy is the settled assurance that God is in complete control over the details of your life. God has made some promises in His Word about His Children and one of them is that He is going to work it all out for those who love Him.

So, the question is - Do you love Him? You've got to know Him to love Him and that's one of my purposes. Call me if you want to talk about what He has done - 205 966-1364.

The second question is - Do you trust Him? If so, get out there do some Joicing and RE-Joicing. If not, see above and give me a call.

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



Your Chaplain,

Chris Vonderau

205 966-1364



Get yours today!

Get your official,
limited-edition

**POST 555
LICENSE
PLATE!**

Pre-orders taken at the Post Store
during the March meeting.

\$12

Military Appreciation Night Gift Basket Winners



Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by Mike's Merchandise in Pelham is Comrade Robert Horsley.

Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by Wish Upon a Star with Us is Douglas Stevens – Navy.



Military Appreciation Night Gift Basket Winners



Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by Wish Upon a Star with Us is Brian Hannum – US Coast Guard.



Military Appreciation Night Gift Basket Winners

Post Commander Tom McDaniel presents a "Soaring Eagle" chainsaw carving to Jerry McClain. The carving was provided by Woodlot Artisans Chainsaw Art Gallery.



Adjutant Ron Koonce displays a gift basket prize provided by Old Time Pottery, which offers veterans and service members a 10 percent discount.



Winner of Post 555 gift basket giveaway prize provided by Heart of Dixie Harley-Davidson in Pelham is Michael Goodwin – Navy. (Heart of Dixie Harley-Davidson in Pelham offers veterans and service members a 10 percent discount on accessories.)



Post Store Price List

(Proceeds Benefits Post 555 and Department Programs)



Post 555 T-Shirt
S-XL - \$20
XXI-XXXL - \$22



**Post 555
Coffee Mug \$ 10**



**Car Fund-raiser Benefiting Oratorical
Scholarships**
\$7 value for \$5



Defender's Bracelet \$5

**American Legion
Centennial Pin - \$5**





May 5, 2019
1:30 p.m.
Pelham City Park
555 Ball Park Road,
Pelham

Pitch Hit & Run™ is the official skills competition of Major League Baseball®. This grassroots program is designed to provide a FREE program for boys and girls, ages 7-14, that gives participants the chance to showcase their pitching, hitting and running abilities in an exciting baseball/softball skills competition.

PITCH – Participants are tested throwing 6 balls to a designated “Strike Zone” target. Any method of throwing is permitted.

HIT – Participants hit 3 balls off a tee for distance and accuracy.

RUN – Participants are timed, starting from second base, touching third then touching home plate.

- Participants compete in each of the three components and accumulate a total score using conversion tables.

Boys and girls are divided into four age divisions: 7/8, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, and have the chance to advance through four levels of competition, including Team Championships at Major League ballparks and the National Finals during the 2019 MLB™ All-Star Week®.

The individual Pitching, Hitting and Running Champions, along with the All-Around Champion in each division age group at the Local Competition will be awarded and advance to the Sectional Level of competition in Madison, AL.

All participants must bring a copy of a valid birth document for age verification and have their parent or guardian fill out a registration/waiver form prior to the start of the competition.

Please register for your local event at <https://www.mlb.com/pitch-hit-and-run/find-a-competition/get-started>

For questions concerning the local competition, you may email your American Legion Baseball coordinator at albaseball@charter.net.

Hosted by
Alabama American Legion
Baseball



Volunteer Opportunity

"Let Freedom Ring" at the National Cemetery in Montevallo.

The American Legion, Matthew Blount Post 555 will participate in the Memorial Day Observance by firing **THREE** Civil War Artillery, Howitzer (cannon) at the Alabama National Cemetery, Montevallo, Alabama 35115, May 27th at 9:00 am.

We need 10 volunteers but need at least two alternate crew members to ensure a smooth operation of each howitzer. This is a great presence in the community opportunity, but most importantly to honor our fallen heroes at the Alabama National Cemetery. Cannon Salute: American Legion Post 555 and Barry Winn, Jimmy White, Ken Sumner



*If you have questions about volunteers, please email or call Kenneth Paschal, Memorial Day Cannon Salute Chairperson at 1SGPaschal@gmail.com or (205) 626-9458.

***No Experience Necessary.** *Each crew member performs a specific task that requires approximately 30 seconds to 60 seconds to master.*

Rehearsal 1: May 11, 2019 @ 12-noon (Helena Park prior to the annual duck race)

Rehearsal 2: May TBD, 2019 @ 6:30 pm (Pelham Senior Center)

Final rehearsal: May 27, 2018 @ 7am (ALNC)

*Last four years were a great success.

*Uniform: **Post blue polo shirt**, **Post baseball cap**, and **Khakis pants**.