



THE TRIPLE NICKEL



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

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Meet Your Comrade

Marion Kane: WAC veteran

By Nancy Waller
2nd 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
(continued on page 3)

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS



Tom McDaniel

Post Commander

Thanksgiving has come and gone. The post had a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner on Nov. 1 at the Pelham Civic Center. I want to thank all who came and contributed to a great time with friends and family. Special thanks to Nathan Waller who gave us his presentation of a time in the life of a World War I soldier. Nancy Waller commented on this, that Nathan's uniform that he wore was all original and every piece was purchased by Nathan himself. Wonderful job Nathan, thank you very much.

I would be remiss if I didn't reflect back and remember some of the things the post should be thankful for. One thing, we are growing as a post and we are getting new

people involved in our programs. An example of this is our Events Committee headed by our Second Vice Commander Nancy Waller and Bill Blank. Committee members Bobby Horsley, Kenneth Paschal, Jeff Monday, Richard Kaster and Frank Lakotich continue to keep our programs on schedule.

The Oratorical Program from our post saw our representative from Pelham High School finish third in the state competition and walk away with scholarship money toward her education. We also sponsored representatives to Boys and Girls State which was held in Tuscaloosa.

American Legion Baseball was again a big success. Thanks to all who helped in this program.

Our Flag Retirement program continues to grow and gain recognition in our community. Thanks again to those members who dedicate their time to this program.

I am proud to say, in recognizing our Fire Fighters, Police and Sheriff's departments, the representative from our Shelby County Sheriff's department took state honors at our Fall Convention. We are truly blessed to have the City of Pelham and Shelby County represented by such outstanding individuals who dedicate their lives to protect our community.

We have participated in programs at the Alabama National Cemetery and throughout the community and should be very proud of what our post has accomplished. I have probably left something out and I apologize if I did. It's a good thing to be involved in so much you can't remember it all.

Remember our next meeting is Dec. 6 at the Pelham Senior Center. Be early at 6:15 for food and social time with our meeting starting at 7 p.m. sharp. See you all there.



1ST VICE'S COMMENTS



Richard Kaster

1st Vice Commander

Well, we are now into the holiday season. For our Post members, it started with Post 555's successful Thanksgiving dinner and membership meeting on Nov. 1 at the Pelham Civic Center. We hope you all had a Happy Thanksgiving Day and are preparing for the month of December, Christmas Day and the New Year 2019. Not to mention all the college football bowl games and Championship playoffs, to see how your favorite team does. We have a lot to be thankful for being Americans and patriots. Even though sometimes we don't realize

what we really have and take it all for granted.

All right, what's up for our Post in the New Year is a lot of events we can get involved in and participate. What I want to focus on are the American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship (Constitution speech) Contests. There are three contests scheduled that our Post will be hosting and conducting this year. The first one is at Pelham City High School scheduled for Jan. 16. It will be held in the Pelham High School auditorium. The school staff will host and Post 555 members will conduct it. The time of the event will be determined when we know how many contestants will be participating. We will need volunteers to assist, escorts, moderator, scorekeeper, timekeeper and an usher. The second contest will be the 23rd District level Oratorical Scholarship Contest on Feb. 9th at the Pelham City Senior Center. The third contest will be the 2nd Division Oratorical Scholarship Contest on Feb. 23 held at the First Baptist Church Pelham. We will also need volunteers for these two contests.

As you can see, we will be busy the first two months of the year with the Oratorical contests. In addition, we will have other events for instance, the Military Appreciation Night on Feb. 9th at the Pelham Civic Center with the hockey game. We look forward to your participation in all these events.

Also, we look forward to see you at our next Post 555 General Membership Meeting on Dec. 6th.

Marion Kane: Great assignments, great opportunities

(continued from page 1)
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.

2ND VICE'S CORNER



Nancy Waller
2nd Vice Commander

I hope that everyone enjoyed some time with family and friends for the Thanksgiving Holiday, and are finished with the turkey leftovers!! I made a wonderful turkey soup, and had one of many more turkey sandwiches for lunch today. I know you can buy turkey in the Publix, WalMart, Winn Dixie, etc. delis, but nothing beats a home-roasted turkey.

Jim Billings, Public Affairs Officer, has a list of events scheduled for December 2018 through February 2019, so I do not need to go through them in my "Corner", but be sure to check in his section of this newsletter. If anyone would like to volunteer for any of these events, you can let me know during any of our meetings or call my cell

@ 251-554-6986.

I would like to share some updated information I recently received regarding the awarding of the Korean War Ambassador of Peace Medal. I presented this information several months ago, but one of our members, Marion Kane, shared a copy of a flier she received regarding the awarding of this medal in Montgomery on Nov. 16. I was so surprised (because the initial information I received said the awarding of this medal would be after the beginning of the New Year), that I contacted the individual listed on the flier. She told me that the reason for having the award ceremony so soon was that some of the Korean War Veterans were literally at death's door, and they and their family members needed to have the medals awarded quickly, which they did.

The Ambassador of Peace Medal can still be requested by using the following criteria. You must provide a copy of your DD Form 214 which documents your service on the land in Korea, in the air over Korea, or on the sea around Korea during the period of June 25, 1950 through July 27, 1953, or if you were on a UN Peacekeeping Mission through the end of 1955. You need to mail the DD Form 214 along with your full name and current mailing address to the following address.

Consulate General of the Republic of Korea
ATTN: Patricia West
229 Peachtree Street
International Tower
Suite 2100
Atlanta, GA 30303

If anyone fits into this criteria and requests this medal, please let me know when you receive your medal because all of Post 555 would appreciate you coming to one of our meetings so that we could honor you by presenting you your medal in front of everyone. Send me an e-mail (wallernj@gmail.com) or call my cell (listed above).

For all Alabama college football fans, I hope you watched and enjoyed the Iron Bowl with the University of Alabama Crimson Tide overtaking Auburn University's War Eagles. ROLL TIDE ROLL! Let's hope they do as well at the SEC Championship and BEYOND!!! Happy Holidays to you and your families, and stay healthy and safe.

ADJUTANT'S AREA



Ron Koonce

Post Adjutant

We are still behind schedule in making our 100 percent renewals by Dec. 31. We have more than 40 members that have not renewed to date. These memberships will expire January 1, 2019. Failure to renewal will impact your continues number of years as a member and receiving your Legion Magazine. A big "Thank You" to the 144 members that have renewed for 2019.

As a reminder, you can renew your 2019 membership online at Legion.org or mail your \$45 renewal fee payable to "American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555" to:

American Legion
Matthew Blount Post 555
50 Racquet Club Parkway
Pelham, AL 35124

The Event Committee has been busy during the month of November with seven separate events:

- The Annual Thanksgiving Family Dinner and Celebration of the Legion's 100th anniversary on Nov. 1 was attended by more than 100 family and friends.
 - Members of the Post Family placed U.S. flags on grave sites at the Alabama National Cemetery on Nov. 7.
 - The Veterans Day event at the Pelham Texas Roadhouse on Nov. 11. We had the largest crowd attending this year than any in the past. Thanks to the Triple Nickel Riders and members of the Sons of American Legion for their participation in the ceremony.
 - Post 555 Trustee, Robert Horsley, spoke on the history of The American Legion at the Alabaster Methodist Church Women's luncheon on Nov. 11.
 - Members of the Post attended the "Saluting Those Who Served" luncheon hosted by Hope Christian School Key Club on Nov. 15.
 - Post 555 participated in the Birmingham Bull Hockey Military Appreciation Night at the Pelham Ice Arena with the Post's American Legion Welcome Center on Nov. 17.
- Many thanks to all than participated and supported these events.

Another reminder about the 2019 Department Mid-Winter Conference will be Thursday, Jan. 24 – Sunday, Jan. 27 at the Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa, 1 Grand Blvd, Point Clear, AL 36564. Deluxe Resort View Room \$129, King Bayside Executive Suite Room \$129, Spa Building Resort View Room \$149, Deluxe Bayside Room \$169, and Spa Building Bayside Room \$179. Please call 1-800-544-9933. The cutoff date is Dec. 28. A detailed agenda will be available in the near future.

Next Post meeting is Dec. 6. Fellowship 6:15 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.



*Post 555
Annual
Thanksgiving
Dinner*

~ ~

Nov. 1



JUDGE ADVOCATE'S CORNER



Chuck Kiser
Judge Advocate

Let me be among the first to wish each of you and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

The 2018 campaign to raise donations for Wreaths Across America was a big success thanks to all who contributed. In 2017, the consolidated Post contribution was \$1,335. In 2018, we raised a total of \$1,660 or an increase over the prior year of over 24 percent.

Wreaths Across America – The WAA ceremony will take place at the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo on Saturday, Dec. 15th at 11 a.m. Sometime that week the wreaths will be delivered to the cemetery and volunteers will be needed to unload the truck and reload them onto trailers in preparation for the ceremony. As in the past, we don't know exactly when the truck will arrive at the cemetery. We will receive notice approximately 24 hours in advance. We would appreciate any help you might be able to provide.

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing - Earlier this week I became aware of an outreach project dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active and retired military personnel. Much like Operation Therapic, which utilizes photography as a rehabilitation medium through Eric Fort, Project Healing Waters utilizes fly fishing as the medium. I have attached some information about this program as well as a contact person's information for anyone who might be interested.

Nominating Committee and Officer Candidates – The Officer nomination and candidate selection cycle is upon us beginning in January. I will be looking for three non-Officer Post members in good standing to serve on the Nominating Committee. This committee will be selected in January and will meet to make their nominations in February with nominations announced in March. We will be electing individuals for the positions of Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander and Trustee. If you have an interest in being considered for nomination for an Officer position in 2019 or are interested in serving on a committee in 2019, please contact me. Get involved in your Post!

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*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

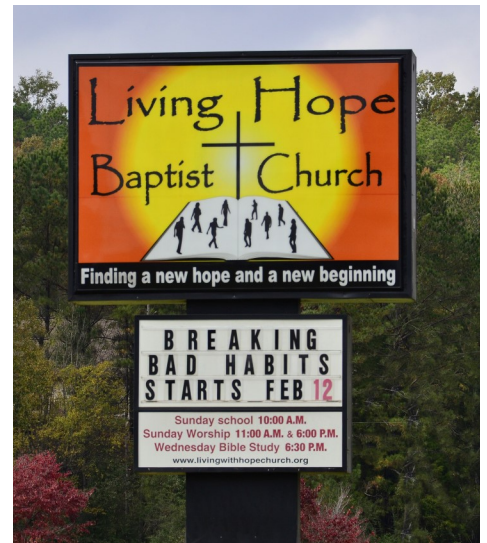


Veterans Day
Texas Roadhouse
Nov. 11

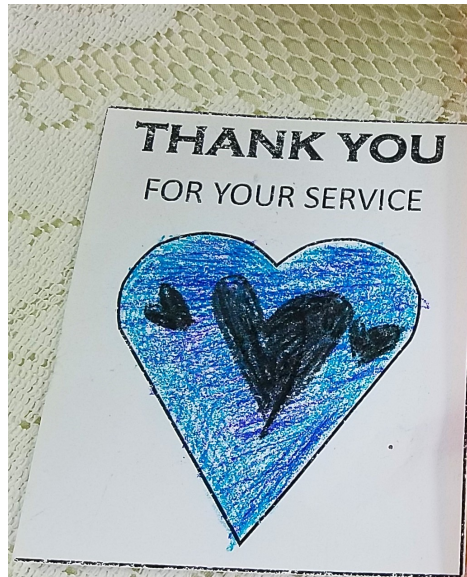


FLAG PLACEMENT
-
**ALABAMA
NATIONAL
CEMETERY**
-
Nov. 7





*Thanksgiving
Dinner
-
Hope Christian
School
-
Nov. 15*





ARMY | MARINES | NAVY | AIR FORCE | COAST GUARD

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ MILITARY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

APPRECIATION

NIGHT



SATURDAY @ 7:00 PM

Opening ceremony @ 6:45 PM



ALABAMA HOCKEY

FEBRUARY 9TH

Alabama Hockey

VS

Missouri State

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

HOSTED BY

The University of Alabama Hockey Program

and

American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555

Veterans and Active military personnel and all who have honorably served free admission. Must present valid Military ID or proof of service.

500 Amphitheater Rd, Pelham, AL 35124

NATIONAL CEMETERY HAPPENINGS

Bonnie Woodie

Alabama National Cemetery

For the first time ever, the gravesite flags were on display for Veterans Day. In the past, the gravesite flags were only used for Memorial Day. Thanks for all the help from AL Post 555.

A new in-ground section (Section 6) for cremations is now in use and has 35 burials. As a reminder, the Floral Policy follows:

The cemetery welcomes and encourages fresh-cut flowers throughout the year. Floral containers are located throughout the cemetery for public use and free of charge. Items left at grave side must be floral in nature and may not stand taller than the headstone.

Floral items and other decorations may not be secured to the headstone. Flowers will be removed when spent, for mowing and maintenance, or if damaged by weather or wildlife.

No permanent floral vases are permitted. Due to the open nature of the grounds, we cannot guarantee against theft, vandalism or the effects of nature. Artificial flowers will be permitted during the period from Oct. 1 through April 1.

Plantings will not be permitted on graves at any time. Potted plants will be permitted on graves during the period 10 days before and 10 days after Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Christmas.

Christmas wreaths or grave blankets are permitted on graves from Dec. 15 through Jan. 10 and will be removed not later than Jan. 20 of each year. Grave floral blankets may not be larger than 2 by 3 feet.



Upcoming events include:

Dec. 15 – 11 a.m. — Wreaths Across America Ceremony begins at 11 a.m. and is open to public. We expect a crowd of approximately 2,000 this year. Recommend arriving at cemetery by 10:30am. Following the short ceremony, family members of those buried at ALNC will place wreaths on their loved one's gravesite. After this time, volunteers will place wreaths on the remaining gravesites. This is a very patriotic event and a time to honor our veterans.

Dec. 17 – 9 a.m. — Volunteers needed to take down Avenue of Flags.

Jan. 12 – 10 a.m. — Volunteers needed to take up wreaths

Thank You!

Bonnie Woodie

CHAPLAIN'S THOUGHTS



Chris Vonderau

Post Chaplain

I am always reading a book by Max Lucado. He writes the way I think and that makes things much easier to understand. As we enter into the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons, I want to point a few things out that he pointed out to me.

1 - When God came to us, He called himself "Immanuel", which means "God with us." Not just "God made us." Not just "God thinks of us." Not just "God above us." But God with us. God where we are: at the office; in the kitchen; driving down the road. God..... with..... us!

2 - In the hurry and scurry of the season, don't miss the promise. If God is with us, that means a few things. God gets us. God understands us. God is walking with us through our darkest valleys and our happiest times.

3 - But most importantly, God came to save us. I have a friend who says he doesn't need saving. He says he's doing just fine. And maybe, if this life was all there was, he may be right. But... there is more and the best is yet to come.

4 - Spend some time this season considering what He has done for you and me. The book I'm reading this season to remind me is "Because of Bethlehem" by Max Lucado. Be blessed and if you need me - 205 966-1364.

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

Your Chaplain,

Chris Vonderau

American Legion to appear in Tournament of Roses

On March 15, The American Legion will celebrate its 100th birthday. To highlight its centennial nationwide during the biggest New Year's Day celebration, The American Legion will have a presence in the 130th annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, Calif., Jan. 1.

An American Legion cen-

tennial float will travel the 5 1/2-mile parade route filled with hundreds of thousands of spectators and millions of viewers watching live on television. The float will showcase to parade viewers who The American Legion is with its representation. This includes several members of the Legion Family, such as National Commander Brett

Reistad, Sons of The American Legion National Commander Greg "Doc" Gibbs and Auxiliary National President Kathy Dugan. Also included will be American Legion Riders, youth program alumni such as 2018 American Legion Boys Nation President Joshua Cheadle and Auxiliary Girls Nation President Hoda Abdalla.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 2018

Thursday, Dec. 6

6:15 p.m.: Meal and fellowship
7 p.m.: General Post Membership Meeting
Where: Pelham Senior Center

Saturday, Dec. 8

9 a.m.: Birmingham VA Medical Center Christmas Gift Project
Where: Pelham Senior Center
Filling gift bags with donated items
(Event Chairman Frank Lakotich)

Tuesday, Dec. 11

5 p.m.: Caravan to Birmingham VA Medical Center
Where: Pelham Senior Center
Deliver gift bags to veterans as a token of our appreciation
(Event Chairman Frank Lakotich)

Saturday, Dec. 15

11 a.m.: Wreaths Across America Ceremony
Where: Alabama National Cemetery, Montevallo

JANUARY 2019

Wednesday, Jan. 16

TBD: American Legion High School Oratorical Contest
Where: Pelham High School Auditorium
Post 555 members needed to support, coordinate, and moderate the event:
Escorts (number depends on the number of contestants)
Two Timekeepers
One Usher
One Moderator
(Event Chairman Richard Kaster)

FEBRUARY 2019

Saturday, Feb. 9

10 a.m.: 23rd District American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Contest
Where: Pelham Senior Center
Post 555 will host and moderate this event; Volunteers needed as follows:
Three Escorts
One Timekeeper
One Usher
One Moderator
One Photographer
(Event Chairman Richard Kaster)