



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

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THE TRIPLE NICKEL

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Matthew Blount Post 555

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ALABAMA ANNUAL CONVENTION



June 16-19, 2022 were the dates for the Department of Alabama Annual Convention held at the Marriott Birmingham on 280 across from Grandview Hospital. We had eight delegates attend (which was our maximum number) from Post 555. It was a GREAT event for Post 555 for the reasons described on page 5 (Second Vice-Commander Continues page)



IN GOD WE TRUST





TOM LONG
Judge Advocate



OFFICER'S GUIDE AND MANUAL FOR CEREMONIES

Greetings. It has come to my attention that there is some confusion over what the proper attire/uniform is for official American Legion Functions. In an effort to clear this up, I am providing the official position of The American Legion in this issue.

The American Legion Department of Alabama Constitution and Bylaws (C&B) and the American Legion National Constitution and Bylaws do not specifically cover requirements for uniforms, headgear, caps, etc. However, The American Legion Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies does cover the specifics in this area. Following is an excerpt from that guide. As you can see in number 1 below, the guide is very specific as to the use of the official cap of the American Legion.

Wearing the American Legion cap, uniform, and regalia

The American Legion cap, uniform or regalia should be worn by its members only when in attendance at official Legion meetings or ceremonies, as official guests at patriotic or other civil functions, or by individuals when officially representing The American Legion on public occasions. For all ceremonies, the uniforms adopted by a department are recommended. However, an official American Legion cap, dark blue or black civilian coat, dark trousers, white shirt with black four-in-hand tie or nice blouse, black shoes and socks make an attractive uniform. A Legionnaire is considered to be in uniform if wearing an official American Legion cap. Therefore, it is not proper to wear a Legion cap while eating a meal at an official American Legion or civic luncheon or dinner.

The cap should be worn in a place of worship only by the guard of honor, color guard and commander of the same while in marching order or standing guard. When seated, the cap should be removed.

Posts marching in formation into a place of worship should uncover at the door, hold the cap with the right hand over the heart until arriving in the pews and commanded to take seats, and remain uncovered during the entire service. At the close of the service, upon command, the post shall rise, hold the cap with right hand over the hearts, march out of the place of worship, and recover after marching through the door. Note: The cap should be held over the heart when approaching the casket and is not at any time worn in a place of worship except by the guard of honor, color guard or commander of same while in marching order or standing guard.

Legionnaires not in formation will uncover upon entering the place of worship, remain uncovered during the entire service and re-cover after leaving the place of worship.

At the graveside, the cap should be held in the right hand over the heart during the entire service. In cold and inclement weather, the cap should not be removed.

In meetings, the cap should be worn except during the Pledge of Allegiance, prayer and while standing in silent reverence in memory of departed comrades, when it should be held with the right hand over the heart.

A Legionnaire wearing a cap should behave in proper accordance as to salutes, etc., the same as if wearing a military uniform. If not wearing a cap, observe ordinary rules of etiquette for civilian dress.

Female Legionnaires should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for women in the armed forces. This is suitable for most situations, but taste and common sense should prevail. By American Legion tradition, a female Legionnaire may leave her cap on during the Pledge of Allegiance, the national anthem, prayer and meals.

Legionnaires wishing to attach decorations and/or other official insignia to their caps are advised of a National Executive Committee resolution on the subject.

Now this standard does **not require** members to wear the official hat at meetings. It states that if a member is going to wear a cap at official meetings, it should be the Garrison Cap of The American Legion. This simply implies that if a member attends an official meeting or ceremony wearing a baseball style cap, for example, when the meeting is called to order, the hat must be removed from one's head until they leave and/or the meeting is adjourned. So, in essence and as an example, if one comes to the meeting wearing a Crimson Tide, War Eagle, or Military emblazoned style hat, they must come off during the official meeting.

In addition, there is **no requirement** that members purchase an American Legion Garrison Cap. However, it is the standard and in the event anyone wishes to purchase one, I have provided the contact information for your use. https://emblem.legion.org/help_uniform_cap.asp

I hope this helps clear up the question about hats at American Legion Official Meetings and Ceremonies. If you have questions, please contact me and I will be happy to discuss.

One last informational item. When providing reports or being asked to provide information at official American Legion meetings, when you approach the front of the meeting room, **you should render a hand salute to the American Flag**, not the Commander or other officers who might be in charge.

Thank you all and God Bless America.

Tom Long

Judge Advocate

1ST VICE'S COMMENTS



Bill Blank
1st Vice Commander



Howdy to all of you men and women of Post 555. I hope that this letter finds all of you in good health and spirits. The members of Post 555 have a lot to be proud of and happy about:

Baseball is well under way and is running very smoothly, considering the heat and rain that met us in the beginning of the season. As always, we are looking for folks who are willing to help support our teams. I am looking for people who would help sell tickets for the games. This is a huge benefit for our team's home games. The funds raised from ticket sales primarily cover the cost of the umpires. I think this a huge effort for our team. Secondly, there is always a need for ambassadors of post 555 to mingle with the fans and let them know how much their presence is appreciated.

Next, the Mid-South tournament and effort is being put into those of you reading this letter, very important and appreciated people in ticket sales and audience of these very special use all the support they can play in the American Legion



ment is closing in on us and a lot of this by many people involved. To your help during the tournament is appreciated. During the tournament we will need ambassadors to meet and greet the fans at the games. Furthermore, our team could get a lot of support. The big prize is the chance to win the world series.

More details forthcoming.

The department convention has come and gone. I attended this convention for the first time.

I am still at a loss as to all that went on. There was information A-plenty, voting for new department officers and my favorite part: the awards ceremonies. Post 555 walked away with two awards, and Squadron 555 received the Elite Award for their 167% membership renewal. Post 555 won an award for the 100% by-May membership renewal. The third award was for our history book and that was a First Place Award. Congratulations and thank you go out to our historian Shauna Hadley and to all those who contributed to our history book. For me it was a great day when finally figured out where I needed to be.

That's it for now. Remember this: my phone number is, (214) 476-7074 and my e-mail address is bhbpac@yahoo.com.

Bill Blank, First Vice-Commander





*2nd Vice's
Interim Report
Nancy Waller*

MEMORIAL DAY UPDATE

In the June newsletter article, I mentioned some exciting things planned by the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery (SCALNC) for the May 30, 2022 Memorial Day Ceremony. Since the newsletter had to be submitted prior to the event, I thought I would give you a short update and share some photos. Go to alpost555.smugmug.com for all of the beautiful photos that **Chic Cecchini** took that day, and tell him THANKS when you see him.

It was a beautiful but VERY hot day, and everything went according to plan. The highlights were the **Patriot Guard Riders** and their famous "Flag Line", Roy Brook with his brand-new American flag, some inspirational words from Congressman Gary Palmer, and a Memorial Day speech from the National High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest winner, Ms. Emma Noble. In my capacity as the Secretary of the Support Committee for the ALNC, I had the distinct honor of introducing Emma. As expected, Emma did a superb job of sharing some facts she had researched about Memorial Day, and at the end of her speech, she received an overwhelming round of applause from the 2,000+ attendees.

At the very end of the ceremony up at the flagpole, there was a volley from four cannons way down the hill near the edge of the ALNC. **Bill Blank** offered to work this mission to get members of Post 555 to help with each cannon, and I would like to thank all of them who volunteered: **Frank Chacon, Carolina Culpepper, Justin Hadley, Brandon Lane, Skip Mize, Vashone Smith, Conrad Stempel, Timothy Vincelette, Donald Walker, and Eldon Woodie. JOB WELL DONE!!!**



FLAG RAISING AT THE PELHAM SENIOR CENTER

On Sunday, June 12, 2022, Boy Scout Troop 404 (who we support) set-up three tents with lots of chairs under each one near the new flagpole that Conner McDonald had erected for his Eagle Scout Project. Some of you may have donated funds to him when he came to the Post to promote his project. If so, thank you all; it finally was "official" on June 12, 2022.

There was a flag team that raised the flag with honor and reverence, then Conner thanked those who participated in his project, welcomed everyone, and that was it. Short and sweet, but a very nice ceremony from the Scouts. It was standing room only for guests and visitors. Lots of photos taken, some of which will be included with this article. Thank you to the following Post members (for attending: **Bill Blank, Chris Combs, David Coram, Ray Johnston, Ron Koonce, Ray Pata, Leroy Raymond, Vashone Smith, Conrad Stempel, Nancy Waller, and Mayor Gary Waters.** (continues on page 5)

Flag Raising at the Senior Center's new BSA Troop 404 Eagle Flagpole



Conner McDonald, Ron Koonce

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF ALABAMA ANNUAL CONVENTION

June 16-19, 2022 were the dates for the Department of Alabama Annual Convention held at the Marriott Birmingham on 280 across from Grandview Hospital. We had eight delegates attend (which was our maximum number) from Post 555. It was a GREAT event for Post 555 for the following reasons: **100% Membership Award, 2022 Department of Alabama**

Firefighter of the Year (we sponsored Firefighter Jim Terrell), 2022 Department of Alabama Law En-



forcement Officer of the Year (we sponsored Deputy Sheriff Tom Maddox), and a First Place for our History Book. I was so proud to be a member of Post 555.

Starting at 1:15 p.m. on Saturday were the elections for new officers. The new officers of the Department of Alabama are as follows: **Buddy Keen, Department Commander; Charles Marsh, Sr. Vice Commander; and Don Madden, Jr. Vice Commander.** At the Division level, **1st Division Commander is Tim Howard, 2nd Division Commander is Richard Kaster, and 3rd Division Commander is Willie**



Rogers, all voted by acclamation. Congratulations to all!! Other Post 555 members attending are shown on the photo.

FLAG RETIREMENT WITH BOY SCOUT TROOP 404

I went to my first flag retirement with Boy Scout Troop 404 on Monday, June 20, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. at the Pelham Cemetery. Scout Master, John Windham, was present along with eight Troop members and four staff. They used a "fire pit" that was erected by Eagle Scout Shawn Winn from Boy Scout Troop 2



that is used for burning flags that needed to be retired with respect due to being worn and torn. There was a short ceremony before we all lined-up to place flag pieces into the flames, and a short ceremony at the end to complete the event.



I appreciate **Chris Combs, a member of Post 555 and the Committee Chairman and Assistant Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop 404,** reaching out to me to forward an e-mail Post-wide telling us about this flag retirement. Hopefully some more Post 555 members will attend the next one. Thanks to **Bill Blank, Bill Carroll, Chris Combs, Ron Koonce, Jimmy Mann (a Post member and Assistant Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop 404), Ray Pata, and Nancy Waller** for showing their support of Boy Scout Troop 404.

*For God and Country,
Nancy J. Waller
Acting Second Vice Commander*

ADJUTANT'S AREA



Nancy Waller
Adjutant



I let everyone know in the June 2022 newsletter that we reached the 100% membership goal and received a beautiful certificate at the Department Convention. If you were part of this effort to achieve 100%, thank you very, very much. If not, I am still glad to have you consider renewing for 2022 which will last until December 31, 2022. If you are one of the members who has yet to renew, you definitely still can by mailing a \$45.00 check made payable to **Matthew Blount Post 555**; mail to 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124 or go to legion.org and "Renew" on-line with a credit/debit card. As soon as you do this, I will see it and send you a 2022 membership card and a nice letter thanking you for your support and commitment to The American Legion and Post 555. Let's keep the number of renewals and the percentage increasing as we get very close to the 2022-2023 year. If you want your "continuous years" to continue, you will need to pay for your 2021-2022 dues, so that when you pay for your 2022-2023 dues, your "continuous years" will be good-to-go.

Effective July 1, 2022, our new membership drive will begin. The 23rd District Commander, Paul Gonthier, has given all Posts in his district a challenge to reach 100% membership for the 2022-2023 year by December 31, 2022. That is a HUGE challenge, but I would love to see how many members we can get to pay for the next membership year. I already have the 2022-2023 membership cards and would LOVE to send it to YOU!!!!

If you are a current R.S.V.P. (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) member, don't forget to report your volunteer hours for the month of June when you come to the July 7, 2022 Post 555 meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, call me or send me an e-mail with your hours. I was given approval to report your hours with a notation that they were reported "telephonically". I don't want to miss any hours!! I submit the hours by the 10th of the month, so contact me before then. If you are not yet an R.S.V.P. member, the only criteria is that you are age 55+ years young, have a current driver's license that I can take a photo of on my phone to send to Pamela Raines, and complete an application. No copy of your driver's license needed anymore. Every month you will record your volunteer hours anywhere you serve, including Post 555 meetings and events. Just let me know if you would like an application.

2022 WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA CAMPAIGN

We honestly should have been talking about Wreaths Across America since January, but it never made it to our

meeting agendas; totally our faults. So, we are going to start accepting donations for wreaths at the July 7, 2022 General Membership Meeting. Wreaths are still \$15.00 each so donate as much as you are able to give. I will have donation forms at the meeting and will be electronically sending them with the monthly e-mail next weekend. Pam Nichols, the Chairman of the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery, reported that we need 10,000 wreaths this year so we will be accepting donations at every meeting and in the mail so that once again, Matthew Blount American Legion Post 555 will meet or EXCEED what we have done in past years. Let's do it AGAIN!!! Thank you all for your generosity with this project.

For God and Country,
Nancy J. Waller
Adjutant



 AMERICAN
LEGION

CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT



Joe Dunn
Post Chaplain



Our Father Who Art in Heaven...

Probably the most well-known prayer in the Bible is the “**Lord’s Prayer**,” The Lord never prayed it, but it was a guideline that He gave to His disciples on how to pray, and for **all** true followers after them. For instance, think about our history. The colonists who were oppressed by the King of England prayed, “**Lord, deliver us from evil**,” Even pastors, when they prayed, “**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven**,” kept their muskets next to their pulpits, and their powder dry!

The colonists knew that anything worth having was worth fighting for. They believed that God wanted them to be independent and free, and thousands fought for it. And in the end, freedom was born, but 29,400 never saw it, because they paid the ultimate price. Surely the Lord was honored as the sons and daughters of heaven prayed, “**It is THY kingdom, it was by THY power, and it is for THY glory forever. Amen.**”

I often pray “**THY will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**” Yet, when I see the thousands of crosses in Arlington, I want to scream, one of those crosses represents a soul God’s will, for He HATES evil, and evil side or the other, or both. I am thankful mains the freedom of choice to believe spoke, “I Am the resurrection and the though he should die, yet he will live.”

WHY? Because of God’s blood shed of my favorite verses in the Bible “There is forgiveness with Thee, that word in context means to have a Deep, cause of war, we enjoy our freedom. enjoy eternal life!

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!

Chaplain Joe



“I HATE war,” because every gone forever. War is not always exists in war, on one that born out of our wars re- or not, that truth that Jesus life. He who believes in me,

on the cross! That is why one is Psalm 130:4, which says, You may be feared.” The Reverential Respect. Be- Because of the cross, we can



Sons of The American Legion Squadron 555

The Squadron has been busy in the month June.

Three members, Bill Blank, Donald Walker, and Ron Koonce attended the annual Alabama Detachment Convention on June 18, 2022, held at the Birmingham Marriott Hotel. The Squadron received recognition for exceeding 2021-2022 membership goal at 164%. Go to www.alpost555.smugmug.com/ to view photos.



Members of the Squadron attended the Boys Scout Troop 404 Eagle Project dedication and Troop 404 Flag Retirement Ceremony during the month of June. Go to www.alpost555.smugmug.com/ to view photos.

We continue to recruit new members. Applications for membership to The Sons of American Legion can be found on the "Home" page of the Post website, www.Alpost555.com. Scroll down to the "join" section. Select "Join the Sons". Print the application and follow the instructions on the form.

The Squadron elections for the 2023 officers occurred in May, however, the squadron still needs to fill the Sgt.-at-Arms position. Anyone interested, contact Ron Koonce, Adjutant, at ron.koonce@alpost555.com.

The squadron participated in Memorial Day activities and Post 555 Legion Baseball support. Legion Baseball continues through July with the State tournament held again in at Pelham High School and other local fields. Those that are interested in participating in helping with this tournament, contact SAL Commander Bill Blank at bhbpac@yahoo.com.

Next Squadron meeting is July 12, 2022, at the Pelham /Senior Center, 7:00pm. Agenda will include American Legion Baseball, By-laws review, and other subjects.

*For God & Country
Ron Koonce, Adjutant*

MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555



MEETS FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH.
 The next Membership Meeting will be at the Pelham Senior Center on 7/7/2022
 Please come for dinner at 6PM followed by the meeting at 7PM

Post Leadership 2022/2023

- | | |
|--|---|
| Post Commander
Jeff Monday | Ron Koonce, Advisor |
| 1st Vice Commander
Bill Blank | American Legion Riders-Director
Doug McDaniel |
| 2nd Vice Commander
Eldon Woodie | Flag Team Coordinator
Vacant |
| Adjutant
Nancy Waller | Boy Scouts Coordinator
David Coram Jr. |
| Judge Advocate
Tom Long | Jr. Shooting Director
Darrell Lawley |
| Financial Officer
Andrew Blount | Baseball Director
Jon Freeman |
| Chaplain
Joe Dunn | School Awards Program
Frank Lakotich, Chr. |
| Sergeant-At- Arms
Derek Winters | Awards Program
Nancy Waller |
| Post Service Officer
Vacant | Webmaster
Ron Koonce |
| Historian
Shauna Hadley | Triple Nickel Editor
Frank Chacon |
| Public Relations Officer
Dorian Ross | Photography
Chic Cecchini |
| Post Trustees
Frank Lakotich (1 yr)
Chris Combs (2 yr)
Tom McDaniel(3yr) | 23rd District Commander
Paul Gonthier |
| Auxiliary President
Caroline Culpepper | 2nd Division Commander
Richard Kaster |
| Sons of The American Legion
Bill Blank, Comm. | |

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR MEMBERS WHO CELEBRATE IT IN JULY!!!



- Will Moore, 7/2
- Chris Jeffcoat, 7/3
- Jerry Harris, 7/4
(Happy 4th of July!!)
- Johnny Bass, 7/5
- Skip Mize, 7/5
- Patrick Murphy, 7/5
- Brian Newton, 7/5
- Eric Fort, 7/6
- Thomas Pillar, 7/6
- Edward Healy, 7/7
- Douglas Remmem, 7/9
- Christopher Young, 7/9
- Henry Carter, 7/10
- Adrian Riggins, 7/10

- Ronald Powell, 7/12
- Leon Franklin, 7/14
- Don Colvard, 7/15
- Anita Bennett, 7/18
- Kurt Honbarrier, 7/18
- Jack Merrymon, 7/19
- Barry Blount, 7/20
- John Bangert, 7/21
- Michael Sumrall, 7/21
- Richard Argo 7/24
- Leroy Raymond, 7/25
- Larry Strayer, 7/25
- James Henley, 7/30
- Justin Hadley, 7/31
- Billy Jones, 7/31

The Triple Nickel

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 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 Chic Cecchini, Post 555

If your birthday is in July and your name is not on this list, it is because it is not listed in MyLegion.org or you did not reply to an e-mail I sent out ages ago asking for updates, so please send it to me so I can wish you a Happy Birthday

EMILY BUCK INVITED TO THE 2022 AMERICAN LEGION 3-POSITION AIR RIFLE CHAMPIONSHIP (JULY 21-23, 2022)

Emily Buck, a member of American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555's Junior Precision Air Rifle Team is heading to the American Legion 3-Position Junior Air Rifle Championship.

The championship event will be held July 21 – 23, 2022, at the USA Shooting range facility located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Buck, a rising senior at Thompson High School, and representing the Triple Nickle this year, was invited to the National Championship based on her performances in the American Legion State Championship postal match and the second round of the postal match qualifications for the National Championship.

Emily has participated in competitive rifle shooting since she was 10 years old; she is currently 16 years old. Throughout her years of rifle competitions, Emily has earned decorations and honors in BB gun, sporter air rifle, and rimfire sporter. She represents Post 555 as a member of the Shelby County Shooting Sports Association's precision air rifle and 3-position smallbore teams. Through her many years of competing,

Emily has worked hard, attending practices, as many competitive events as possible, as well as practicing many extra hours at home. Emily earned the prestigious Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) Junior Distinguished Badge at age 14. She has earned invitations to, and attended, the USA Shooting National Junior Olympic Championship, and the CMP 3-Position Smallbore National Championship several times throughout her career.

This year Emily finished in the top fifteen individuals in the American Legion Air Rifle Postal match, earning her the invitation to Colorado Springs. Aside from competing, Emily has been a dedicated mentor, teaching other younger shooters in the club and helping with beginning shooter classes. Working hard as a student at Thompson High School, Emily has maintained a 4.7 GPA and has been inducted into several honor societies, such as the National Honor Society, Beta Club, Mu Alpha Theta, Rho Kappa, and the American Sign Language Society.

Emily's goal is to earn a shooting scholarship so she can study Neuroscience. First place winners at the American Legion 3-Position Junior Air Rifle Championship can win \$5000.00 in scholarship funding.

Darrell Lawley Jr.
Shooting Director, Matthew Blount Post 555



What a Go, Emily! (Editor)

14th Annual Wreaths Across America Campaign

Alabama National Cemetery

Montevallo, Alabama

Saturday, December 17, 2022



The cost to sponsor each wreath is \$15.00. This year we are hoping for at least 10,000 wreaths. All wreath sponsors and family members of those interred at the Alabama National Cemetery are invited and strongly encouraged to attend and participate in the wreath-laying ceremony.

To sponsor wreaths, please complete the information below and mail it Matthew Blount Post 555, 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124. Make your checks or money orders payable to "Matthew Blount Post 555" and put "Wreaths Across America (WAA)" on the memo line. The deadline for donations is **November 3, 2022**, so please act on this request as soon as you are financially able. Each sponsorship is tax deductible. For more information and/or questions, please contact Dorian Ross, Post 555 WAA Chairperson @ 205-624-4548. Thank you in advance for your show of support to our Fallen Heroes and their family members during the 2022 Christmas Season.

-----CUT HERE-----

14TH ANNUAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DONATION FORM

PRINT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL / ORGANIZATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ SPONSORSHIP AMOUNT: \$ _____

IN HONOR OF (LIVING): _____

IN MEMORY OF (DECEASED): _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____