



# DISTRICT 23 DISPATCH

Published specifically for the members of Department of Alabama District 23

Fall 2024

Volume III Issue IV

## District 23 Summer Photos

### In This Issue

Summer Photos	1
Commander's Desk	2
Meeting Directions	3
Department Activities	4-5
Post Activities	6-7
Alabama Department News	
Department Judge Advocate	8

### Member Posts

- Post 6 -Clanton
- Post 17 -Talladega
- Post 45 -Sylacauga
- Post 47 -W. Blockton
- Post 68 -Childersburg
- Post 105 -Goodwater
- Post 131-Columbiana
- Post 138 -Alabaster
- Post 195 -Sterrett
- Post 216- -Clanton
- Post 343 -Clanton
- Post 555 -Pelham





*Message From the Commander's Desk*  
*Charles Duncan*

Greetings fellow  
Legionnaires

I want to mention a few items in this newsletter that will be talked about more at our next District meeting. Details on meeting are below.

Sat. Nov. 2, 2024 at 9:00am

Post 45, 8 Hammett Ave & Ft. Williams St., Sylacauga, AL 35150

I want to mention membership. We are doing pretty good, our District is in 5<sup>th</sup> place out of 14 Districts but there is still work to do. The goal for this month is 65%. As of the 15<sup>th</sup>, we have 5 posts that have attained the goal or above, one post only needs 1 person to reach the goal and the rest need a little work. We have two posts that are below charter strength. These need to be pulled up by Mid-Winter Convention in January to avoid having their Charter pulled. We just had a revitalization and only had three posts show up. This would have been a great opportunity to gain some members. I know we had some sickness and some people helping relatives with storm damage but I think the post could have found some officer or member that could have come to the revitalization and helped their post. I have told you that me and my staff are here to help you in any way we can but when we offer help and people don't show up it makes me think you don't care.

I would like to urge as many of you as possible to attend the Winter Conference this year. We will have our Southeast District Vice Commander present. They have also improved on the agenda and are having some good classes at the Convention. I also want you to consider going to the Department Convention in Mobile next year. If you are not able to attend both, I would rather you attend the Convention. This is where you have a chance to vote for your leadership and

possibly other items that may need to come before the General Membership.

Mid-Winter Convention is Jan 23-26, 2025

Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach

\$119 per night 800-634-8001 for Reservations ID# 19354. Deadline is Dec. 23, 2024

I wouldn't wait till the last minute, it may fill-up.

One final request. Please remember our Be The One mission. Are you making calls to your members to check on their welfare? Especially your older members that may not be able to attend. Just ask how they are doing and if there is anything they need. Do not use this call to ask for renewals. This is a welfare check. Also check on veterans you may know that are not members. Let them know they are important also.

That is all for this time, more to come at District meeting. See you there. Let's support our host post.

*Charles Duncan*  
*Commander District 23*  
1-205-910-3258  
[cduncan67@yahoo.com](mailto:cduncan67@yahoo.com)





## Public Relations Update

### *DISTRICT 23 DISPATCH*

*Published specifically for the members of Department of Alabama District 23*

The District 23 Quarterly welcomes articles from Posts within the District to be published.

Recommended subject matter is past and future activities of your Post or any American Legion or Veteran-related subject matter.

The articles need to be proofed and “print ready” prior to sending to the editor for publication. If the article includes graphics or photos, it is helpful to include additional separate photos in Jpeg format along with your article.

The newsletter will be published on the first of the quarter prior to the meeting month. Deadline for articles will be two weeks prior to the publishing date. A reminder will be sent to each Post prior to deadline.

Items for publication are accepted on Executive Committee approval, available space and American Legion regulations. Please submit articles via email to Ron Koonce, Editor at:

[americanlegion.ala.23@gmail.com](mailto:americanlegion.ala.23@gmail.com)

*For God & Country*

*Ron Koonce*

*Public Relations Officer*

*Follow the District 23 news on Facebook*

[https://www.facebook.com/  
alabama23district](https://www.facebook.com/alabama23district)

## Next District Meeting

### Fall District 23 Meeting 2024

**When:** November 2, 2024  
9:00 am-12:00 pm

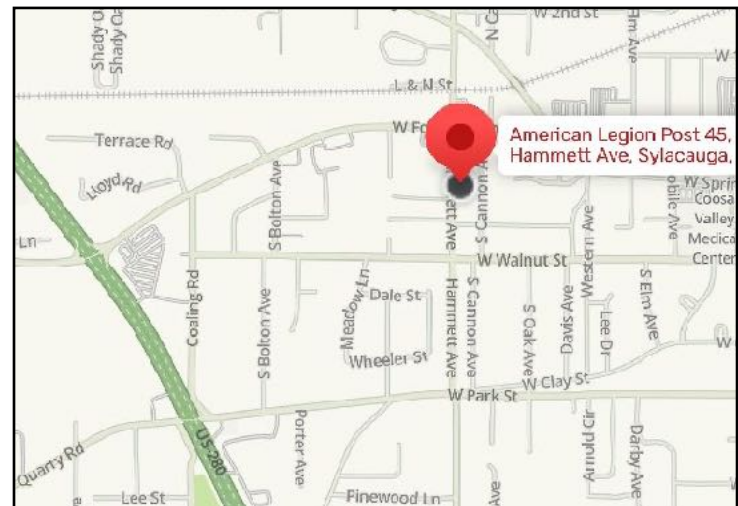
**Where:** Post 45  
Sylacauga, AL

#### Directions

##### Directions to Meeting Location

##### The American Legion Post 45

Exit highway 280 onto W Fort Williams Street toward town. Turn on to S Hammett Ave. between Arby's and Wells Fargo Bank. The Post can be seen from the road.



#### Next Meetings

**Feb. 2025** Based on Oratorical contests, meeting will be either the 8th or 15th. Location to be determined.

**May 17, 2025 Post 138** -127 1st Street SW, Alabaster, AL 35007.



# Alabama Department Mid-Winter Conference

## January 23-26, 2025

This year's Conference will be held at Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama. The dates are January 23 - 26, 2025. We are working on the agenda and will publish it soon. Are you interested in something specific? Send your ideas to [christy.jones@legional.org](mailto:christy.jones@legional.org).

Room rates are \$119.00 and if you are wanting a suite for hospitality those will be \$435.00. For reservations please call 800-634-8001 and use booking ID # 19354. The reservation cutoff date is December 23, 2024.



## 2025 Oratorical Contest

LEGION FAMILY, it's time to start preparing for your upcoming oratorical contest if you have not started yet. This year I am going to provide you with the documents that will HELP kick start your program. The attached Chairman's guide will give you guidance, examples, and the info you will need to run your program. I have also attached a few other useful documents. If there is anything in the guide that you cannot achieve due to physical restraints or personnel you may have to substitute or work around, but you need to make sure you do not compromise the integrity of the contest. If you have questions, please ask so that we can work together to suggest a work around that will not compromise your program's integrity. You have four months to start getting your program set up.

One suggestion that I would like to make is that you need to start now looking for your judges. Don't make this hard! Read the Chairman's guide and contact your choices as early as possible to give them time to fit us into their schedule.

Please remember we are here to assist you in running your program. I am always available as well as members of the committee to assist you. Please call or email as soon as you determine that you may be running into a problem so we can get ahead of them.

Don't forget, we still need the contact information of your oratorical poc. We will be adding the miscellaneous forms that will be needed to run your contest that are not in the guide to the webpage.

*Willie Rogers  
Sr. Vice Commander  
Oratorical Chairman  
Department of Alabama American Legion*



**2024-2025  
Oratorical  
Chairman  
Willie  
Rogers  
334-467-  
5039**



# Alabama National Cemetery



## Wreaths Across America

### Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery 15th Annual Wreaths Across America at the Alabama National Cemetery\* December 14, 2024, 11 am

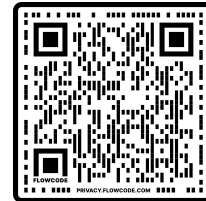


For the last 15 years, during the Christmas season, live Maine Balsam Wreaths have been placed on each Veteran's grave at the Alabama National Cemetery (ALNC) located at 3133 HWY 119, Montevallo, AL. This would not be possible without the generosity of donors. The cost of each wreath is \$17.00. In 2024, more than 11,000 will be needed.

To sponsor wreaths for ALNC, please complete this form and return it, along with payment, to Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery, PO Box 648, Montevallo, AL 35115. Make your checks or money orders payable to SCALNC, for: Wreaths Across America (WAA). If you prefer to donate online using a credit card, scan this QR code for the SC website WAA donor page.

Donor requests for names provided below to be included on the virtual "Honor/Memory" display board for 2024 at <https://scalnc.org/waa-at-alnc>, must be received no later than November 30, 2024 to appear prior to the ceremony date. Wreath donations are accepted throughout the year & are tax deductible. For donations of \$250 or more, In order to reduce postage costs an acknowledgment will be sent to the **email address** provided below.\*

**\*The Support Committee for the ALNC plans & coordinates the WAA Ceremony & wreath laying. Additional fundraising support is provided by MSOs, businesses, civic groups, individuals, and others. For more information on the ceremony, or to volunteer, please visit: [www.scalnc.org](http://www.scalnc.org). Please visit our website and/or Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/scalnc](http://www.facebook.com/scalnc)) for updates for 2023.**



### Wreaths Across America Sponsorship Form

Name of Individual/Organizational Donor: **Please print clearly**

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of (living): \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of (deceased): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please note that in order to reduce administrative costs, a hard copy letter will only be sent to donors without email access. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.*



*Matthew Blount Post 555*

*Pelham, Alabama*

*Annual Charity Ride*

Post 555 held its annual Matthew Blount Charity ride on September 21, 2024 in honor of Matthew's Birthday. The Riders raised over \$3,000 for 2024 Wreaths Across America.



*Annual Post Family Thanksgiving Dinner*

Post 555 will host its annual Legion Family Thanksgiving Dinner on November 8, 2024 at the First Baptist Church Pelham. Over 100 members and VIP's are confirmed to attend. The dinner is provided by the Post in show its appreciation for the support of its members, its local partners and the City of Pelham

Photos from 2023



## Post 45 - Sylacauga, AL

### *Sylacauga Veterans Day Parade*

Sylacauga 's annual Veterans Day Parade is scheduled to begin at 10:00am. Participating vehicles will stage on 6th street before 9:30am. Drivers are encouraged to be in their vehicles by 9:45am. Parade begins at 10:00am.



Don not miss this event and support our Veterans.

To register please call Lisa Garrett at 256 2451616. There is no fee.

### *Alabama Department News*

### *Children & Youth Fundraiser*

#### **2024-2025 Department Officers**

- **Commander** - Don Madden - commander@legional.org
- **Sr. Vice Commander** - Willie Rogers - srvice.commander@legional.org
- **Jr. Vice Commander** - James Bryant - jrvice.commander@legional.org
- **1st Division Commander** - Alan Chambers - 1stdiv.commander@legional.org
- **2nd Division Commander** - Paul Gonthier - 2nddiv.commander@legional.org
- **3rd Division Commander** - Leslie Looney - 3rddiv.commander@legional.org
- **NEC** - Rico Hall - nec@legional.org
- **Alt. NEC** - Ron Bradstreet - alt.nec@legional.org
- **Adjutant** - Ryan Marshall - adjutant@legional.org



#### **YETI BOOZE COOLER RAFFLE**

DRAWING: JANUARY 25<sup>TH</sup> 2025

TIME: 7:00 PM

\$5 DONATION PER TICKET

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT CHILDREN & YOUTH

\* DO NOT HAVE TO BE PRESENT TO WIN \*

Contact: Leslie Looney, Willie Rogers or Christy Jones to Purchase Tickets

Tickets will be available during the Mid-Winter Conference

*The District 23 Dispatch Is published quarterly for the members of American Legion Alabama District 23. Items for publication are accepted on the Executive Committee approval and available space.*

*Submit articles prior to the no later than 14 days for publication the prior to the monthly quarterly meeting. We reserve the right to edit any submissions for the purpose of publication.*

*Letters to the Editor must include name, address and telephone number. Names will be withheld upon re-quest.*

*Send email to: ron.koonce@gmail.com*

*Copyright 2024*

*American Legion Alabama District 23*



## *Comments from the Department Judge Advocate*

Good day to all my Veteran brothers and sisters.

We are a third of the way through the forth calendar quarter of the year with a busy several months ahead. At the first of the year or shortly thereafter, each post, district and the department will be concerning themselves with who will lead these pieces of our state legion. As you have already seen, there are resolutions in for Jr. Vice Commander of the Department as well as two Division officer candidates already declaring. There will be many more in the next couple of months leading up to our Mid-Winter Conference. These are extremely important positions. That said, probably more importantly, are those Legionnaires you will be selecting to lead your posts and districts. We are a bottom-up organization as I have said many times before. The strength of our organization and the thousands of Veterans in Alabama we support, begins at the Post level. They are the foundation for a great American Legion Department of Alabama.

That brings me to the primary subject of this short article. I know many of you will say “I have heard this before”. And hopefully you have. I know I’ve said it many times to whoever will listen to me. Officers, regardless of the position, should be selected for their ability to perform the work of the office to which they are elected. They should not run for office due to any real or perceived social prestige or what color hat they will wear. Having knowledge of the work of the legion and having enthusiasm for its purposes is extremely important. They should also have an innate sense of fairness, justice and courtesy as well as open-mindedness, moral courage and the ability to get along with people. Every level of the

legion should be working towards the goals, mission and objectives of the organization. Understand, “willingness to serve” is not enough. You should ask are the candidates fit to serve? What does that mean? That means they will be able to carry out the duties of the position and lead at that respective level. What are other considerations? They must be a member in good standing and have sufficient knowledge of The American Legion history, policies, and programs. Be assured, whatever position a legionnaire is running for, at some point, you will be asked to explain to a non-member “what is the Legion all about” and “why should I join”. Additionally, candidates should demonstrate regular attendance at their respective Post. Having a good working knowledge of the activities and the financials of the posts, etc., is also a must.

In short, we as legionnaires should put much thought into who will be our candidates for election and ultimately, our officers. We, as members, hold this responsibility in our hands. It is up to us to make it a reality and participate in the growth of our American Legion. Thank You and God Bless each of you and God Bless America.



*Tom Long  
Judge Advocate  
Department of Alabama  
American Legion*