



THE BUGLE

April 2019

Volume 15, Number 4



Monthly Newsletter of The Woodlands American Legion Post 305

Think not of the price of your dues. Think of the price you paid to be eligible to pay them.

Notice of April 18, 2019 Meeting

The April 18, 2019 meeting will be held at the ministry building at St Simon and Jude Church. Be sure and arrive early, say 6:30 to 7:00 if you would like to partake of the monthly munchies. The Auxiliary led by presiding officer **Kathy Carroll** does a great job in preparing dishes to snack on. Meet, greet and munch starts about 6:30. Meeting starts promptly at 7:30.

All nonmember war time veterans and or their mother, female spouse, daughters and granddaughters are invited to visit and consider becoming a member.

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Bruce Carter



I completed my ninth month as Commander in March 2019. We had our March 2019 meeting in the Ministry House at Sts. Simon and Jude Catholic Church. Below is the schedule for the Post meetings. **Please note the April 2019 meeting location will be in the Ministry House:**

Post Meetings -

Event Center (Domec Hall for Post meetings and room 10 for the Auxiliary)
(2019) 5/16, 6/20, 7/18
Ministry House (rooms A & B)
(2019) 4/18

There are directions to the church on our website, www.alpost305.org

POW/MIA: One of the topics I am interested in is news about our MIAs. Below is a link to a website that documents recovery of MIAs: <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/Recent-News-Stories/>
This is an impressive listing that showcases the diligence of our Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

Membership: We have over 200 paid up members, many of whom are Paid Up For Life (PUFL). Despite this we have a very low turnout at our monthly meetings. We need more active participation from Post members in order to continue the services we provide to our veterans and community. Please endeavor to come to our meetings and see how you can help.

Boys State: Victoria Glover, our Boys State committee chairman, reports that we have 43 candidates for this year's Boys State event in Austin. This exceeds the 28 boys we sent last year which was the second highest Post representation. Perhaps this year we will have the highest representation. That is all . . . For God and Country,
Bruce Carter, Commanding Officer

Story of the Month

From Commander Bruce Carter

Here is an interesting story from a combat nurse who offers a different perspective on scars, specifically emotional scars. Cherissa Jackson is the chief medical executive for AMVETS and a 23-year Air Force combat veteran. She is the author of "At Peace, Not in Pieces," a memoir about her battle with post-traumatic stress and prescription for healing:

I used to try hard to forget what it felt like to fear dying.

The sounds of helicopters hovering above and "incoming fire" alarms wailing as our unit took cover. While routine, these sounds were never easy to get accustomed to no matter how many times we'd reacted to them. That was life on combat deployment though. Nowhere to hide from danger. Like trying to run from an earthquake or take cover in the path of a category F5 tornado.

For those who'd never experienced combat, it's like trying to explain color to someone who has never had the gift of sight. I'd completed two tours of duty in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. My chosen profession was "combat nurse" in a place where lives were changed forever by bullets and bombs in a matter of milliseconds. My duties entailed working 5 to 6 twelve-hour shifts while treating some of the most horrifying injuries one could imagine.

Those images would play back in my head during sleepless nights as I tried to crowd them out by thinking about loved ones back home. After several months, I had become numb to my everyday routine, perhaps out of a subconscious attempt to salvage my sanity, until the day that routine was interrupted by a mass casualty alarm indicating incoming wounded from the battlefield.

I remember unzipping my first body bag. It's impossible to analogize what charred human flesh smells like to any other odor I'd ever smelled, which makes it unforgettable for me to this day. I'd watch as many nurses exited the bay because it was too much to handle. Several doctors wept as they pronounced each person dead, as if it wasn't already obvious.

For me, it was this confluence of events, sensations, thoughts, and experiences that had begun to alter my sense of humanity, and how this experience would disrupt my baseline for what I'd consider "normal" after experiencing this complete sensory overload. An overload that would aggravate the wounds from my earlier experiences.

I will never forget days like those because it established the moment, I'd never see life the same going forward. It was the moment I'd "felt" post-traumatic stress, a diagnosis that I didn't welcome but had to accept, and how it would color my identity as a military officer, a healer, a mother, a sister, and a daughter.

Most people wouldn't even know or think I'd served, much less served in combat. My scars were well hidden, and that suited me fine. I didn't have to tolerate questions about my service, where I'd served, whether I'd ever killed anyone or been shot at, and suffer the dubious looks from men who still can't fathom the notion that women serve in harm's way. Being a "veteran" meant I had to bear my scars, so I chose not to, which had the opposite effect of reopening my wounds even deeper, in retrospect.

I'd eventually come to accept that the vestiges of those experiences were more like tattoos than scars, but only after admitting I needed help and seeking treatment. I'd come to see my invisible injuries as evidence of my patriotism and willingness to sacrifice, not imperfections to be suppressed and hidden for fear of being judged. Tattoos, with their bold, beautiful colors and deliberate outlines, tell a story whereas scars serve no purpose other than to remind one of past trauma.

For me, and women like me, wearing the uniform and stepping up to do what 99 percent of today's population wouldn't should be heralded. The problem is it needs to start from the inside, with the self-belief that we belong and don't have to explain why. It starts with the belief that we are veterans and don't have to prove it. It starts with the belief that we bear tattoos, not scars, that tell our stories.

Our stories of valor, honor, and courage must be told and better understood. Our stories include coping with the cumulative effects of isolation in male-dominated units, post-traumatic stress, military sexual trauma, domestic violence, homelessness, and infertility in disproportionate numbers, all while facing the rigors of transition, mental recovery, restoring interpersonal relationships, and in many cases raising children alone.

Whenever I think about woman veteran experience, a quote comes to mind: "I am proud of the woman I am today, because I went through one hell of a time becoming her." Those words perfectly encapsulate my journey and that of many others whose struggles are the reason they should be admired, not marginalized, as veterans who embody perseverance. Once that becomes the norm, they would no longer be afraid to share their stories, ask for help, use resources, or be overtaken with sadness while walking a tight rope where suicide awaits at the bottom should they fall off.

If we can achieve that, our identities will be intact, our road to successful transition and recovery will be more certain, our stories will be told by the beautiful tattoos that replace our painful scars — and more of us will spend our lives living instead of trying not to die.

**That is all,
Bruce Carter, Commander**

THE AUXILIARY UNIT 305 PROGRAMS & NEWS



Presidents' Corner

Kathy Carroll

March 2019

I hope everyone is taking advantage of the beautiful Spring weather we are having. Sunday, March 24th, the weather was ideal for Red, White and Bike. There were over 400 riders and I think almost all of them came to our rest stop. This year the organization gave 7 bikes to children of injured service members and we were lucky enough to meet the families of 5 of the recipients. Dayna Salter has been chairing this project for us for many years but unfortunately this was her last time. Dora Blue has agreed to take over this very worthwhile project. This is a great organization and I am very proud that our Unit supports such a good cause.

District 7 Spring Convention will be held at Post 84 in Madisonville on Saturday, April 13, 2019. All Auxiliary members can attend. This will be an important meeting since we are electing new District officers. It is a one-day convention and it is located close enough that we don't need to stay at a hotel. Right now, Auxiliary members attending are Dora Blue, Kathy Carroll, Rosalie Fryer, Jenny Hamann (District Officer), and Geri Mulvihill (District Officer). If anyone else is interested please let me know, but you can just show up that day. It is a great chance to meet people from other units in our District and hear about the things they are doing. We will also be supporting the Traveling Trophy contest by buying socks to be donated to the Warm Feet for Warriors Project.

The Woodlands Garage Sale will be held at the Marriott garage at the Woodlands Mall on Saturday, April 13th. I know that this is the day before Easter, but the sale is only from 7am to 10am so it does not use up your whole day. Start checking your pantries, cabinets, closets and garages now for things that we can sell. Since there is no Birdies for Charity this year, we have a big hole in our budget that we hope can be filled from the profits at this sale. If you cannot bring things to the sale, you can take them to Rosalie Fryer's house by April 19th. Baked goods are also a big seller. Small loaves of bread are very popular and because it is the day before a holiday many people may be looking for a Sunday dessert.

The Unit will hold elections for new officers at the May meeting. The nominating committee is working now to fill all the offices. If you are willing to serve in any capacity or you would like to fill one specific position, please contact any one of the nominating committee members. They are Rosalie Fryer (936-520-8895), Geri Mulvihill (832-620-6265), and Dayne Salter (281-229-1365). None of these positions require a lot of work and the Unit can do so much more if the responsibilities are spread out among many members. Think about what you can do and if you are asked, please say yes.

FYI: Division 2 Convention will be held on May 17-19, 2019, at Post 618 in Willis, TX. Dept. of TX Convention will be held July 12-14, 2019, in Irving, TX. The Auxiliary will meet at the Sheraton Hotel on John Carpenter Freeway. If you think you might attend, I would suggest that you make a hotel reservation now so that you can get the Auxiliary rate of \$119/night. You can always cancel if you cannot go.

The Unit voted to cancel our meeting in April since it falls on Holy Thursday. Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be May 16, 2019. I hope to see all of you then.

2019 Post Membership Regular Meeting Dates and location:

March 21, Ministry House (Legionnaires in Room A ~ Auxiliary in room B)

April 18., Ministry House (Legionnaires in rooms A ~ Auxiliary cancelled their meeting this month)

May 16, Legionnaires – Event Center ~ Auxiliary – Room 10

June 20, Legionnaires – Event Center ~ Auxiliary – Room 10

July 18, Legionnaires – Event Center ~ Auxiliary – Room 10

August 15, Legionnaires – Event Center ~ Auxiliary – Room 10

September 19, Ministry House (Legionnaires in rooms A ~ Auxiliary in room B)

October 17, Ministry House (Legionnaires in rooms A ~ Auxiliary in room B)

November 21, Ministry House (Legionnaires in rooms A ~ Auxiliary in room B)

Directions to the church is on our website, www.alpost305.org



Don't Forget

Don't forget . . . to bring your aluminum cans to the meetings. It raises funds for the Post. Hats off to **Harlen Thornhill** for volunteering to take the cans to the recycle center and trade them in for cash.

Membership Dues



\$36.00 per year.

2019 Membership Dues are now due. The next to last notice for 2019 goes out in April. Pay now so as to not cause confusion when the 2020 membership campaign kicks off July 1st.

A 2019 membership / renewal application follows.



Important Information



About Us

The Bugle is the monthly newsletter of The Woodlands American Legion Post 305 and Auxiliary Unit 305. Members in good standing are entitled to a copy of The Bugle. Editor is past Commander **Emery Heuermann**, Assistant Editor is past Commander **James Bolin**. Articles from members are welcomed.

The Post 305 website is located at www.alpost305.org.

We have a Facebook page. It is administrated by past Commander **Kim Biggerstaff**, <mailto:kimbiggerstaff@icloud.com>.

“Official” Mailing Address & Telephone # of Post 305: American Legion Post 305, P. O. Box 9336, The Woodlands, Texas, 77387. Tel # (281) 298-2440.

Monthly Meetings, Location and Time

- The Post and Auxiliary meet at Sts. Simon and Jude Catholic Church in The Woodlands at 7:30 PM on the third Thursday of each month.
- The Church is located at 26777 Glen Loch Drive, The Woodlands TX 77380. A meeting location map is posted on the Website.
- Meetings start at 7:30pm. Meetings are preceded by a mix, mingle and munch pot-luck finger food supper at 6:30pm, provided by the Auxiliary.

CONTACTS

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Post 305 Chaplain **Bill Houghton**, 281-367-3159, <mailto:whoughcloc@aol.com>

VA Houston Regional Office: (713) 383-7842

VA Conroe Outpatient Clinic: (936) 522-4024

VA Tomball Outpatient Clinic: 1200 W Main St, Tomball, TX 77375, **Phone: (281-516-1505)**

Texas Veterans Commission Hot Line: 1-800-252-8387 (VETS)

Texas Veterans Commission, outpost at Conroe VA Out Patient Clinic, 3rd floor.

Ms. **Tracy Mathews**, Veterans Counselor, representing Texas Veterans Commission, stationed at Conroe Community Based Outpatient Clinic - 690 South Loop 336 West, 3A-153 - Conroe 77304-3319 - Tel #: 936-522-4024 or 936-522-4020 - M-F 8:00- 4:00

Montgomery County Veterans Service Officer: Conroe, Ms. **Kay Lee**, 936-539-7842

Harris County Veterans Service Officer: Houston: 281-876-6600

Military Veteran Peer Network: Conroe: 936-521-6132

STATE LEGISLATORS

(Note: if your district is not displayed, please drop a note to the [newsletter editor](#) .



Dist. 3: **Cecil Bell Jr.** – Magnolia (281) 259-3700

Dist. 15: **Mark Keough** – The Woodlands (281) 419-1090

Dist. 16: **Will Metcalf** – Conroe (936) 539-0068

Dist. 126: **Kevin Roberts** – Houston (281) 444-1814

Dist. 150: **Valoree Swans** – Spring (281) 257- 4222

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