



# THE BUGLE

JANUARY 2018

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 1



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 OF THE WOODLANDS

**POST COMMANDER  
VICTORIA GLOVER**



Happy New Year's everyone! Hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas Holiday. I know we did not have our December meeting due to the close proximity of the holiday. It has been busy for everyone with the travels to and from family.

January meeting is our annual Chili Cook-off! Invite veteran friends and family to our meeting and show them we know how to get our Chili on! We also are holding a Boys State Recognition Ceremony on Tuesday Jan. 30<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 9pm. Ceremony starts at 6:30pm. The event will be held at the Community Center. Let's look at representing the post well with backing the Boys State Program.

I want us to start increasing our numbers and inviting more Veterans to our meetings. I know I have been inviting the veterans every chance I get. Also, we need to bring in more fundraisers and activities that appeal to the families. Our numbers have dwindled greatly through-out the American Legion as a whole. Our Post is

## TO A HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL 2018

thinning out as well. Feel free to let us know.

Activities ideas for the Post are accepted. Any ideas are a great help. An idea can't work if it is not brought up.

Let us ever be reminded to never forget our fallen, the POW/MIA's, veterans, active duty personnel and their families. Keep them and our first responders in our prayers!

**Victoria Glover  
Commander**

### MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (December 18, 2017)

The usual third-Thursday monthly membership meeting was cancelled by the Executive Committee in view of its close proximity to Christmas, when many members are headed out-of-town to be with family and friends, or are preparing to receive such guests. The Auxiliary had already agreed it would not meet, for the same reasons.

### BOYS STATE GRADS RECOGNITION CEREMONY

**Tuesday, January 30, 2018  
6:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
AT**

**South County Community Center**

**COST TO ATTEND: Nothing  
COST TO STAY AWAY:**

$$\$ = \frac{1}{2}at^2 + v_0t + r_0$$



**VETERANS ADVOCATE**

### **THE DOWNSIDE OF SOLAR ENERGY**

Solar energy is touted as clean, however, The Associated Press has reported that many panel makers are grappling with a hazardous waste problem. Fueled partly by billions in government incentives, the industry is creating millions of solar panels each year and, in the process, millions of pounds of toxic sludge and contaminated water. To dispose of this material, the companies must transport it by truck or rail far from their own plants to waste facilities hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of miles away. The fossil fuels used to transport that waste, experts say, is not typically considered in calculating solar's carbon footprint, giving scientists and consumers who use the measurement to gauge a product's impact on global warming the impression that solar is cleaner than it is.

A study by Environmental Progress (EP) warns that toxic waste from used solar panels now poses a global environ-

mental threat. Last November, Japan's Environment Ministry issued a stark warning: the amount of solar panel waste Japan produces every year will rise from 10,000 to 800,000 tons by 2040, and the nation has no plan for safely disposing of it. Neither does California, a world leader in deploying solar panels. Only Europe requires a solar panel maker to collect and dispose of solar waste at the end of their lives. All of which raises the question: just how big of a problem is solar waste? EP investigated the problem to see how it compared to the much more high-profile issue of nuclear waste. They found:

~ Solar panels create 300 times more toxic waste per unit of energy than do nuclear plants.

~ While nuclear waste is contained in heavy drums and regularly monitored, solar waste outside of Europe today ends up in the larger global stream of electronic waste. This will also be a problem in the US, which has more than 1.4 million solar energy installations now in use, including many already near the end of their 25-year lifespan. Federal and state governments have been slow to enact disposal and recycling policies, undoubtedly fearful of raising any red flags about the environmental threat posed by a purported climate change panacea. EP estimates that Americans with solar roofs produce 30 to 60 percent more electronic waste than non-solar households.

~ In countries like China, India and Ghana, communities living near e-waste dumps often burn the waste in order to salvage the valuable copper wires for resale. Since this process requires burning off the plastic,

the resulting smoke contains toxic fumes that are carcinogenic and teratogenic (birth defect causing) when inhaled.

This is not to even mention the environmental damage done by making solar panels in the first place. A 2013 investigation found that from 2007 to 2011, the manufacture of solar panels in California produced 46.5 million pounds of sludge and contaminated water. Roughly 97 percent of it was taken to hazardous waste facilities throughout the state, but more than 1.4 million pounds were transported to nine other states. That's no way for a state to keep its carbon footprint small. Six years later, it's safe to assume the amount of toxic waste is even higher as solar panel production continues to ramp up. Julie Kelly sums this up well; "These are some of the dirty little secrets behind the push for renewable energy. While consumers might view solar panels as harmless little windows made of glass and plastic, the reality is that they are intricately constructed from a variety of materials, making it difficult to disassemble and recycle them. [Source: Canada Free Press | Jack Dini | December 17, 2017 ++]

**DoD POLICY ON CLUSTER BOMB USE**

The Pentagon has put off indefinitely a planned ban on using certain cluster bombs, which release explosive sub-munitions, or bomblets. The U.S. military considers them a legitimate and important weapon, although critics say they kill indiscriminately and pose hazards to civilians. A 2010 international treaty



**THE BUGLE**

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**Monthly Meetings:** The Post and Auxiliary meet at the South County Community Center in The Woodlands at 7:00 PM on the third Thursday of each month, except in October\*. The Center is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Lake Robbins Drive and Grogan's Mill Road, next to the library. Meetings are followed by a pot-luck supper provided by the Auxiliary.  
 \*In October, a combined, short meeting precedes the Annual Picnic at Henry's Home Horse and Human Sanctuary in Conroe.

outlaws the use of cluster bombs, but the U.S. is not a signatory. The George W. Bush administration declared in 2008 that after January 1, 2019, the United States would continue its use of cluster bombs only if they met a performance standard of failing to detonate one % or less of the time. That standard is important because armed and unexploded cluster munitions left on the battlefield pose a long-term hazard to civilians.

Tom Crosson, a Pentagon spokesman, said that despite efforts to develop more reliable, and thus safer cluster munitions, the U.S. military has been unable to produce bombs with failure rates of 1 percent or less. He said it's unclear how long it might take to achieve that standard, and thus the Pentagon concluded in a months-long policy review that it should set aside the 2019 deadline and allow commanders to authorize the use of the weapons when they deem it necessary. The new policy drew immediate criticism. Mary Wareham, arms division director for Human Rights Watch, said there is no compelling reason for the use of cluster munitions. "The U.S. says it can't produce 'safe' cluster munitions, so it has decided to keep using 'unsafe ones,'" she said. "We condemn this decision to reverse the long-held U.S. commitment not to use cluster munitions that fail more than one percent of the time, resulting in deadly unexploded sub-munitions." Her organization is chair of the Cluster Munition Coalition, an international campaign seeking to eliminate cluster bombs.

A new Pentagon policy approved November 30 erases

the 2019 deadline and asserts that the weapons are legitimate, not necessarily a humanitarian hazard, and important for wartime attacks on "area targets" like enemy troop formations. The new policy authorizes commanders to approve use of existing cluster bombs "until sufficient quantities" of safer versions are developed and fielded. "Safer" means meeting the one percent failure standard or developing bombs equipped with a self-destruct mechanism or that can be rendered inoperable in 15 minutes or less by the exhaustion of their power source. The policy does not define what qualifies as "sufficient quantities" of safer weapons, and it sets no new deadline.

In practice, the U.S. rarely uses cluster bombs. The Pentagon says its last large-scale use was in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. They could be considered important for use in a large-scale conflict such as a ground war against North Korea. In a memorandum signed November 30<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said the U.S. remains committed to fielding weapons that are effective in war and that "minimize unintended harm" to civilians and U.S. and partner forces. "Although the DoD seeks to field a new generation of more highly reliable munitions, we cannot risk mission failure or accept the potential of increased military and civilian casualties by forfeiting the best available capabilities," Shanahan wrote. Going on, "Cluster munitions are legitimate weapons with clear military utility," He also asserted that cluster munitions "may result" in less unintended harm to civilians and others than if other

types of weapons have to be used instead against certain targets like massed formations of enemy troops and time-sensitive or moving targets. By law, the U.S. cannot provide cluster munitions to other countries unless they meet the one percent failure standard.

[Source: The Associated Press | Robert Burns ; November 30, 2017 ++]

### **SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN PREMIUM PAYMENT UPDATE**

If you receive Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) and have the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), you will see a change in your net pay and statements starting in April of 2018. Beginning with the SBP premiums due in April of 2018, DFAS will start deducting SBP premiums from CRSC when retired pay is not sufficient to cover the full amount of the premiums. This new deduction is due to a change in the law which requires DFAS to deduct SBP premiums from CRSC. This change affects retirees who receive CRSC and currently pay SBP premiums via direct remittance. Retirees who currently have SBP premiums deducted from their Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) pay will not be affected.

This change will benefit retirees and their survivors by preventing a debt when a retiree forgets to pay the SBP premiums directly. When SBP premiums are not paid during a retiree's lifetime, it creates a debt which must be repaid from the SBP annuity a survivor receives. DFAS will begin deducting SBP premiums from the April CRSC entitlement (paid on May 1<sup>st</sup>) for SBP premiums due in the month of

April for all retirees with CRSC who are currently sending in their premium payments (through direct remittance). Retirees can also request to voluntarily have their SBP premiums deducted from CSRC prior to the April SBP premium. More detailed information about the required deduction of SBP premiums from CRSC (that will begin with the April 2018 CRSC entitlement paid on May 1st) will be posted on the DFAS website and included in the Retiree newsletters in the coming months.

If you want to have your SBP premium deducted from your CRSC before the April SBP premium, call the DFAS Customer Care Center at 1-800-321-1080 and tell them you want to start having your SBP premium deducted from your CRSC pay. You will need to provide your full name, social security number, and a phone number where you can be reached during the day. You may also send a signed and dated letter to DFAS that has all of this information.

Note that the SBP premium deduction will be part of the garnishments total on your CRSC statement. Also, until April, you will continue to receive an SBP premium bill, which will show the CRSC SBP premium deduction as a "prior payment received" once the deduction is processed. You can check the DFAS website [www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil) for more information regarding this change. Information will be updated there as more details are available. [Source: DFAS Retiree Newsletter | Dec 2017 ++]

### AVAILABLE DISCOUNTS WITH NEW ID CARD

Veterans can finally get hundreds of discounts by using a new ID card made by "Military Veterans ID" through their website [www.DD214ID.com](http://www.DD214ID.com). For many years almost every American company has offered our military veterans discounts, usually a minimum of 10% off, but there was a catch. Veterans had to show an (photo) ID card to receive the discount, except there was nowhere a non-retired veteran could get a photo ID. Enter "Military Veteran ID, LLC", a new private company that makes custom plastic photo ID cards one at a time, only for veterans.

Veterans simply get out their Form DD214 (with their SSN and DOB blocked out), make a pdf copy and have a head photo taken (with a smartphone). These two files are uploaded during the order process. Military Veteran ID verifies the information and fills-in the new ID card blank along with the photo. They accept all major credit cards and PayPal payment, for a reasonable \$14.95. Then, in about a week, the credit-card sized ID card

comes in the mail to the veteran. Veterans can now enjoy all the generous discounts offered to them just by showing their new ID card. The Military Veteran ID website lists around 100 companies offering discounts. [Source: Veteran News; 8/8/2016.]

### BIRDIES FOR CHARITY LIVES ON!

The word just came in: The Houston Golf Association has (gleefully) announced there will be a 2018 contest! So, our prominent fundraiser will, once again, go forth under the watchful eye of **Jim Bolin**. For the benefit of Post and Auxiliary participants, **Jim** has classified his ideas of the most annoying golf partners. The only thing worse than playing with one of these guys (or gals) is BEING one of them!

- 1. Unsolicited Swing Advice Guy** -- Defining characteristics: Knows exactly how to fix your swing even though you didn't ask. Employs a vast array of swing jargon that only confuses you further. Favorite expression: "Wait, try this!"
- 2. The Human Rain Delay** -- Defining characteristics: Thinks

### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

**Post Service Officer Toby Carroll:** Tel: (281) 323-498  
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VA Houston Regional Office: (713) 383-7842  
VA Conroe Outpatient Clinic: (936) 522-4024  
Texas Veterans Commission Hot Line: 1(800) 252-VETS  
County Veteran Service Centers:  
Montgomery County - Conroe: (936) 539-7842  
Harris County - Houston: (281) 876-6600  
Military Veteran Peer Network: Conroe: (936) 521-6132

#### **STATE LEGISLATORS:**

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 Swanson - Spring: (281) 257- 4222

he is honoring spirit of the game by never picking up. Not in the spirit of the game: dragging his foursome through a three-and-a-half hour front nine. Favorite expression: "Put me down for a 10."

**3. Cell Phone Guy --** Defining characteristics: Considers golf course an extension of his office, home, therapist's couch, etc. Has perfected the balancing-phone-on-shoulder wedge shot. Favorite expression: "You guys hit. I gotta take this."

**4. The Cart Girl Schmoozer --** Defining characteristics: Convinced he's got a shot with the cart girl. Would be crushed to learn she offered the same flirty laugh and bag of nuts to foursome of geeks up ahead. Favorite expression: "We'll take four beers and one more smile, darlin'."

**5. The Parking Lot Pro --** Defining characteristics: Color-coordinated outfit, matching logos and oversized tour bag suggest he's played professionally. Topped drive off the first tee suggests otherwise. Favorite expression: "These are the same shoes Tiger wears."

**6. The Air Counter --** Defining characteristics: Can't remember his score without reliving every shot in detail. Favorite expression: "One in the pond, two drop, three back in the pond. Four I had that funky lie in the bunker and left it in the bunker."

**7. The Frat Boy --** Defining characteristics: Unable to fathom a round of golf without a steady stream of adult beverages. Idea of restraint is to hold off drinking ... until the second hole. Favorite

expression: "A few beers will loosen up that swing!"

**8. Cigar Guy --** Defining characteristics: The easiest golfer to locate on the course thanks to waft of smoke trailing behind him. Oblivious to playing partners struggling for air -- and the ash droppings on his belly. Favorite expression: "Straight from Havana, baby!"

**9. The Sandbagger --** Defining characteristics: The 15 handicap who is somehow playing "much better" than he has in years. Feigns apology when he drops bunker shot within inches of cup, then kicks sand off his shoes like a tour pro. Favorite expression: "I guess it's just one of those days..."

**10. Oblivious Guy --** Defining characteristics: So preoccupied with his own game never looks for anyone else's ball. When driving a cart, always blows past your ball and heads directly to his. Favorite expression: "But enough about me. What do YOU think of my swing?"

**11. Ball Retriever Guy --** Defining characteristics: Never passes a water hazard without his trusty scoop at the ready. Last bought a new sleeve of balls in the late 80s. Favorite expression: "Whoa! A ProV1!"

**12. The Volcano --** Defining characteristics: Has unique ability to allow even the most pleasant days to be soured by any bad swing, bounce, or lie. Relies on Ball Retriever Guy to occasionally fetch clubs out of lake. Favorite expression: [Not printable herein]

**13. Delusional Guy --** Defining characteristics: Forces group to wait on every par 5 because he's convinced he can get home in two. Usually gets there

in four. Favorite expression: "If I really catch it, I can get there."

**14. Mulligan Guy --** Defining characteristics: Liberally allows himself another whack even when first shot is findable. Favorite expression: "Wait, wait, wait. I gotta try another."

**15. The Plumb Bobber --** Defining characteristics: The only guy in the group not to notice the foursome behind yelling from the fairway as he lines up his putt for holing out from every angle imaginable. Favorite expression: "Son of a gun, I actually think it goes both ways!"

**16. Yardage Book Guy --** Defining characteristics: Has to walk off every blade of grass before hitting. After contemplating whether a shot is 176 yards or 178, ends up hitting it 150. Favorite expression: "I can't decide if it's a hard 7 or a soft 6."

**17. The Cheat --** Defining characteristics: A sympathetic figure when he pushes his tee shot deep into the woods. Not as sympathetic when he announces his ball somehow stayed in bounds -- with a clear shot to the green! Favorite expression: "Better to be lucky than good!"

**18. The Overcelebrater --** Defining characteristics: Treats every holed three-footer as if he just won the Masters. Has sent multiple playing partners home early, thanks to overzealous chest bumping. Favorite expression: "Yes SIR!"

#### **AND ONE SAD NOTE**

District 7 Finance Officer and Post 618 Member **John Palasota** departed this mortal world and transferred to the Post Everlasting

# AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS

## President Kathy Carroll



Happy New Year everyone! I hope your holiday season was festive and safe. Just like the fireworks on New Years' Eve, we are starting 2018 with a bang. At the January meeting, we will have our annual chili cook off – Post vs Unit. This has always been a fun event and a gastronomical success. So hopefully everyone will polish up a favorite recipe or surprise us with something new.

Department of Texas Mid-Winter Conference will be held at the Omni Hotel in Austin, January 26-28, 2018. We always come away from the conference with good information, ideas of things our unit can do, and this time they are planning a leadership training. Right now **Rosalie Fryer** and I are planning to attend, but I hope some of you will be able to join us. Rosalie has a room reserved at the Omni, so let her know if you are interested in sharing accommodations.

It may seem early to think about Girls State, but we will need to start the interview process soon. Our Girls State chairman, **Geri Mulvihill**, has

already been in contact with several High School counselors and is trying to schedule dates for the interviews. However she cannot do this alone. If you are able to help with the interviews, please contact **Geri** and let her know your availability. You don't have to commit to do all the interviews, but the more people we have the better it will be. **Geri's** contact information is: 832-620-6265 and e-mail address: [gerimulvihill@outlook.com](mailto:gerimulvihill@outlook.com).

You may remember that in May 2017, we had no one to fill the position of secretary for the Unit. Our treasurer, **Dayna Salter**, agreed to temporarily act as secretary until someone would step forward. She has been doing a great job, but because of her teaching assignments she is no longer able to do the secretary job. So we need someone to step up and fill this position beginning this month. If you are willing to become our secretary, please call me or **Rosalie Fryer** who was the chairman of the nominating committee. This is a position that we must fill and I am hoping that someone will step up so I don't have to make phone calls and beg someone to do the job.

Birdies for Charity has always been a good fundraiser for us, and it has provided a sizable amount of money in our budget. We had been alerted that the Houston Golf Association lost Shell as a sponsor and might have to drop the charity. But, we are now informed that there will be a Birdies in 2018! So, be ready to place your bets. Despite the good news, we are always looking for fundraising

ideas in order to support our budget. If you know of any other ways that we can raise money, please contact anyone on the Executive Committee, so that we can check it out. It would be wonderful if we could find a fundraiser that does not take a lot of time or manpower, but where we could raise a good sum of money.

The new year is always a time for new resolutions. However, studies have shown that although most people make resolutions in January, they are usually broken or forgotten by February. But, I think there is one resolution that we can all make and keep this year. And that is to recommit to fulfill the aims and purposes of the American Legion Auxiliary. Although we are all friends and we enjoy our time together, we are much more than a social club. The work our Unit does and the things we support make a real difference in the lives of our veterans and military families. I am very proud to be a member of Unit 305 and when I tell people what we do, I am actually amazed at how much we accomplish every year.

Our next meeting and the chili cook off will be on January 18, 2018, at the South County Community Center. I hope to see all of you there.

God bless our veterans and our men and women in uniform. And God bless the United States of America.

**Kathy Carroll,**  
**President ALA Unit 305**

## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCALE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Mon.	Jan. 15	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Mon.	Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Day		
Thur.	Jan. 18	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Jan. 18	Post & Auxiliary Vie For Honors	19 <sup>th</sup> Annual Chili Cook-off Contest (time TBD)	
Fri.	Jan. 26 to	Department Mid-Winter Conference		
Mon.	Jan. 29	(concludes)	Omni Austin South Park Hotel	
Tues.	Jan. 30	Boys State Honor Ceremony	South County Community Center	@ 6:00 PM
Mon.	Feb. 12	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Feb. 14</b>	<b>St. Valentine's Day</b>		
Thur.	Feb. 15	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Mon.	Feb. 19	Presidents' Day		
Mon.	Mar. 12	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Mar. 15	Membership Meetings (AL Birthday)	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Sat.	Mar. 17	St. Patricks Day	Wearin' of the Green	
Sun.	Apr. 1	Easter Sunday & April Fool's Day		
Mon.	Apr. 16	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Apr. 19	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM

### POST & AUXILIARY UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION (2017-2018)

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>TEL. NO.</u>	<u>E-MAIL ADDRESS</u>
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SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Bruce Carter	(281) 844-0836	bruce4482@att.net
ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS	(vacant)		
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ASS'T CHAPLAIN	Larry Reynolds	(-----)	
JUDGE ADVOCATE	Everett Ison	(281) 298-9524	everett.ison@sprint.com
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