



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 "THE WOODLANDS POST" THE BUGLE



January 2011 Volume 7, Issue 1

COMMANDER'S CORNER



Dear Legionnaires',

I hope that everyone had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. I just cannot believe that not only year 2010 has past but also the first decade of the 21st century. I hope that you have a prosperous 2011.

This month will be busy as we start out with some fun with the annual Chili Cook-off, so get out your favorite recipe and enter the contest. The Auxiliary will not only be judging each entry but they will participate as well, and the Post will judge their entries. We will announce the winner that evening. I would also like for each contestant to bring your chili recipe and enter it into the cook book that we are putting together as a fund raiser.

February will include an initiation of all new members of Post 305. This will be a special ceremony for all first-year members that have joined our Post. If 2011 is your first year, please come and participate in the ceremony in your honor and let us welcome you again.

Membership is still an issue and we need dues renewals returned to the Post as soon as possible. I would like to ask that all members update their information by registering in 'mylegion.org'. This will keep the Post updated when information changes, but it will also maintain Department and National records as well.

January 19–23 will embrace the Department Mid-Winter Conference, held at the Omni Hotel, 4140 Governors Row, Austin, Texas. Anyone interested in attending, please contact me. More information can be found at the Department of Texas website <txlegion.org>.

In closing, remember to pray for our troops and their safety in their ongoing efforts to protect our country.

Our next meeting will be at 7 PM on January 20th at the South County Community Center.

For God and Country,
Everett Ison

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Commander Ison opened the meeting and determined a quorum was present. The Finance Report was given by the Commander in the absence of **Dave Lips**, Finance Officer. Post finances were summarized as: The General Fund total was \$15,633.74 and the Allocated Fund total was \$21,765.37 for a grand total of both funds of \$37,399.11.

The current membership report was given by First Vice Commander **Kimberly Biggerstaff**. As of the December 16 meeting, paid membership stands at 284, which is 64% of our goal. We will be calling members who have not renewed their membership since 2009, seeking their dues and reinstatement.

The Executive Committee will be accepting nominations for "Legionnaire of the Year" for 2010. Any paid member wishing

to nominate a Post member should submit nominations to **Commander Ison** before the next Executive Committee meeting on January 17th.

Brad Trefz reported that he is helping the debate teacher at Oak Ridge High School conduct an Oratorical Contest on Friday, December 17th. Second Vice Commander **Jim Bolin** reported that the District Oratorical Contest will be held on Jan. 16th at Willis Post 618. As he is the District Chairman, Jim could use some help in conducting the District Contest.

Commander Ison reported that the homecoming of the US Army's 453rd Inland Cargo Transport Company was a great success. Lots of good food was provided and a welcoming celebration on successful deployment to Afghanistan.

ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF

This month the Post will be trying something different when conducting its traditional Chili Cook-off. Instead of just having the Post members prepare a chili dish to be judged by the Auxiliary, the Auxiliary members will also cook a chili dish to be judged by the Post. The Post usually has six entries which would be served as the pot-luck supper after the meeting. Now, with both the Unit and the Post submitting entries, we should have a lot of chili to be taste tested and judged, so come on out and enjoy the food. We need more members in attendance on January 20th, so we won't have as many leftovers

Note that the judges (to be selected) cannot have "a dog in

the hunt", and a judge cannot judge his or her spouse's offering!

CORRECTIONS

The December Bugle carried two errors which need correction:

~ The note of the sad passing of Post member **Bob Jackson** (of Flying Tiger fame) stated his first name incorrectly. His full name is Ervin Robert Jackson.

~ The photo of the Auxiliary members manning the poppy table at Anadarko misidentified one member. Vice President **Geri Mulvihill** was named while the photo shows her sister, Treasurer **Jenny Le**.



VETERAN'S ADVOCATE

Veterans Discount Offered by Houston BARC Shelter

The City of Houston and the Bureau of Animal Regulation and Control (BARC) Animal Shelter & Adoptions are proud of our veterans! And, so to honor their courage and service, BARC has established a Veterans Companion Program that kicked off on last Veterans Day. Any veteran with proof of military service (military ID card or Form DD214) may adopt an animal from BARC for half of the standard adoption fee. The current adoption fee is \$55, so veterans will have the opportunity to adopt a companion pet for \$27.50 with proof of their

service. The adoption fee includes spay/neuter surgery, microchip placement, initial vaccinations including rabies, City licensure, Animal Planet training DVD, Cesar Millan training DVD, starter bag of Hill's Science Diet pet food, and free enrollment in the American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen six-week obedience school. With all of these included, it's an unbeatable deal at the regular \$55 fee, and BARC even brings it down to half price on Saturdays for the public. But, as a veteran, you will be able to have first pick of the litter any day of the week. So go to BARC and let them help you find the perfect pet, a battle buddy for life. This is an awesome opportunity for veterans to find companion pets that offer unconditional love and support. BARC is very proud of our veterans, proud to offer this program in honor of their service. For more info, contact Ian Todd, Community Involvement Coordinator for BARC Outreach Program, 3200 Carr Street, Houston, or see its website: www.HoustonBARC.com or e-mail iantodd@houstontx.gov or phone (direct) (713) 229-7343 or (cell) (832) 360-3573.

Housing For Returning Veterans

The national, non-profit organization, "Homes For Our Troops" (HFOT) is in business to build specially adapted houses for returning veterans who have been severely wounded. HFOT conducts fundraising events to help finance its home-building program, and Houston hosts the largest annual fundraiser. Since

2004, an average of 92% of every dollar donated has gone directly to home projects. Over 60 specially designed homes have been built and 30 more are under construction. There is no cost to the veteran for these houses.

This year's Houston event will be held on January 28/29 in George Bush Park and will include games, raffles, prizes, battle re-enactments, rides, bands, choirs, exhibition shooting and a petting zoo. All Post and Auxiliary members are encouraged to attend and show their appreciation to our wounded and disabled veterans. (Refer to site www.homesforourtroops.org for added info.)

Important Contact Numbers

Houston Regional VA Office:
1-713-383-7842

County Veterans Serv. Offices:
Montgomery 1-936-539-7842
Harris 1-281-876-6600

Texas Veterans Commission:
1-800-252-8387
www.tvc.state.tx.us

State Legislators:
Dist. 4 – Tommy Williams
281-364-9426

Dist. 15 – Rob Eissler
281-681-9655

Dist. 16 – Brandon Creighton
936-539-0028

Dist. 126 – Patricia Harless
281-376-4114

BACKGROUND TO THE FOUR CHAPLAINS MEMORIAL CEREMONY

Traditionally, in each February, American Legion Posts conduct a memorial service to the four Army chaplains who died among other Army troops, Navy personnel and

crewmen of the US Army Transport *Dorchester* on February 3, 1943 when the ship was torpedoed by German U-boat 223. Post 305 will be holding such memorial service in February. Background to that sad but heroic event follows:

The steamship *Dorchester* was launched and entered Atlantic coastal service in 1926 as a passenger liner offering voyages "in luxurious comfort" to well-to-do travelers. It had capacity of up to 314 passengers and was manned by a crew of 90. Long before the 1940's, demand for such accommodations had declined, replaced by airline service and fast, through train service. As war in Europe raged and the US prepared to participate, the War Department "drafted" ships and converted them for wartime service – troop transports and cargo vessels. Thus, the old *Dorchester* became a US Army troop transport, with additional lifeboats, life rafts and light armament (20 mm cannons and 50 cal. machine guns) – with a capacity of 904 including troops and crew. USAT *Dorchester* began voyages between US ports and Greenland in February 1942. It had made five voyages to the US Army Command Center and airfield at Narssarssuaq (code named "Blue West One") where ferry pilots refueled enroute to England.

In February 1943, the ship was included in Convoy SG-19, together with two merchant ships and three US Coast Guard cutter escorts – the *Comanche*, the *Escanaba* and the *Tampa*. The *Dorchester* sailed from New York

City carrying 904 persons, including Army troops, the Naval Armed Guard, government civilians and the Merchant Marine crew.

With the convoy 150 miles from its destination, on the night of February 3, the *Dorchester* was torpedoed by German submarine U-223; the torpedo striking into the boiler room, killing 100 men, knocking out the electrical system and releasing clouds of scalding steam. The ship sank by the bow in 20 minutes, but some of its lifeboats were launched. Many men in life jackets in the 34 degree water died of hypothermia. The *Escanaba* saved 133 men by using wet-suit clad swimmers dragging lines to the survivors, and the *Comanche* saved 97. (The *Tampa* continued to escort the other two ships.) When additional rescue ships arrived, they found "hundreds of dead bodies floating in the water, kept afloat by their life jackets.

Among the Army personnel aboard were four chaplains who knew one another before boarding ship. They had been together at the Army's chaplain school after enlisting. They were:

~Reverend George L. Fox (Methodist), WWI Marine veteran.

~Rabbi Alexander D. Goode (Jewish), John Hopkins Univ. MD.

~Reverend Clark V. Poling (Dutch Reformed Church), seventh generation Dutch Reformed minister.

~Priest John P. Washington (Roman Catholic), former Newark street-gang member; then parish priest.



These chaplains sought to calm the men and organize an orderly evacuation of the ship, guiding men to safety. As life jackets were passed out to those without, the supply ran out. The chaplains removed their own life jackets and gave them to others. They helped as many men as they could into life boats, and then linked arms and, saying prayers and singing hymns, died with the ship.

This heroic action was noted and recorded by many survivors. It resulted in many tributes. In December 1944, the four chaplains were awarded the Purple Heart and the DSC. In July 1960, Congress established by act the Four Chaplains Medal and presented these to the next of kin. In 1948, a commemorative stamp was issued by act of Congress, and February 3rd was designated "Four Chaplains Day". Many other memorials have been erected in honor of these heroic men -- Army chapels, stained glass windows and sculptures. With some irony, the SS *Queen Mary* houses an "Immortal Chaplains Memorial Sanctuary", and it was the ship which transported to the US three POW survivors of U-223, sunk a year after the *Dorchester*.

MONTHLY TRIVIA QUIZ

Interested readers may e-mail their answers to this month's questions to the Editor. The member with the earliest set of correct responses will be recognized in the next Bugle.

1. In what year did Armistice Day formally become Veterans Day?
2. What was the purpose of the 20th Amendment of the US Constitution, the so-called "Lame Duck" amendment?
3. When and where did the first American Legion Boys' State take place?
4. In September 1830, the Secretary of the Navy recommended that the ship *USS Constitution* be sold and broken up. What event was instrumental in causing reversal of that proposition?
5. During WWII, when did Italy declare war on Germany?
6. If you see a Legionnaire wearing a blue uniform cap with a white crown and gold lettering, what position does he or she hold?
7. When a Navy ship crosses the equator, what event traditionally takes place?
8. What alternative meaning was applied to "USO" by service members?

December Quiz Answers

1. The First American Volunteer Group (the "Flying Tigers") was comprised of three fighter squadrons plus a headquarters unit. The squadrons adopted as designations and graphics "Adam & Eve", "Panda Bears" and "Hells Angels".
2. The Legion's Oratorical Contests have the theme: the US Constitution.
3. President W. H. Harrison died after one month in office of pneumonia resulting from his inauguration. President J. A. Garfield died after six months in office of wounds received by an assassin.
4. The rear loop of the sling retains the oiler in the stock of an M-1 carbine.
5. Union General Hooker tried to protect his troops from VD by controlling the quality of "camp followers", who became known as "hooker's girls". Thus today, "hooker" equals prostitute.
6. The Navy proposed the "Navy Medal of Valor" in 1861. A year later, it was adopted as the "Medal of Honor".
7. WWII began in 1939.
8. A standard stainless steel GI mess tray had six food sections or depressions.

AUXILIARY UNIT NEWS



I am hoping the New Year will bring a healthy and prosperous year to our Auxiliary and their family members. We must remember to pray for our men and women who continue to fight the war on terrorism. Our last shipment of 2010 to Afghanistan happened early in December. We had 60 boxes that were shipped from our ACE Hardware location on Rayford Road. We started at 8:30 am on a beautiful Friday morning and finished at 11:30 am. The community came through for us once again and paid for every shipment. Our Auxiliary team members who participated on this boxing day were myself, Christina O'Grady, Eileen O'Grady, Joan Sparks and Mary Bolin.

We had fun at our meeting with an ornament exchange and prepared ourselves for the upcoming chili cook-off with the Post. Look out gentlemen, the women of The Woodlands are stirring their pots.

Wreaths Across America

Wreaths Across America is an annual event at the Houston National VA Cemetery. It was attended by several Auxiliary members. The day began with a beautiful blue sky, the speeches were kept short and the program was organized and very well done. The wreaths that were placed on the headstones of our fallen veterans were a quiet, yet profound statement to their years of service. The Auxiliary provided wreaths for Shirley Engel's husband, Marvin, Veronica Maiolo's husband, Sam and Lee Montgomery's husband, Errett.

Betty Dettinger

We have lost one of our dear Auxiliary members, Betty

Dettinger. Her loss is felt very deeply by her family and especially, her husband Dutch. Betty has been an Auxiliary member for several years and a friend to many of us. We will miss her. The Auxiliary extends its heartfelt condolences to her family. Please keep Betty and her family in your prayers. A memorial service for Betty is planned for January 21st at 10:30 am, at St. Simon and Jude Church, on Glen Loch Drive. The Auxiliary has been asked to provide finger food.

Ann Jones, President

HELP FOR WOMEN UNDER CANCER TREATMENT

If you or any woman you know is undergoing chemotherapy cancer treatment, she can take advantage of "Cleaning For A Reason", a national, non-profit organization which will provide residential maid service, once a month for four months, while she is under treatment, at no cost to the patient. Any type of cancer qualifies. The service maintains a list of professional maid service providers who are insured and/or bonded. Eight such maid service "partners" are listed in the Greater Houston Area. If a qualifying woman has interest, she should fill out an online application at www.cleaningforareason.org and follow the steps enumerated. It is the Bugle's aim to inform its readers of this benefit, which can ease the stress and effort of housekeeping while enduring the debilitating effects of chemotherapy.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| <u>DAY</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>EVENT</u> | <u>WHERE?</u> |
|------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Sat. | Jan. 16 | District Oratorical Contest | Willis Post 618 @ 1:00 PM |
| Mon. | Jan. 17 | Martin Luther King Day | |
| Mon. | Jan. 17 | Post Executive Committee Meeting | South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM |
| Wed. | Jan. 19 to Sun. Jan. 23 | Dept. of Texas Mid-Winter Conference Austin, Texas | Omni Southpark Hotel, 4140 Governor's Row, Austin |
| Thur. | Jan. 20 | Membership Meetings (Chili Cook-Off) | South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM |
| Fri. | Jan. 28 | Dues Paid Target at 90% (398 members) | |
| Thur. | Feb. 3 | USAT Dorchester Torpedoed (1943) | |
| Sun. | Feb. 6 | Four Chaplains Sunday | |
| Mon. | Feb. 14 | Valentines Day | Candy, flowers & new car |
| Mon. | Feb. 14 | Post Executive Committee Meeting | South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM |
| Thur. | Feb. 17 | Membership Meetings (Four Chaplains) | South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM |
| Mon. | Feb. 21 | Dept. Oratorical Contest | |
| Mon. | Feb. 21 | Presidents' Day | |
| Fri. | Feb. 25 | Dues Paid Target at 95% (420 members) | |
| Mon. | Mar. 14 | Post Executive Committee Meeting | South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM |
| Tues. | Mar. 15 to Thur. Mar. 17 | American Legion Birthday Recognition and Post 100% Membership Awards | |
| Thur. | Mar. 17 | Membership Meetings | South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM |
| Thur. | Mar. 17 | St. Patrick's Day | |
| Sun. | Mar. 20 to Wed. Mar. 23 | National Conference | Washington, DC |
| Fri. | Mar. 25 | Dues Paid Target at 98% (433 members) | |

The Post and Auxiliary Unit meet at the **South County Community Center** in The Woodlands at 7:00 PM on the third Thursday of each month. The Unit hosts a potluck supper following the meetings. The Center is located on the corner at the intersection of **Lake Robbins Drive** and **Grogans Mill Road**.

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