



+ AMERICAN LEGION POST  
305  
"THE WOODLANDS POST"  
THE BUGLE



August 2011 Volume 7, Issue 8

**COMMANDER'S CORNER**



**Kimberly Biggerstaff**

Greetings fellow Legionnaires, Our Fourth of July Parade went well and I'd like to thank all the veterans, legionnaires, and auxiliary members who came out and participated. A special thank you to all the grandkids who also came out. We are always looking for ideas and suggestions for improvements so let us know if you have any. Keep in mind, we would love to really fill up the float with more veterans. A very special thank you to **Mickey Fussell** for all his hard work as Parade Chairman.

We sent 12 boys to Boys State in Austin this year. This is an outstanding American Legion program and the boys always seem to have a great time. We received letters from a few of

them letting us know how much they appreciated the opportunity. I hope we can send another 12 or more next year. The reason we were able to send so many was due to some very generous donations from the corporate and private public. If you know of anyone who would like to finance a boy to Boys State next summer, contact **Dayton Denton**; Tel; (832) 928-6054.

The MEDVA Medical Center, City of Houston, and Houston Zoo will be hosting their annual Welcome Home Event on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 6 pm . The Welcome Home Family Day will be at the Houston Zoo. All service members and veterans with ID will be admitted to the zoo for free, and up to one adult and three children are free. For more information check out:

[www.facebook.com/houstonveterans](http://www.facebook.com/houstonveterans)

Our annual picnic will be at Shadowbend Park on October 20. This year we will need assistance in supplying a few items. Please contact **Dave Lips** at (281) 362-1390, if you are interested in helping.

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall will be coming to American Legion Post 658 in Crosby Texas. It will be there the weekend of

November 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. If we get enough interest, perhaps we could carpool over there to see it. I saw it when I was stationed at Holloman AFB, and it is very moving. I encourage everyone to go see it if you can't see the real memorial in Washington DC.

This year's RecruitMilitary's Veteran Opportunity Expo will be held Thursday, August 4, 11 am to 3 pm at Minute Maid Park, 501 Crawford Street, Houston. This is a recruiting event for veterans who already have civilian work experience, men and women who are transitioning from active duty, members of the National Guard and reserves, and military spouses. It is produced by RecruitMilitary in cooperation with The American Legion. If you or someone you know needs assistance with job placement, take about 10 copies of you resume and attend. For more information go to:

<http://recruitmilitary.com/expos/377Houston/candidates/information>

Thanks to **Robert Sullivan**, the grandson of **John Morphis** and member of The Woodlands High School JROTC, for coming to our meeting. He has volunteered to help the Post with our community activities. I'd also like to welcome our new member, **Victoria**

**Glover.** She is prior military and a our newest transfer-in. Thanks for coming to your first meeting, and I hope you will continue to help in whatever capacity you can.

For God and Country,  
**Kimberly Biggerstaff**

### **ADVICE FROM FIRST VICE COMMANDER**

Greetings,  
Please accept my sincerest thanks for your vote of confidence in electing me as your new First Vice Commander. I am principally charged with membership affairs and I look forward to working with each of you during 2011-2012. New ideas, new processes, new outreach efforts, new members are all on the horizon this year.

Speaking of new processes, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, a new way for members to renew their membership is also in play. A new program developed by National allows members to reinstate or renew their membership by paying dues on line. To learn more about the program visit [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org). Select the "renew now" button (located on the right hand side of the screen) and several videos become available that explain the new program. To renew your membership, type in your name or membership number, and a screen pops up with the information National has on you on file. You can pay dues with a MasterCard, Visa or Discover card. A one-piece form with a built in Thank You, Temporary Membership Card and dues receipt can be printed. The original will be mailed to you from National. Post 305 **Adjutant Pickens Jones** will be notified two times per month of renewing members. He, in turn, will mail

your original membership card to you. It's a good program, saves you time, postage and paperwork. Another benefit is that once you enter the debit/credit card information, you're set up for next year, if you choose to pay your dues on line again. It's a good program so give it a try.

A new initiative to improve communications with Post 305 members is being implemented this year as well. As a part of that effort, your email address is needed so that we can keep you apprised of current developments. Please email me at: [emeryheuernann@charter.net](mailto:emeryheuernann@charter.net) to be added to the list.

Before I close, if there are any members that need a ride to the meeting each month, please give me a call at (281) 362-8431. A "taxi" service is being set up to ensure that everyone can attend that wants to.

Until next month, let's all remember the American Legion motto . . . For God and Country.

**Emery Heuernann**

### **MEETING HIGHLIGHTS** **(July 21, 2011)**

**Commander Kim Biggerstaff** opened the meeting in the customary manner and called on the Adjutant for a silent roll call. A quorum was present. She then called on those present to review for approval the minutes of the previous meeting and those of the Executive Committee meeting of July 18. With some discussion, both were adopted by motion. The Commander called on the Sergeant-at-Arms to identify any guests present. He introduced **Victoria Glover**, a former service member who requested transfer to Post 305, and **Robert Sullivan**, student at Woodlands High and a

Junior ROTC cadet. Young Sullivan offered to assist the Post in any of its projects.

**Finance Officer Dave Lips** gave the current financial report, summarized as follows:

~General fund----- \$14,908.41  
~Allocated fund----\$22,507.53  
~Total assets----- \$37,415.94  
(as of 6/30/2011)

**First Vice Commander Emery Heuernann** reported on membership but had no to-date total due to new-year complications. These are just "growing pains" due to a changed system. The Vice Commander has been analyzing the roster to plan his 2012 campaign to attract earlier dues payments.

**Service Officer Dayton Denton** suggested that the Post invite all 12 Boys State grads (and their parents) to the Post's November 17 meeting, where the traditional Thanksgiving feast will be featured. This was agreed. **Dayton** also suggested that potential sponsors of Boys State participants be invited too as a means of encouraging donors. The Post is budgeting for four boys at \$275 each, but will aim for more using contributed funds.

The Commander displayed the mounted plaque presented by the Department, recognizing the Post's History Book, ranked first by the judges. **Historian Win Salter** cited the books available for perusal on a table at the rear of the room.

**David Lips** reported there are four pledges unfulfilled from the Birdies-for-Charity fund raiser and that the Post's "take" would not be received until October or November.

The Commander reminded all that the Fall Rummage Sale is coming

up in October and that articles for sale are needed, especially "big ticket items". But, **Dayton Denton** added that the single storage locker was almost full. That means Post donors should hold their treasures, then transport those to the sale site on set-up day, with trucking help on request.

Under "Unfinished Business", the Commander brought up our July 4 parade showing in the absence of **Mickey Fussell** (who was out sick). She requested the equivalent of an "after-action report" to focus on "lessons learned". She cited several improvements which could be made, to be included in the critique. Under "New Business", **Bill Pittman** spoke highly of his visit to the National Museum of the Pacific in Fredericksburg, Texas, and its coverage of the "Flying Tigers" history. **Steve O'Driscoll** suggested that the Woodlands High drill team and color guard be invited to our next flag disposal ceremony. Drill team member **Sullivan** agreed to check out such possibility after school resumed. We have over 70 distressed flags for proper disposal. **Win Salter** asked about the past proposal to have a Boy Scout Troop conduct its formal flag disposal ceremony which involves cutting a flag into pieces and burning each. The Vice Commander agreed to look into such Scout Troop interest, even though an open fire could not be set at the Community Center's parking lot.

The Commander ran through incoming mail, some of which required noting, including three "thank you" letters from Boys State grads and one from "Texas Sentinel", to which the Post made a donation. Another notice was of the August 6 "Welcome Home

Family Day" for returning troops at the Houston Zoo (where volunteers are sought to man tables).

There being no further business, the Commander closed the meeting "by the numbers".



### VETERAN'S ADVOCATE

**BUDGET APPROVED:** *By Rick Svatora, Texas Veterans Commission, Austin*

The 82nd Texas Legislature passed a budget with only a slight, two-percent decrease in funding to the Texas Veterans Commission. On June 17, 2011, Gov. Rick Perry signed the budget into law and it takes effect September 1, 2011. Due to the leadership of budget writers Sen. Steve Ogden and Rep. Jim Pitts, the Texas Veterans Commission's budget for three of its core program areas – Claims, Education, and Employment – was restored to adjusted Fiscal Years 2010-2011 levels. Under House Bill 1 as introduced, the Texas Veterans Commission faced a 20-percent cut to those programs. The restoration in General Revenue funding amounts to over \$2.5 million for the agency. The Texas Veterans Commission's success this session was due to the support of a number of legislators committed to the agency's service to veterans.

Rep. Ralph Sheffield, Vice Chairman of the House Defense and Veterans' Affairs Committee, passed an amendment on the House floor to restore the Claims budget.

Rep. John Otto, Chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee that wrote the budget for the Texas Veterans Commission, was the first to increase funding by providing \$800,000 to the Claims budget. He also funded the Texas Veterans Commission's request for a Women Veterans Coordinator. The funding provided for the coordinator in the final budget will allow Texas to assist women Veterans to attain equitable access to services.

The Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance will also start administering the Veterans Housing Assistance Program, beginning September 1, 2011. Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, Chair of the Senate Veterans Affairs and Military Installations Committee, led the effort and worked with Sen. Tommy Williams to transfer the funding from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to the Texas Veterans Commission. The program will provide at least \$585,000 in grants per year to modify homes of injured service members, provide temporary housing for caretakers of severely injured service members, and provide rental assistance to Veterans and their families. In addition, legislators worked tirelessly to enhance and protect the Fund for Veterans' Assistance:

- Senate Bill 1635, by Sen. Wendy Davis and Rep. Joe Farias, creates an option on vehicle registration renewal forms to enable individuals to

donate directly to the Fund for Veterans' Assistance.

- Senate Bill 1739, by Sen. Davis and Rep. Joe Pickett, chair of the House Defense and Veterans' Affairs Committee, will prohibit the use of the Fund for any purpose other than grants to meet the needs of Veterans or for the administration of the Fund.

Gov. Perry signed both bills into law on June 17, 2011.

### **Important Contact Numbers**

Houston Regional VA Office:  
1-713-383-7842  
My HealtheVet Coordinator:  
1-713-791-1414; Ext. 6348  
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](http://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

### **FOURTH OF JULY PARADE**

As has been the tradition at Post and Unit 305, we appeared in this year's Independence Day parade. Last year we did the same, but there was some expressed need to make a better showing in 2011. Parade Chairman Mickey Fussell identified some improvements that he recommended, and these were accomplished, more or less. The Post has always adopted as its basic unit a vehicle-drawn, flat-bed trailer, converted into a parade "float" by decoration,

where Post and Unit members, dressed appropriately, rode.



An Earlier Parade Float when Harlen Thornhill (right) was Commander

Our 2011 turnout was better than last year, with several new faces and families on board. **Commander Biggerstaff** and **Auxiliary Finance Officer Jones** occupied the place of honor – the classic Thunderbird. (**President Jones** was in Washington on Unit business.) We will, once again, make some added improvements in the Post's appearance for next year.



Color Guard: Comrades Bannon, Jones, Jones and Bolin



Float With Riders and Tow Vehicle with Grandkids



Classic Thunderbird with Post and Auxiliary Brass



Commander Kim Biggerstaff



Jackie Jones, ALA Treasurer



ALA's Linda Ryan and Dayna Salter, Vice President, Flag Distributors

## AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS



**Ann Jones, President**

### DEPARTMENT CONVENTION

The Department Convention in Odessa proved to be a very positive experience. It was attended by myself, **Sue Ellen Bannon, Rosalie Fryer, Mary Lee Mulvihill** and **Mary Bolin**. Odessa is a dry hot area, but the people there were very friendly and the local Post and Auxiliary went out of their way to make us feel welcome. The main reason that the Department Convention was a positive experience is that Unit 305 was mentioned time and again during the proceedings. We were awarded nine certificates for outstanding program achievements and an announcement was made about one of our four Girls State delegates being elected to Girls Nation. One of our programs has also been submitted for a National award. We won the

state Community Service Award for participation in accordance with the community service plan of action. We also were the only Unit in the state that submitted a Presidential Scholarship that will be considered at the National level. Many times the state committee chairman read one of our program narratives describing one of our Unit projects. It was a very proud couple of days for all of our members who attended the state convention. The following is the list of our achievements:

#### Leadership (1)

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Leadership Certificate in recognition of their Vision, Influence and Dedication.

#### Leadership (2)

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Leadership Certificate in Recognition of and Appreciation for their Leadership Narrative.

#### Constitution & Bylaws

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Certificate in Recognition for Being a Star in the American Legion Auxiliary Life by successfully revising and submitting their Constitution and

Bylaws to the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Texas.

#### Membership

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Certificate of Recognition for a Movie Rating of "100% of Goal+".

#### Poppies

The ALA Department of Texas awarded **Ann Jones** and Unit 305 a Poppy Certificate of Appreciation for our participation in promoting the Poppy Program by the distribution of poppies during Veterans Day and Memorial Day and promoting the history of this little red crepe "Memorial Poppy" that represents the story of men and women's sacrifices fighting for our freedom and also for bringing awareness to the public how the "Power of One Memorial Poppy" has become "A Star" in the lives of our veterans and their families.

#### Children and Youth

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Certificate for being a Star in the lives of our Children and Youth. "Your activities have made a difference in the lives of our Military, Veteran and Community Children."

#### Education

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Certificate in

### AUXILIARY UNIT OFFICERS & CONTACT INFORMATION

**PRESIDENT:** Ann Jones; Tel: (281) 620-4052; E-mail: [aejones222@aol.com](mailto:aejones222@aol.com)

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**SECRETARY:** (Vacant)

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**SGT-AT-ARMS:** Christina O'Grady; Tel: (281) 475-0774; E-mail: [yankeefan0216@yahoo.com](mailto:yankeefan0216@yahoo.com)

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:**

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Sandy Holzinger; Tel: (281) 364-8590; E-mail: [zing4@earthlink.net](mailto:zing4@earthlink.net)

Geri Mulvihill; Tel: (832) 620-6265; E-mail: [geri.mulvihill@yahoo.com](mailto:geri.mulvihill@yahoo.com)

Appreciation of and Recognition for Active Participation, as reflected in their Narrative for the Education Program.

### National Security

The ALA Department of Texas awarded Unit 305 a Certificate of Appreciation for their ability to develop, implement and monitor programs and activities that contribute to the practical and emotional well being of military service members and their families.

And finally, last but not least, the next award is being submitted to National for consideration of a National Award.

### Community Service Award

"The Community Service Award is awarded to The Woodlands Unit #305 2010-2011 in recognition of your participation in accordance with the community service plan of action to benefit our Veterans, Service Members and their Families." Our Community Service Award was for our **Operation: We Care** project. This is the project where we reached out to the community to help us fill our care packages that were sent to Afghanistan and Iraq. **Christina O'Grady** is the chairperson of this committee. We had churches, pre-schools, high schools, elementary schools, sewing circles, middle schools, grocery stores and our local ACE Hardware store involved in **Operation: We Care**. We also had numerous individuals who bought groceries and items for us. We then took our boxes and sat outside of ACE Hardware and asked the community to pay for the shipping overseas. We have shipped over 800 boxes in this manner. The community, along with ALA 305, came together to make this project happen.

**Ann Jones, President**

## WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER SCHEDULED TO CLOSE

After 102 years of vital service to the wounded and disabled men and women of our armed forces, as well as to governmental officials, Walter Reed Army Medical Center will close its doors next month. Walter Reed began life as a general hospital at what was in 1898 called Washington Barracks on land set aside by George Washington as a military reservation. It is the third oldest US Army installation in continuous use in the US, the older being West Point on the Hudson and Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania.

Located where the Potomac and Anacostia rivers join, it was an excellent site for defense of the nation's capital. The base was renamed after WWII and became Fort McNair, named for Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair, killed in Normandy in 1944. Its hospital is perhaps one of America's most historically significant military medical treatment facilities.

Starting in 1881, Major Walter Reed, of yellow fever fame, was Camp Surgeon and later Professor of Medicine and Curator of the Army Medical Museum. In 1902, he died at the facility from complications of surgery for appendicitis. In 1901, "Walter Reed's Clinic" became an entirely separate command from Fort McNair and was relocated eight years later to a new facility on a nearby site, becoming Walter Reed General Hospital. The original facility became the post hospital until 1911 when it was converted into a clinic.

In 1923, General John J. Pershing signed a War Department order creating the "Army Medical Center" on the same campus as

Walter Reed General Hospital. Pershing lived at Walter Reed from 1944 until his death in 1948. In 1951, the Medical Center and the hospital were combined and renamed "Walter Reed Army Medical Center".

The complex today, located on 113 acres, includes about 5,500 rooms, distributed among 100 buildings. It has served more than 150,000 active and retired military personnel from all branches of the military. Today, the President, Vice President, Senators and Representatives may all receive care at the facility, which is ranked as a tertiary care center, housing numerous medical and surgical specialties. Former President Eisenhower died there in 1969 and virtually all Presidents and Vice Presidents have received care there. But the real heroes who have been treated at Walter Reed are exemplified by National Guard Sergeant John Kriesel of Minnesota and Army Sergeant Patrick Hagood of South Carolina, two of many wounded veterans visited by President George W. Bush.

In 2005, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission noted that the Department of Defense proposed replacing the complex, moving its functions to the site of the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, seven miles away. The consolidation of three military hospitals, including closure of aging Walter Reed, was approved, but the name "Walter Reed" would be retained. The combined complex is to be called Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, staffed with medical personnel of all services. The estimated cost of the plan, which has been under implementation, is \$2.6 billion, over twice its original, 2005 estimate.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>WHERE?</u>
Sun.	Aug. 14	VJ Day (1945)	
Mon.	Aug. 15	Post Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Aug. 18	Membership Meetings	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Fri.	Aug 26 to	American Legion National Convention	Minneapolis, Minnesota
	Thur. Sept. 1		
Mon.	Sept. 5	Labor Day	
Sun.	Sept. 11	Patriot Day ("Nine-Eleven")	
Mon.	Sept. 12	Post Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Sept. 15	Membership Meetings	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Fri.	Sept. 16	POW/MIA Recognition Day	
Fri.	Sept. 16 to	Department Executive	Omni Southpark Hotel, 4140 Governor's
Mon.	Sept. 19	Committee Meeting	Row, Austin
	(Date to be Set)	District 7 Convention	(Venue to be announced.)
Mon.	Oct. 17	Post Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Oct. 20	Annual Octoberfest Picnic	Shadowbend Park Pavilion @ 7:00 PM
Fri.	Oct. 21	Fall Rummage Sale Set-up Day	Robinson Road Community Center
Sat.	Oct. 22	Fall Rummage Sale	Robinson Road Community Center
Thur.	Oct. 27	Navy Day	
Mon.	Oct. 31	Halloween	Trick or Treat!
Tue.	Nov. 8	Election Day	
Thur.	Nov. 10	US Marine Corps Founded (1775)	
Fri.	Nov. 11	Veterans Day	
Mon.	Nov. 14	Post Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Nov. 17	Membership Meetings (Turkey Nite)	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Day	

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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