



American Legion Post 305
"The Woodlands Post"
THE BUGLE



July, 2012

Volume 8, Issue 7

COMMANDER'S CORNER



Fellow Legionnaires,

I'd like to thank the nominating committee and all of you who voted for me, as I assume the Commander's role of Post 305. With most of you knowing me for such a short period of time, it means a lot to have your confidence in my ability to carry on the outstanding job our Past Commander,

Kimberly Bigger-staff, has done in moving our Post forward. Commander, you deserve a round of applause for all of your hard work, as do all of the other officers of last year. You got us a front row seat at the District Convention.

I'm looking forward to working with all of the officers who have been appointed alongside me, plus all the committees and members in the coming year. In the coming months, we will require help from each and every one of you to further expand our Post and make it interesting for new members to come and stay. We all need to work together as a team to continue to make this the best Post in Texas. If we plan on attempting to get more veterans to attend our monthly meetings and become active members, we are going to have to have something for them to come in to and want to stay. I will be recommending to the Executive Committee, guest speakers to let us know all of our benefits and what is happening to them, as well as how our troops presently in harm's way are being supported.

This Post can do so much if all of us just spend a little time to support programs such as the ones we do. We have 20

different committees that this Post is working and only ten actual members chairing them. We all need to get more active and help out with these committees. It really does not take much time and, of course, more members would help. Boys State and Girls State are two good examples of what we can do for our teenagers. Another program is Americanism. I will be speaking to the present committee leaders about continuing your duties as chair of the committee assigned to you. If they do not want to, we will be looking for others to replace them. These committees are extremely important if we want to hold ourselves to the standards the American Legion stands for. If anyone wishes to be on a certain committee or activity, please let us know. If you cannot attend meetings, but wish to be involved, this is a good way to help.

Last month, I had a chance to go to my first District Convention and what I saw there amazed me and made me feel a lot better about the American spirit. I saw some 20 different Posts with young members, old members, children, different sexes, and different races, all intermingling towards a specific purpose of Americanism. If only we could get the agitators out of the way, we could have this across our great nation.

I also heard a report concerning membership that shocked me. I knew the American Legion was having trouble getting new members, but I didn't realize that they were also losing active members and not only by death. The State of Texas, for example, has lost over 20,000 active members in the last five years. There are over 17,000 veterans in the Montgomery County area. Our goal last year was 398 of which we have 330. Each year since 2007, they have continued to lower the goal post and, if we continue to do this, we will lose the game. Our goal next year should be the membership number of this year and we work up from there. I would like to challenge each and every one of you to find out, with our help, how many

veterans you have in your neighborhoods and go out of your way to meet them and talk with them. The face-to-face type of discussion is more personal to the individual rather than routine e-mails and phone calls. Explain to them that the old view of the American Legion as a social club is not what we are today. Explain what we do for our veterans and their families. We have some of the "Why You Should Belong" pamphlets that you can give them to read.

Discuss with them joining up and attending meetings and, once you have done this, be a faithful sponsor for each of them mentoring them through the process of becoming an active member. We have a lot of work to do within the Post to keep them coming and one of the main items is to make the meetings more informative and interesting for them to come and stay. I know we all appreciate the Auxiliary Unit and their bringing in that fabulous food each meeting. It shows on our waists, and we need to continue working with them in various other ways to accomplish our ends.

July 4th is just around the corner and I know that our new Second Vice Commander doesn't want us to forget the Fourth of July Parade is coming up. We hope we can fill our float with veterans and their supporters.

Perhaps some of you know some Wounded Warriors or Congressional Medal of Honor recipients (there are four in the Houston area) that would like to participate. If you can wear your uniform, that would be great! I can't fit in mine. If you have a ball cap that identifies a ship you served on, unit or campaign and/or war era, that would be fine as well. We look forward to seeing you at the United Methodist Church parking lot ready to roll for the parade.

Finally, our strength lies in the combination of this Post and its Auxiliary Unit. Unit 305 is a hard working group who has supported us well in the past. We need to thank the Auxiliary Unit for all of the food and drinks they bring to each meeting. We must continue to work side-by-side with them in all of our endeavors.

Let's remember our main purpose is to help veterans and their families. One of our jobs as an American Legion Post is to keep all veterans informed as to all of the legislation that goes on in Washington, D. C. that affects them, and we need to stay on top of what National Commander Wong is doing to help in this effort.

**For God and Country ~~~~~
Pete Koch**

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (June 21, 2012)

Prior to the meeting, the Post held a ceremony in the parking lot of the Community Center to properly dispose of unserviceable American Flags.

Commander Biggerstaff opened the meeting in the prescribed manner. After approval of the previous meeting's minutes, the Commander then asked Sergeant -at-Arms **Jim Bolin** about visitors present. 7th District Vice Commander **Ed Jarvis** and **Robert Sullivan**, grandson of **John Morphis**, were introduced as visitors.

The Commander moved on to give the Finance Officer's Report. She reported that the General Fund contained \$14,574.65, while the Allocated Fund total was \$22,358.47 for a Total Assets of \$36,933.12.

On membership, the Commander reported that the Post includes 330 paid-up members with a goal of 398, or a percentage of 82.9. That will probably be the way we close out the year.

Sergeant-at-Arms **Jim Bolin** made a plea to the membership to come forward and help by being part of the Color Guard which is down to just four members.



Among our Comrades in Distress was **Win Salter** who had hope to make the meeting, but had a little set-back earlier in the week. Service Officer **Dayton Denton** is away until September.

Second Vice Commander-elect, **Mickey Fussell** reported on the projected trip to the L'auberge Casino Resort on the 24th of July. The bus for the trip will leave from First Class Tours at 9:00 a.m. The cost of the bus ride is \$16, but L'auberge will give you a \$10 meal voucher and \$5 in coins when you get there. Lunch will be additional and anything you might spend on the games is on you. Make sure you call First Class Tours at 281-443-1200 seven days in advance to make a reservation on the bus.



There was no Unfinished Business nor New Business

For the Good of the Legion.

- The Department Convention will be held in Houston this year, a good chance for us all to visit and see what happens at the Convention. Location is the Crown Plaza Hotel at Reliant Stadium from July 11 thru July 15th.
- It was suggested that we try to get a group of July 4th Parade participants together after the parade to go to lunch If you are interested, check with the Commander.
- We still have 24 Entertainment Coupon Books to sell. We have covered our cost, but not yet raised any funds for our own account.
- Next, the Commander presented Years-of-Service cap stars to members completing a five-year milestone of service, as of May/June, as follows:
 - ~ **Rudy Charest** – 30 years
 - ~ **Mickey Fussell** – 25 years
 - ~ **Harlen Thornhill** – 25 years
 - ~ **James Bolin** – 15 years
 - ~ **Emery Heuermann** – 15 years
 - ~ **Dewey O’Neal** – 10 years

The Commander then presented Certificates of Appreciation and Challenge Coins to Executive Committee members for a job well done. [Later, she presented **Win Salter** – at home – with the Legionnaire-of-the-Year award, as well as his Certificate and Coin.]

The Commander then invited members of the Auxiliary into the meeting. Vice Commander **Ed Jarvis** inducted the members of the new Executive Committee, and **Rosalie Fryer** then administered the oath of office to the Executive Committee of the Auxiliary.

The Meeting was closed in the prescribed manner at 8:30 PM. and refreshments were served.

VETERANS ADVOCATE

[The following is from **Jerry Patterson**, Chairman, Texas Veterans Land Board,]

“Fellow Texans:

“The innovative Watkins-Logan-Garrison Texas State Veterans Home in Tyler recently welcomed its first residents, who will no doubt be spoiled by the eager staff. Our Tyler home is not your traditional nursing home; it has 10 cottages, each containing 10 private rooms. This new design has more of a home-like feel to it, with each cottage boasting an open kitchen, a dining room and large table. Residents will eat family-style meals together at the table and enjoy each other's company in the cottage's large living room, with its fireplace.

“The state-of-the-art Tyler veterans home joins seven others across the state, in Amarillo, Big Spring, Bonham, El Paso, Floresville, McAllen and Temple. But unlike previous Texas State Veterans Homes, this one focuses on drawing residents into a social connection by mixing the best communal aspects of a home while still maintaining privacy and independence for residents.

“In other important VLB news, I'm pleased to announce new, higher loan limits for veterans seeking to buy a house and/or land. Now an eligible Texas veteran can get a VLB home loan of up to \$417,000 and a \$100,000 VLB land loan for tracts of 1 acre or more. This combination allows veterans to buy tracts near cities and build their dream homes on them.

“For additional information on homes and cemeteries, as well as low-cost homes, land and home improvement loans, please call (800) 252.VETS (8387) or visit the Veterans Land Board website at texasveterans.com. Or, find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/TXVLB](https://www.facebook.com/TXVLB).”



Important Contact Numbers

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

County Veterans Serv. Offices: Montgomery County 936-539-7842. Harris County 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

EVENT BULLETIN BOARD

WHAT ~ WHEN ~ WHERE

July 4, 2012: The Woodlands 4th of July Parade: All members of the Post are welcome and encouraged to be a part of the Post's entry into the 4th of July Parade. Ride the float or walk along side. Be a part of this great celebration. Parade leaves from The Woodlands Methodist Church on the corner of Lake Woodlands Drive and Grogan's Mill Road at 9:00 AM. Come early because there will be a crowd.

July 11 to 15, 2012: Department Convention: For the first time in a long time, the Department Convention will be held in Houston. This is the perfect time to attend your first Department Convention without having to pay for lodgings and travel many miles to get there. So, attend and learn more about your Legion so you can speak more easily about it to prospective members. And, there's opportunity for fun and relaxation. Crown Plaza Hotel, Houston, at Reliant Stadium.

July 19, 2012: New Officers Take Over: At the July meeting, the newly elected officers will run the meeting and carry out all the needed administrative actions to kick off the year, including the Commander's selection of new and ongoing programs to be funded and carried out, naming of Standing and Special committees and the appointment of chairpersons, at least. These guys and gals who occupy new chairs will need your support. So be there for them!

July 24, 2012: Casino Trip: For those of you who missed the last casino day-trip, you can join the magnificent seven who went. Let's try for a larger turnout on our next jaunt; this time to L'auberger Casino Resort in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

ELECTRIC CARS EVOLVE WITHOUT TOTAL SYSTEMS ENGINEERING

[The May 30th edition of the WSJ ran an op-ed piece by Dartmouth University Professor Ron Adner. That column inspired this article, which cites some of Adner's examples and conclusions.]

If you are a USAF veteran or were trained to manage large, complex projects, you know what is meant by "systems engineering". Back in the 1950's, the Air Force recognized the need to procure new aircraft on a systems basis, as development of the six "century-series" fighters proceeded. No longer was it enough to spec and procure an airplane, then separately buy rockets, avionics, ramp power units, refueling hoses, maintenance tools, etc. Each aircraft configuration required defining its whole system of needs, developing all components concurrently and procuring everything through one prime contractor. So, Systems Engineering became basic to the Air Force and became adopted as a total control-coordination mechanism for all complex projects – military and civilian. It includes a dozen or so of ongoing disciplines and related communications, such as System Definition, Configuration Management and Inter-face Control.

Today, most auto makers are developing or marketing vehicles which obtain all or part of their propulsive energy from banks of storage batteries. The industry has proceeded with electric car development without applying a systems engineering approach. This could be shortsightedness, a "head-in-the-sand" attitude or a case of unintended consequences. The auto maker produces the vehicle, and it includes a battery-charger inter-face (a socket) and maybe a cable, but that's all. The absence of systems engineering is due to the lack of control over the many external interfaces and secondary impacts which exist and are not being adequately recognized. Today's electric cars are doomed as a result! Two examples:

The Secondary Market – Electric car batteries are very costly and can account for one-third of the cost of the vehicle, while offering limited driving range. Every year will see improvements in battery technology, but the benefactors of that are those who have yet to purchase an electric vehicle. The useful life-span of batteries and their ability to hold a charge degrades with use. The pace of battery development reduces the worth of existing batteries and will give the used-vehicle shopper pause. Lousy resale value or poor trade-in allowances will kill the used car market for electric vehicles. So, today's and probably tomorrow's electric cars are for the ignorant, the leaser and the affluent liberal "greens".

Power Grid Capacity – As long as only a handful of electric car users plug in each morning at, say, the company parking lot or garage, the power grid will accept the added current load. But, if, say, just 5% of the cars in Los Angeles County were to plug in at one time, it would add a 750 megawatt load on California's already-stressed grid – a load equal to the generating capacity of two mid-sized power plants! Unless major increases in our power infrastructure are accomplished in advance of the need, the very success of the electric car will assure its failure.

Summary - It does not seem likely that Nissan, GM, Toyota or Tesla will help address such challenges which must be resolved if the electric car is going to go anywhere.

Win Salter

AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS



Dayna Salter
Unit 305 President

Our June meeting saw the installation of our new officers (see box below). We also conducted some business in the short meeting.

New committee chairs were appointed. **Rosalie Fryer** will be heading up both Poppy and Good

Will, and **Mary Bolin** has agreed to chair the committee to plan a Fall

Crafts Show.

Stephanie Marshall, Joan Sparks and **Veronica Maiolo** will continue as chairs for the Girls State, Americanism and Social Committees. **Geri Mulvihill** will be in charge of membership. **Ursula McConnell** agreed to chair National Security as we continue our program of care packages to troops in Afghanistan and elsewhere on active duty.

We are still looking for someone to chair VA&R committee to help find, plan and organize our participation in programs for veterans. That will be a topic of discussion at the July 19th meeting.

The Tupperware fundraiser closed with a profit over \$200 coming to the unit. Purchases will be distributed at the July meeting. Thanks to **Jenny Le** for the idea.

The Unit Scholarship fund is growing nicely. The raffle for the patriotic white teddy bear and \$50 Visa card will be closed out with a drawing on July 15th. Please contact **Joan Sparks** via email jzremo1@gmail.com if you would like to help out by selling tickets.

Also plans are in place to award the first Unit scholarship in a few years this August. Please be sure to have your freshman apply. If you need a form and/or the rules, please contact me.

The Department of Texas convention is in Houston this year at the Reliant Crowne Plaza, July 12--15. A six delegate team of **Salter, Fryer, Bannon, Sparks, Mulvihill** and **Le** will be attending on behalf of Unit 305.

The Unit will be out in force for the Fourth of July Parade through The Woodlands Market Square. If you would like to help decorate and ride on the float, we will be congregating in the Woodlands Methodist Church (Methodome) parking lot around 7:30 am on Wednesday, 7/4. The parade rolls at 9 am.



I look forward to seeing everyone at the July 19th meeting. We will be doing sandwiches and salads again as the best fare for hot weather. **Veronica Maiolo** will be calling around to coordinate the dishes presented.

Have a safe and Happy Fourth of July!
Dayna Salter

AUXILIARY UNIT 2012-2013 OFFICERS & CONTACT INFORMATION

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