



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 "THE WOODLANDS POST" THE BUGLE



March 2013 Volume 9, Issue 3

COMMANDER'S CORNER



Commander Pete Koch

Dear Legionnaires,
We held the February meeting in another location due to scheduling conflicts, but it worked out all right. The meeting was held in a building that was built in 1909 as a one-room school house. Prior to the meeting, the Four Chaplains Memorial Ceremony was held for the Post and Auxiliary by **Chaplains Jerry and Mary Lee Mulvihill**. It was a very moving ceremony. The *Conroe Courier* newspaper sent a reporter to cover the event, so, for those of you who receive the *Courier*, look for an article concerning the event, clip it out and bring it to the next meeting.

The March meeting will include an initiation of all new members of Post 305. This will be a special ceremony for all incoming

members from 2011 to 2013 that have never been initiated. If you are one of these members that have never been initiated, please come and participate in the ceremony in your honor and let us formally welcome you again.

Membership remains an issue and we need those renewals returned to the Post as soon as possible. It will not be long until the 2012-2013 membership year has ended and we will begin 2013-2014. We would hate to see the continuous years of service broken for any of our veterans. The programs that we support, including Boys State, Scholarships, Oratorical Contest and others, rely on the Post's share of your dues --- nearly 42 cents per month. It follows that we need your support to continue these programs.

After discussions with the Auxiliary Unit, we have decided to change the format of our monthly meetings to allow us sufficient time to better include speakers, Post and Unit training and entertainment, along with the business and social hours. As of the April meeting, we will slot the business portion of each meeting from 7:00 PM until 7:45 PM. From 7:45 PM until 8:15 PM we will plan for speakers, training and/or entertainment; and, from 8:15 PM until 10:00 PM we will have our

social period and clean-up, when the Auxiliary will present pot-luck dishes and drinks and we will mingle and chat. The Post will obtain the services of speakers who can keep us updated on changes in military benefits, current status of veterans' health care, local newsworthy items, etc. If any of you have a topic that you think would be of interest to our members, including training subjects, please direct them to Second Vice-Commander **Mickey Fussell**, and we will discuss them at Executive Committee meetings and find a date to place them on the schedule.

The semi-annual Rummage Sale is held in April and October. Normally, it is the Friday and Saturday after the third Thursday meeting of those months. This Spring, it is on the 19th and 20th of April (set-up day and sale day). Donations to the rummage sale are always needed and appreciated and are tax-deductible. Because the Post is an IRS-approved 501(c)19 organization, we can offer a donation receipt that can be used with your tax return as proof of a charitable donation. We have volunteers with trucks and trailers to pick up any items you wish to donate. The Rummage Sale is held at the **Robinson Road Community Center**, located in Oak Ridge North where Robinson Road ends at

Hanna Road. Set-up on Friday is from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Volunteers normally meet at the Community Center about 8:00 AM on Friday, then travel to our storage building as a group to load everything up and bring it back to the Community Center. If you have a truck, please bring it. If not, please come anyway as we always need volunteers to help load and unload and to organize the sales room.

We now have "Welcome Packages" that we will be presenting to all new and transferred members as they attend their first meeting. Each one will also be assigned a Sponsor to assist him or her in becoming familiar with the Post and its members. These packages contain information that all Post members should be aware of. If any of you would like a copy, please contact me at petekoch76@gmail.com and I will assure you that you will get one.

Our next meeting will be at 7:00 PM on March 21st at the South County Community Center on Lake Robbins Road in the Woodlands.

For God and Country,

Pete Koch

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
February 21, 2013

Due to a scheduling mix-up, the meeting was held at the Oklahoma Community Center, north of Hufsmith and south of Oklahoma. Fourteen brave Post members and a similar number of Auxiliary braved the night to come to a strange and different place.

Before the business meetings commenced, **Chaplain Jerry Mulvihill** and his wife **Mary Lee**

did an outstanding job of conducting the tribute to the Four Chaplains lost at sea during WWII.



The Post meeting was then convened in the prescribed manner. The Commander checked with Sergeant-at-Arms **Jim Bolin**, to assure that we had a quorum, which he confirmed. Next, the Commander asked Finance Officer **Kim Biggerstaff** to give the financial report. She reported that the General Fund had \$17,330.83 and the Allocated Fund and Money Market were at \$22,377.24, for a total in all funds of \$39,708.07.

Next, the Commander called on First Vice Commander **Emery Heuermann** to give his membership report. He reported that the Post has 302 paid members for the year which is 92% of the goal of 333 members.

Mickey Fussell, Second Vice Commander, reported that he is planning the next outing to Coushatta Casino Resort on March 5th. The bus leaves First Class Tours at 8:00 AM and will return about 8:00 PM. Make reservations a week ahead of the outing at 281-443-1200. All are invited. Call **Mickey** if you have any questions at 281-296-9344. He also noted that the Conroe Seniors take many trips each month and that we would be welcomed on any trip. He specifically mentioned their trip to the greyhound dog track on May

22nd. Mark that date on your calendar. More info later. **Mickey** also reported that the Auxiliary was working hard on new decorations for the 4th of July parade float.

The Commander then asked for a report from **Jim Bolin** on the status of the **Birdies-for-Charity** drive. He said that the response has not been going so well, with the deadline for submission of guesses to him being March 25. That is after the next membership meeting, so give your Birdies guesses to him at the meeting or by the deadline. If you did not receive a pledge form and would like to participate, call **Jim** a 281-251-2352, give him your guess and answer a few questions, and you will be in the mix for a new car. **Jim** also reported that **Dayton Denton** (absent) is on track to conduct interviews of Boys State hopefuls by the end of March. Anyone wanting to help should call **Dayton** at 832-928-6054.

There being no further business to come before the membership, the meeting was closed in due order at 7:50 PM.



VETERANS ADVOCATE

ARE YOUR VETERAN-CHARITY DOLLARS GETTING TO THE VETS?

We have all received tons of mailed pleas to donate our scarce dollars to this or that charity --- many of them assisting veterans and veterans' families in some

way. Such drives by the DAV, the Purple Heart Service Foundation, the Wounded Warriors Project, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Paralyzed Veterans of America and many others, including the service-related associations (AFA, Navy League, Marine Corps Foundation, etc.) draw sympathy and support from us as wartime veterans. But, how much of what we give gets to those we are told are helped?

When you go to the Better Business Bureau's website www.bbb.org/us/WiseGiving, you will feel assured many charities that flunk other evaluators' criteria are worthy of your contributions. But are they? **The Blinded Veterans Association** says its goal is to "help veterans and their families overcome the challenges of blindness," according to its website. Services include helping them take advantage of Department of Veterans Affairs services and employment training. If you check with the BBB, you'll feel assured the association is worthy of your donations. It is both accredited by BBB's Wise Giving Alliance charity-rating service and has the BBB's seal of approval. But, the American Institute of Philanthropy's CharityWatch, however, gives the association an "F". The other leading charity-rating service, Charity Navigator, awards it zero stars out of four. "There are 158,000 veterans that are legally blind, but only 20% of (the association's) budget is spent on field services to help blinded vets," says CharityWatch founder and President Daniel Borochoff. "The rest was primarily used for mailings and public service announcements. Is this really how a blinded veteran, who can't find a job or even pay his gas bill on time, wants his charitable aid to be spent?"

The differences between the groups' ratings underscore one of the challenges facing BBB as its 100th-anniversary year draws to a close. Just as it was dogged by "pay to play" allegations about its business ratings two years ago, some people question whether BBB's charity ratings really have teeth, and whether the up to \$15,000 it receives annually from charities that pay to use its seal of accreditation influences its decisions. The questions come as many charities, particularly smaller ones, struggle to raise money, as the proportion of people's incomes devoted to charitable giving remains virtually stagnant. As people decide where to send their annual or year-end charitable donations, Borochoff doesn't think BBB's ratings should guide them. "How can you be a watchdog when you are getting paid by the very charities you're supposed to be rating and monitoring?" he asks.

So, the responsibility is on you, the prospective donor, to do some research to assure your dollars are really going to help. But, you can always depend on The American Legion and its Auxiliary to assure your donations there are fully helping veterans and their families.

FUNDING DEFENSE AND VETERANS' BENEFITS

Leon Panetta, as Secretary of Defense, sent a letter to House and Senate Armed Service Committee leaders warning he would recommend a Presidential veto if they don't remove certain provisions from the defense authorization bill that the administration finds objectionable. Among the four-page list of complaints were a couple of personnel issues. Panetta urged removal of House-passed limits

on annual Army and Marine Corps force cuts. He also urged the committee leaders to reverse their refusal to let DoD impose large TRICARE fee hikes on military beneficiaries. Will the President really veto the defense bill over those issues? No. Similar provisions have been included in many previous defense bills. The specific wording of such letters gives a better idea of what the big objections are. The four-page list of complaints includes only a few issues to which the Pentagon "strongly objects." These typically refer to major operational issues, limits on White House powers to conduct international affairs, etc. On TRICARE fees, Panetta's letter expresses "hope the conferees will reconsider." In any event, Armed Services Committee leaders have largely dismissed the veto threat, noting "They say that every year." The last defense bill to be vetoed was President Bush's pocket veto of the FY2008 Defense Authorization Act which was quickly passed after a minor provision was deleted. The last one before that was the FY1996 Defense Authorization Act, vetoed by President Clinton. [Source: MOAA/ Leg Up 14 Dec 2012]

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

KEEP YOUR POWDER DRY!

Quoting 27 words from The Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution:

“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” [Amendment 2]

On January 27, 2013, **The Boston Globe** printed a letter to the editor sent by Mark Flaherty of Norfolk, Mass. Flaherty wrote:

“As we enter 2013, the government is trying to erode our Second Amendment rights. Whether you support firearm ownership or not, you need to realize that our Founding Fathers

put this position into the Constitution for a reason. Our Founders believed that the people of this country should be as armed as our government.

“If we allow our employees (the government) to decide which rights we do have and cannot have, then they cease to be rights. You may be OK with restricting our Second Amendment rights, but will you be just as OK when they start coming for other rights? Without the Second Amendment, we don’t have any other rights.

“‘From my cold dead hands’ is more than just a quote; it’s a battle cry. I served my country, I fought for freedom, and I refuse to sit back and watch as our rights get trampled on and taken away.”



EVENT BULLETIN BOARD WHAT ~ WHERE ~ WHEN

Tuesday, March 5; “Hats Off To Heroes” Baseball Game: Post 305 and Auxiliary members are invited to attend the 7:00 PM ballgame between The Woodlands H/S varsity team and Fort Bend’s Travis H/S at TWHS’s field, Scotland Yard (3800 South Panther Creek Drive, directly behind McCullough Junior High). Military service will be recognized and honored. Unit President Salter needs to inform the Highlander Home Run Club of how many seats to reserve for us, so phone her if you are attracted to the “old ball game”.

Tuesday, March 5; Daytrip To Coushatta Casino Resort: In an effort to offset the impacts of sequestration, the Post and Unit are heading for Louisiana to try their luck again at the Coushatta Casino. If you have not already reserved your seat, go to the ballgame above. If you are on board, you know all about trip details.

Thursday, March 21; Initiation Of New Post Members: For many months the Post has failed to formally recognize and introduce its new members. This will be remedied at the March membership meeting where an initiation will take place. The Commander will “play catch-up” and so welcome those new members who are in

Sunday, March 24: Groundbreaking For The Texas Capitol Vietnam Veterans Memorial: This two-day event recognizes Texans who gave their lives in the Vietnam War. All Texas ‘Nam veterans and the general public are welcome to participate at any of the venues – LBJ Presidential Library auditorium and Great Hall, Austin’s Scholtz Garten restaurant (evening reception for vets) and the Capitol Grounds.

Saturday, April 20; Spring Rummage Sale: With the assembly of treasures and set-up of the sales room on Friday, April 19, our semi-annual Rummage Sale takes place at the usual location – Robinson Road Community Center – on April 20th. We will be pleading for tax-deductible donations of reusable goods in the April Bugle, but it is not too early to begin your spring cleaning.

Saturday, April 20; District 7 Convention: If you helped with setting up for the Rummage Sale, you can avoid the hassle of sale day by heading for Post 84 in Madisonville to take in the District 7 Convention. In reality, the Post and the Auxiliary will be selecting our delegates and planning how we will meet the District’s challenge of the year.

AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS



Dayna Salter, President

Our February meeting was short and noisy, but productive, as we managed to vote to fund several worthy causes while sharing our temporary venue at the Oklahoma Community Center with the Post.

We voted to send money to the Texas Department to help fund the National Veterans' Creative Arts Festival, Cancer Research and programs for homeless female veterans. We also voted to send a donation to the Four Chaplains National Foundation as a yearly remembrance. It was nice to spend some of our hard earned money. But, that means we need to start earning more money for 2013 programs.

Along that vein, don't forget your "Birdies for Charity" Fundraising efforts. Although this is a Post fundraiser, I would like to remind all Unit members to contact friends, neighbors, co-workers and ask them to contribute \$20 or more. Each \$20 donation gives the donor one chance to guess the number of birdies to be had at the Shell Houston Open scheduled for the end of March. A \$100 donation gives the donor five guesses. The Grand Prize will be awarded to the winner of a drawing from the correct entries on May 9, 2013. This has been one of our big fundraisers each year. The 2013 goal of Chairperson **Rosalie Fryer** is \$1000 for our Unit coffers. Entries are due at our next meeting on March 21st.

Other upcoming fundraisers are the Rummage Sale on April 20th, and a table at the VFW craft show on May 4th. Please save those dates and start planning your baking and other crafts. We will discuss this further in March.

Our Girls State program is off to a great start with enthusiastic candidates from three high schools this year. Oak Ridge HS has rejoined The Woodlands HS

and College Park HS in nominating potential candidates. As of this writing **Stephanie Marshall** is still scheduling interviews. If you are interested in helping out, please contact her.

I have a serious plea to all members to email me their hours so that as we begin the reporting season for the Texas Department, I have documentation of all our hard work. All the work you have done between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013 counts for this period. Think of all those hours baking for sales, sitting at tables, knitting, sewing, crocheting, preparing for meetings and potlucks, distributing poppies, working with veterans' children or elderly vets and their families. Meetings and conventions count. I will send out an email reminder for this important data.

Our March meeting is scheduled for the 21st at the same old place. The potluck will be the postponed Italian Night. **Veronica Maiolo** will be calling around to coordinate the dishes. I hope to see you there.

Happy St. Patrick's Day
-Dayna Salter



AUXILIARY UNIT OFFICERS & CONTACT INFORMATION

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CHAPLAIN: Mary Lee Mulvihill; Tel: (281) 353-5574; E-mail: mulvihill1954@yahoo.com
PARLIAMENTARIAN: Rosalie Fryer; Tel: (936) 520-8895; E-mail: rcfryer@charter.net
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Liz Heuermann; Tel: (281) 362-8431; Email: lizheuermann@peoplepc.com
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CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCALE</u>
Sun.	Mar. 17	St. Patrick's Day	
Mon.	Mar. 18	Post Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Tues.	Mar. 19	Iraq War Began (2003)	
Thur.	Mar. 21	Membership Meetings (New Member Initiations)	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM.
Sun.	Mar. 24 to	Groundbreaking For Texas Vietnam Veterans Monument	LBJ Presidential Library and Texas Capitol Grounds, Austin
Mon.	Mar. 25		
Fri.	Mar. 29	Good Friday	
Sun.	Mar. 31	Easter Sunday	
Sat.	Apr. 6	Army Day	
Mon.	Apr. 15	Post Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Apr. 18	Membership Meetings	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Fri.	Apr. 19	Set-up for Rummage Sale	Robinson Road C. C. @ 8:00 AM
Sat.	Apr. 20	Post Rummage Sale	Robinson Road C. C. @ 7:00 AM
Sat.	Apr. 20	District 7 Convention	Post 84, Madisonville, TX @ 9:30 AM
Wed.	May 1	Loyalty Day	
Wed.	May 8	Victory over Europe (VE-day)	

POST OFFICERS & CONTACT INFORMATION

MAIL ADDRESS: American Legion Post 305, P. O. Box 9336, The Woodlands, TX 77387

POSITION, NAME & TELEPHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL

COMMANDER:	Pete Koch	(936) 273-3588	petekoch76@gmail.com
FIRST VICE CMDR:	Emery Heuermann	(281) 362-8431	emeryheuermann@charter.net
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CIRCULATION: Emery Heuermann

WEBMASTER: Emery Heuermann

www.alpost305.org and www.mypost.org

FACEBOOK MANAGER: Kimberly Biggerstaff

MEETING DAY & PLACE: 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. The Auxiliary Unit hosts a pot-luck supper following the meetings. The Center is located on the southeast corner at the intersection of Lake Robbins Drive and Grogan's Mill Road, next to the library.