



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305

“THE WOODLANDS POST”

THE BUGLE



JANUARY 2014

VOLUME 10; ISSUE 1

THINK NOT OF THE PRICE OF YOUR DUES; THINK OF THE PRICE YOU PAID TO BE ELIGIBLE

Post Commander Pete Koch



COMMANDER'S CORNER

It's hard to believe that we are starting a new year and that 2013 passed so rapidly! With the holiday season behind us, it is time to look forward, but to also take stock of where we are with respect to the goals I set six months ago and what additional programs need our collective attention. As simply as I can put it, those goals were:

- 1a. Continue the programs of the previous year, once they are restated and found to be still worthy.
- 1b. Plan for succession of each officer position and committee chairperson and train a replacement in that job.
- 2. Develop and implement a formal public relations plan.

3. Make meeting changes which will attract more members.

4. Conceive of and implement more interesting social activities to better know one another and the families.

We are halfway through the Legion year, and I have to admit we have not advanced goal achievement to even close to the 50% level. So, whether my goals were not achievable in a year's time, or we have not collectively focused our effort on goal achievement, I am not going to analyze here. But, I am offering nine new year's Resolutions which may, or may not, further goal achievement, but are specific to the six months which lie ahead.

- 1. We volunteered to host the 7th District Convention in April. **I RESOLVE THAT** we all pitch in and make that short affair as effective and as memorable as any other host Post has managed recently.
- 2. The three R's of membership – Renewal, Retention and Recruitment – need better application of effort. Results of such effort must include enlisting some younger veterans and

giving them an opportunity to lead. In December 2011, I attended my first Legion meeting and, although not a young

New Member Peter Koch



veteran, was selected to lead you seven months later. Seven years ago, this column observed: *“We were at 322 members for the year on Dec. 17th. We need to reach the goal of 410 by the time of the Department Convention. We would need a couple of more to reach our all-time high, and 433 to make the “Hall of Fame” award. Let's do it all soon, so we get it out of the way.”*

The arithmetic is clear; our goal then was 410; it is today 322. We are leaner now, yet the second largest Post in the District, but are we better at what we do? **I RESOLVE THAT** we focus our membership drive to (a) exceed today's goal by one payment and (b) enlist three new members, hopefully younger guys and gals. [I was

one of three who joined in December 2011, but where are the other two – **Tony Green** and **Bob Bagley**?]

3. In my judgment (and by **Dayton Denton's** clear opinion) this Post is failing to reach out within the community to directly help veterans and their families. **I RESOLVE THAT** we adopt at least two new programs to begin in 2014, scoped to help the hospitalized veterans at the DeBakey Medical Center and the veterans residing in our patch including their families.

4. All the years we spent in uniform were devoted to training, interrupted by the bad guys shooting at us, and we returning fire. In the Legion, training on a schedule, interrupted by project work, business meetings and socializing, is a real need by which you sharpen your knowledge of the "Legion way" to conduct Post Operations, manage Elected Programs, promote Membership Growth, assist with Post Fundraising, provide Effective Leadership and support Public Relations. This Post, as far as I know, has rarely conducted formal training sessions and that needs to change. We have in house the training resources of three District-recognized trainers – Everett Ison, Kim Biggerstaff and your Commander. **I RESOLVE THAT** the Post conduct at least two training sessions in the next six months on two of the topics listed above, and that Post members be encouraged – by

carrot or stick – to attend District, Division or Department training sessions.

5. We have at hand a draft public relations plan in support of Goal Two, but it needs review, finalization and adoption. **I RESOLVE THAT** this review and adoption be accomplished by April 1st, including input from media consultant **Donna Wick Milstead.**

6. Our banked financial resources seem to hover around \$40,000, which is a good thing and a bad thing. Good because we are solvent; bad because we are not expending some of it on programs while not allowing it to grow. **I RESOLVE THAT** the Post invest \$20,000 in conservative equities or a fund, to be managed by the Finance Committee under guidelines to be set.

7. There has been criticism that this Post is disorganized as evidenced by poor reflective action, or none, when unplanned events occur and a Post response is indicated. **I RESOLVE THAT** each elected officer provide a written description of his/her duties, including those prescribed by handbook but recast to reflect Post 305's setting and practices. As these definitions are produced, some correlation must take place to eliminate overlap and to assure all conceivable events have a lead action taker.

8. Among us, we know very little about the majority of our

members – personal, professional, military, work status, etc. It would be a great help to the Post to have a data base of the members' skills, interests and availability. **I RESOLVE THAT** the Post conduct a canvass of all members, using a carefully prepared questionnaire to gain better knowledge about what comprises the membership.

9. I RESOLVE THAT I will be crystal clear when I request an action as to the lead responsibility for a Post business task I want accomplished. And, I want acknowledgement of such order. We are a military-related organization and need to act more like one. We all have had that experience, even though in the distant past.

Now, I understand that my "resolves" do not carry the authority of a formal Post Resolution, with all the "whereas'es", but they should convey to you what I see as beneficial, if not necessary, over the next six months. And, within that time, you are going to lose my leadership while I get some needed head repair. So, **Emery Heuermann, First Vice Commander**, and a Past Commander, will sub for me. I trust you will thrive under his guidance and help him to keep us on an even keel.

For God and Country,

Pete Koch

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

December 19, 2013

The Post Membership Meeting was convened at 7:10 PM in the prescribed manner and a quorum was determined. The

minutes of the last Membership Meeting were approved.

Finance Officer Kim Biggerstaff gave the financial report as follows: General Fund - \$18,656.35; Allocated Fund - \$22,881.72; Total of both funds - \$41,538.07. The report was approved pending audit. The **Finance Officer** also furnished a spread sheet depicting how the money was received and spent during the previous quarter.

Reporting for the **First Vice Commander Emery Heuermann**, **Second Vice Commander Mickey Fussell** reported on membership; the Post has 258 members paid up for the year 2013-2014. That is 83.2% of our goal of 322. According to the time line, we should be at 85% by the end of December.

Continuing and reporting as the **Second Vice Commander, Mickey** noted that the trip to the Battleship Texas National Monument was thoroughly enjoyed by the six people who attended. The next trip will be to the National Museum of Funerals on February 5. Tripmakers will leave at 9:30 AM from the Methodist Church parking lot (where the 4th of July parade assembles). A lunch stop after the tour of the museum is on the schedule. Mickey has checked the reviews by attendees to the museum, and most all are very positive, so a good time will be had by all.

The next report came from Service Officer, **Dayton Denton**. In an effort to lead by example, Dayton recounted the way that he is helping people in need as well as the Legion. He is leading the Pledge of

Allegiance at the monthly Woodlands Chamber of Commerce breakfast. This will gain us recognition by people who can help us. Also he helped with food for a woman who was receiving only \$1,000 per month. He likened it to being his own food pantry. Also he is visiting local merchants that claim to give a 10% discount to veterans. He wants them to put up a sign saying they give a 10% discount. He also brought up that member **Steve McKinsey** is taking personal hygiene items to veterans at the VA Center. He noted that we are not supporting him as we once were by bringing personal hygiene and comfort items, paperback books and ball caps to the meeting.

There being no further business to come before the membership, the meeting was closed in the prescribed manner.

The Post and the Auxiliary enjoyed a light menu of finger food and comradeship until closing time.

BOARDING PARTY TAKES OVER BATTLESHIP TEXAS

On December 4th, a small but determined boarding party visited the USS Texas in LaPorte and inspected all available decks and compartments. Led by **Second Vice Commander Mickey Fussell**, the party included **Jim** and **Mary Bolin**, **Bubba** and **Kim Keng** (aka **Kim Biggerstaff**) and **Win Salter**. The ship, a National Monument, has been undergoing repairs to save it from the ravages of time and decay. The boarders were all well impressed by the old ship, which fought in both World Wars in Europe, North Africa

and the Pacific. Below decks, the spaces are staged with appropriate artifacts – white china mugs, steel mess trays, officers' silver service, a rack of

L to R: Mary and Jim Bolin, Win Salter, Kim Biggerstaff and Mickey



M-1 Garand rifles, galley pots and pans, four-high stacks of sleeping racks, machine shops, and lockers. Topside is bristling with guns from 20mm AA to the main batteries of 10 14-inch guns in five turrets.

Kim Biggerstaff Mans 3" Gun



The boarding party went ashore to raid the gift shop and enjoy a fine lunch at the Monument Inn.

ANNUAL CHILI COOKOFF CONTEST

January's meeting is Chili Cookoff Contest time. We invite members of the Post and the Auxiliary to get out their best chili recipe and make a pot to bring to the meeting.

A few years ago, only the Post made the chili and the Auxiliary became the tasters and voters for the winner. However, for the last few years, both the Post and Auxiliary have made chili to be tasted and voted upon by the opposite organization. This has generated a

lot of bragging, but for some unknown reason, the number of pots of chili have decreased, especially on the Post side. Last year the Post only had three contestants. The Post used to get at least six, so the Post needs some new faces to get involved. Not only will your entry show support for the Post, but the Post will have enough chili to feed Auxiliary members.

The winner on the Post side will receive a great looking plaque celebrating your first place finish in the taste test.



VETERAN'S ADVOCATE

NEW VA BURIAL AWARD PROCEDURES

The VA has proposed to change and simplify the rules for a surviving spouse to receive the basic monetary burial award. Basically, it is recognizing that any funeral will cost more than the allotted benefit. Thus, to make it easier on the survivor, the VA will not require a written application with attached receipts. They also say that they will be simplifying the descriptions and regulations to make it easier for the survivor to understand. Following are the VA's proposed guidelines for the benefits for a non-service related death.

Non-Service-Related Death

For deaths on or after October 1, 2011, VA will pay up to \$700 toward burial and funeral

expenses (if hospitalized by VA at time of death), or \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (if not hospitalized by VA at time of death), and a \$700 plot-interment allowance (if not buried in a National Cemetery). For deaths on or after December 1, 2001, but before October 1, 2011, VA will pay up to \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses and a \$300 plot-interment allowance. The plot-interment allowance is \$150 for deaths prior to December 1, 2001. If the death occurs while the veteran was in a VA hospital or under VA-contracted nursing home care, some of all of the costs for transporting the veteran's remains may be reimbursed. An annual increase in burial and plot allowances, for deaths occurring after October 1, 2011, begins in fiscal year 2013, based on the Consumer Price Index for the preceding 12-month period.

TRICARE NEW-CUSTOMER SERVICE FEATURES

TRICARE beneficiaries now have an easy way to access customer service features. The [TRICARE.mil](http://www.tricare.mil) home page has a new "I want to..." section offering beneficiaries a gateway to links that help them manage their health care from prescriptions to enrollments and much more. The "I want to..." section of <http://www.tricare.mil> was launched on December 1st. The redesigned home page focuses on tools for beneficiaries to manage their health care benefits. "I want to..." has quick links to secure login portals for more than a dozen customer service features including:

- Managing prescriptions
- Enrolling or purchasing a plan

- Finding a doctor
- Updating personal information
- Filing or checking on a claim
- Paying a bill
- Booking appointments at a military hospital or clinic
- Changing a primary-care physician
- Viewing military health records

Many beneficiaries may not even know these resources are available online. The new look [TRICARE.mil](http://www.tricare.mil) home page is a hub for beneficiaries to manage their health care benefits from the comfort of home or on the go with mobile sites. Mobile, online and toll-free customer service options are time savers and prevent unnecessary trips to a military hospital or clinic. Other common requests, such as comparing plans or seeing what's covered, are also featured in the "I want to..." section as well as links to download forms, or subscribe to TRICARE email alerts.

[Source: TRICARE News Release 3 Dec 2013 ++]

Important Contact Numbers

Houston Regional VA Office:

1-713-383-7842

County Veterans Service Offices:

Montgomery 1-936-539-7842

(Ms. Kay L. Lee)

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

Dist. 16 – Brandon Creighton

936-539-0028

Dist. 126 – Patricia Harless

281-376-4114

AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS



Dayna Salter, President

I am sad to say that we lost three of our senior members since the last Bugle was published. **Annicke Nanninga** passed away on November 29th, **Leona Montgomery** passed away on December 2nd and **Jeanne Salter** on December 31. All had suffered from dementia in their later years, and had become quite frail. Our Unit's condolences go to family and friends.

At Leona's memorial service on December 14th, the Unit provided the Auxiliary Funeral Service and food for the family after the services. Dual Post/Unit member **Kim Biggerstaff** assisted me by assuming the role of Chaplain. We put on quite a spread of sandwiches and cookies, and the family was very appreciative.

As our Unit 305 members age and pass on to the Supreme Com-

mander, it should give us pause to reflect and consider where our Unit is going now that we are well into the 21st century. Since I became President in January 2012, eight senior members have passed away. The problem is that we have not replenished that number with new senior members. Our Unit members are very good and generous in signing up new granddaughters or great granddaughters as new junior members, but we need workers as well. Recent senior members that were signed up in last minute membership drives rarely renew. We are constantly striving to meet goals set by the Department that do not accurately reflect our dwindling population of senior members.

What we need are the mothers, wives, sisters of the current and recent military. Where are the 30, 40 and even 50 year olds? A suggestion of regularly providing child care during our meetings was made. We had that once, and I have asked the Post **Commander Pete Koch** to contract with the SCCC for two meeting rooms for the Auxiliary – one for our meeting and one for children to do some crafts with a sitter. He agreed completely with that plan. Potential Post and Unit members would all benefit from the service.

The next problem is to find potential members in that age group. I would like to challenge every unit member to look among their friends, co-workers or church group to find those potential members. Stress the work we do raising money for veterans programs, our successful Girls State track record, and community projects in the schools.

We need to bring these new members in, let them learn how the Auxiliary works, and hopefully get some number of them interested in serving the Unit or the Department by becoming an officer. The skills that they would develop in such roles would help them in the workplace or in other endeavors.

We have not succeeded in developing a viable succession plan for the current membership. That needs to be our goal for 2014.

Our next meeting is January 16th and will be the **Chili Cookoff!** Dust off your crock pots and start cooking!

Dayna



2013-14 AUXILIARY UNIT OFFICERS & CONTACT INFORMATION

PRESIDENT: Dayna Salter; Tel: (281) 229-1365; E-mail: dayna.salter@ymail.com

VICE PRESIDENT: Vergie Fussell; Tel: (281) 367-7115; E-mail: V.H.Fussells@gmail.com

SECRETARY: Sandie Holzinger; Tel: (281) 364-8590; E-mail: zing1991@yahoo.com

TREASURER: (Vacant)

HISTORIAN: Stephanie Marshall; Tel: (832) 637-2909; E-mail: edaymemories@hotmail.com

CHAPLAIN: Jenny Hamann; Tel: (281) 323-4530; E-mail: jmlchirp@yahoo.com

PARLIAMENTARIAN: Rosalie Fryer; Tel: (936) 520-8895; E-mail: rcfryer@charter.net

SGT-AT-ARMS: Annie Smith; Tel: (281) 367-4714 E-mail: c.smith@thewesternsystemsinc.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

Mary Bolin; Tel: (281) 251-2352; Email: jpb20006@sbcglobal.net

Liz Heuermann; Tel: (281) 362-8431; Email: lizheuermann@peoplepc.com

Veronica Maiolo Tel: (832) 228-4403; Email: sammaiolo@sbcglobal.net

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCALE</u>
Wed.	Jan. 1	New Years Day	
Mon.	Jan. 13	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thurs.	Jan. 16	Membership Meeting (Annual Chili Cook-off Contest)	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Fri.	Jan. 17	Persian Gulf War Began (1991)	
Mon.	Jan. 20	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	
Wed.	Jan. 22 to	Department Mid-Winter	Austin's Omni Southpark Hotel
Sun.	Jan. 26	Conference	
Tues	Feb. 4	Outing to Funeral Museum	Carpool from Methodist Church 9:30 a.m.
Fri.	Feb. 14	Valentine's Day	
Mon.	Feb. 17	President's Day	
Mon.	Feb. 17	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thurs.	Feb. 20	Membership Meeting (Four Chaplains Memorial Service)	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Mon.	Mar. 17	St Patrick's Day	
Mon.	Mar. 17	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thurs.	Mar. 20	Membership Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM
Thurs.	Mar. 20	First Day of Spring	

POST CONTACT INFORMATION

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Tel. Number</u>
COMMANDER:	Pete Koch	(936) 273-3588
FIRST VICE CMDR:	Emery Heuermann	(281) 362-8431
SECOND VICE CMDR:	Mickey Fussell	(281) 367-7115
ADJUTANT:	Pickens Jones	(281) 367-7631
FINANCE OFFICER:	Kimberly Biggerstaff	(281) 296-9344
SERVICE OFFICER:	Dayton Denton	(832) 928-6054
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:	Jim Bolin	(281) 251-2352
ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS:	Carl Smith	(281) 367-4714
CHAPLAIN:	Victoria Glover	(832) 813-9415
ASS'T CHAPLAIN:	John Postel	(281) 798-9029
JUDGE ADVOCATE:	Everett Ison	(281) 298-9524
HISTORIAN:	Winfield Salter	(281) 370-1912
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:		
	Harlen Thornhill	(409) 273-2287
	Carl Smith	(281) 367-4714

E-MAIL

petekoch76@gmail.com
emeryheuermann@charter.net
v.h.fussells@gmail.com
pickensjones@usa.net
kingator5747@sbcglobal.net
whselfstorage1@yahoo.com
jpb20006@sbcglobal.net
[c.smith@thewestern
systemsinc.com](mailto:c.smith@thewesternsystemsinc.com)
goldvicgoddess@gmail.com
cowboys.dawn@gmail.com
eison01@comcast.net
flintye@gmail.com

harlen@consolidated.net
[c.smith@thewestern
systemsinc.com](mailto:c.smith@thewesternsystemsinc.com)

OTHER INFORMATION:

THE BUGLE BRASS: EDITOR: Jim Bolin; CIRCULATION: Emery Heuermann; GHOSTWRITER: Win Salter
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.