

AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 "THE WOODLANDS POST" THE BUGLE



SEPTEMBER 2014

VOLUME 10: ISSUE 9

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

Post Commander Pete Koch



COMMANDER'S CORNER

Dear Legionnaires',

I would like to thank everyone that attended our July meeting. It was the first meeting of the fiscal year 2014–2015. We had a wonderful 2013–2014 year. I am looking forward to serving you throughout the coming year.

An Audit Committee, chaired by Judge Advocate Everett Ison, and comprised of the new Finance Officer Jim Bolin and Adjutant Pickens Jones, conducted the annual review of records including financial and legal, and we passed with flying colors. Only minor suggestions were made having to do with files and record storage.

Also, I want to take the time to welcome the new Officers of the Auxiliary Unit 305. I have had meetings with the new President, Jennifer Hamann, and we are discussing ways for the Post and the Unit to work more closely together to increase membership and to hold more joint events.

We have decided to hold an Open House on October 4th at the South County Community Center from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM. We will be advertising this event throughout the local area veterans and their to all families. We will be showing our veterans, their families and the community in general how our Post/Unit 305 is involved in the We community. will have displays of all of our active programs and some that are available to new volunteers. Please come and bring your friends and neighbors.

We also discussed the forming of a Sons-of-the-American-Legion Squadron. This would be an invaluable asset to us. I believe that a Squadron would complement our activities, and we can also support them as well.

At the September 18th Post Meeting, we will be awarding Legion service stars to those members who are at their fiveyear level of membership. These fabric patches are affixed to Legion caps. We will be handing out 16 – 5-year stars, 26 – 10-year, 8 – 15year, 5 – 20-year, 2 – 25-year, 1 – 30-year, 1 – 40-year and 1 – 45-year star. Please congratulate each of these members for this excellent achievement.

I am asking for our Legionnaires to volunteer on several committees that we form in the Post. These include Americanism (which embraces Boys Scholarship, State. Flag Etiquette; Flag Disposal; Color Guard; and July 4th Parade); Membership; Fund Raising; Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation; Public Relations; Children & Youth: Adopt-A-Path: Legislative; POW/MIA; Employment; Boy Scouts; and Funerals. We have a program director for each of these, but they can always use more help. So if you would like to assist in any one of these programs, just let me know and I will pencil you in.

I would like to remind everyone that our annual picnic (Oktoberfest) is approaching. The date is October 16th and it will be held at Shadowbend Park on Lake Woodlands Drive. This is a great time to relax and enjoy the comradeship with each other. Hamburgers, hot dogs, and bratwurst plus drinks will be provided by the Post, while side dishes, condiments and desserts are brought by the Auxiliary. More information will be communicated at our next meeting on September 18th at 7:00 PM.

For God and Country, Pete Koch

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (August 21, 2014)

Commander Pete Koch opened the meeting in the usual manner. but then directed attention to two pairs of quests who had two different matters to present. The first was ninevear-old Marcela Dreesen, (accompanied by her mother), who was invited to describe her project of developing personalcare gifts for the veterans at DeBakey VA Medical Center. She sews pockets into Turkish towels and fills them with an assortment of personal-care items, then rolls them into gift packages for individual veterans. She also creates colorful lap and wheelchair robes. She has delivered numerous of these gifts and personally distributed them to sick and wounded GI's. She departed to a standing ovation by Post members.

The other guests were Bill Windo (Post member) and his wife Jane. Everett Ison, who shares with Wingo the lead in advancing the memorial mon-"The Way ument project. Home", had arranged a DVD and oral presentation of the project by Wingo. The project is in a funding drive for casting the monument and installing it in Woodland's Town Green Park. Bill Wingo made the presentation and ran the DVD, followed by a plea for subscribers to the cause. (See the separate article on the project herein.)

Turning back to the usual business, the minutes of the July meeting were approved, as were the minutes of the August 18th Executive Committee meeting. The **Commander** called on **Pickens Jones**, **Adjutant**, for a report on the paid-up members to date, but he did not have the data. **Finance Officer Jim Bolin** was absent on vacation, so the **Commander** gave what information he had, which was about the new budget. There was no paper report or print-out to distribute.

Acting Sergeant-at-Arms Carl Smith cited the presence of Joseph Bennett who joined the Post in January and now returned for the first time. He was given a Welcome Package. There being no First nor Second Vice Commander, their reports could not be made. Chaplain Glover reported next and updated us on the condition of Joe Watz. Joe has been hospitalized and on a feeding tube, but the removal of the tube caused some damage to his vocal cords. He cannot speak as a result. The good news is that he does not have pneumonia; the bad news is he has another infection - methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).

Then Commander Koch announced the scheduled Open House to be held on Saturday, October 4. at the South County Community Center, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. It will be a joint Post/Auxiliary affair with the purpose of inducing current members of both organizations and potential members to come by, sip some coffee and catch up on the programs being carried out. A sub-motive is to help in the recruitment of new members. A planning session by the Open House Committee is scheduled for Thursday, August 28th, at 7:00 PM. Any participant is welcome.

Historian Win Salter reported that work is starting on this year's history book and yearbook, while last year's history book is with Legion National,

competing for recognition. It was given First Place by the Department of Texas. As last Relations Public vear's Officer. Salter developed a Post Public Relations Plan. It has been printed and is being reviewed by Executive Committee members for possible adoption. Service Officer Dayton Denton was absent, but the Commander reported that **Denton** will be working with the four high schools to get recommendations for Boys State, Our target is to send 18 high school juniors to Boys State in this annual period. The one At-Large member present, Carl Smith, had nothing to report.

Commander Koch turned to staffing of programs and tasks to be performed this year. He had reviewed those manned last year and was requesting each member to indicate which ones he or she would lead or support this year. He then cited the new Korean War service medal being offered by the South Korea government. Qualified veterans of that war can apply for the medal with proof of time and place of service. The service must have been in-country or in waters in the war zone. The Adjutant has medal applications.

There being no other business to come before the membership, the **Commander** closed the meeting in the prescribed manner. A pot-luck supper prepared by the Auxiliary followed.

<u>"THE WAY HOME"</u> VETERANS MEMORIAL MONUMENT PROJECT

A long time ago (2002), a few advocates of creating a Woodlands monument to honor the service and sacrifices of local veterans worked toward such accomplishment. Strong support and leadership came from Post 305 in the personages of John Nanninga, Marge Brown and Everett Ison. The concept sought official acceptance from Township officials, as was necessary, but was denied. That did not stop the advocates. The concept was kept alive with the development of a sketch of the proposed monument, which would depict the image of two GI's seeking the way home. The two figures were personalized when two young men from the area were killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2007. The quest for Township approval was sought again and, aided by many supporters, it was given unanimously.

It became necessary to have the project sponsored by an agency and that was satisfied by the creation of the Greater Woodlands Public Art Found-Seed ation. monev was obtained as donations and sculptor Edd Hayes created a scale model of the monument which helped garner support. The monument depicts two soldiers, graduates of South County high schools - Army PFC Cory C. Kosters and Army Corporal Zachary R. Endsley.

Post member **Bill Wingo**, who leads the project for the Public Art Foundation, gave a briefing of project status at the August 21 Membership Meeting and showed a DVD. The project has no public funding and depends on donations by corporations and individuals. The drive for funds to finance the casting of the monument in bronze and construction of the site in Town Green Park is underway. The plan is to hold a groundbreaking on Veterans Day 2014.



The design of the plinth makes provision for honoring 2,000 veterans by name and other data inscribed on granite tiles. So, among other memorials in support of the monument are the tiles, which are available for a donation of \$200 each. Of course, any donation is welcome and other memorials are offered. More information and tile applications are available at www.woodlandspublicart.com,



THE VC IS HERE TO HELP US; SOME OF US

No! Not that VC! The veterans reading only headlines, hearing only sound bites, might have a few misconceptions about how Congress and the VA plan to use non-VA healthcare providers to ensure more timely and convenient access to care. A magical sounding item called a "Veteran's Choice" card, for example, won't be a limitless credit card given qualified veterans to cover whatever health services they receive from whatever physician they use. And veterans not already enrolled in VA health care won't gain accelerated access to outside care as promised by the legislation - unless they serve in areas of combat operations within five years of enrollment. The centerpiece of the "Veter-Access. Choice ans and Accountability Act", the title of H.R.3230, is a special \$10 billion Veterans Choice Fund.

Over the next three years, VA is to use the fund as needed to buy care from non-VA care providers for veterans if they face long waits for VA care defined initially as more than 30 days - or if they reside more than 40 miles from VA care. The intent is to eliminate VA patient wait lists that some VA health administrators and staff conspired to hide in recent years, thus compromising the integrity of performance reports and putting patients' health at risk. VA leaders and veteran service organizations prefer to attack wait times through improved resourcing. They want VA spending raised to meet actual patient demand from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, from the expansion of diseases presumed caused by defoliants used in Vietnam, and from higher costs of caring for aging veterans. So H.R.3230 also authorizes VA to spend \$5 billion more to expand its own capacity to deliver care, by hirina more medical and support staff and also building and leasing more space.

House-Senate conferees, in shaping the final bill, categorized the Choice Fund as emergency money, so the \$10 billion gets added to the nation's debt but not to VA budgets. The \$5 billion for more VA-delivered care is to be paid through cuts elsewhere in including VA, executive bonuses and by deferring planned rate cuts for some types of VA home loans. The legislation mandates use of a new Veteran's Choice Card but it isn't a golden key to private sector care. It will be more like an informational insurance card to be presented to non-VA health care providers to identify the veteran and to verify eligibility for episodes of care that, sometime earlier, were arranged through and approved by a VA care coordinator. The administrative challenges the VA faces in coordinating a vast expansion of private sector care, monitoring outside care quality and integrating those medical records back into VA health care will be profound. But the bill is said to set aside only \$300 million for these added tasks.

Indeed, in reviewing the new law's requirements, VA officials are weighing whether current Veteran Identification Cards (VICs), which are issued when veterans enroll in VA health care, might be modified to serve as the "choice card" that the new law mandates. Other details in the reform package will disappoint reformers who seek to fully "privatize" VA care. The bill is a series of compromises between nearterm action to address the patient wait-time scandal and steps to shore up the integrated VA health care system so prized by many veterans and service organizations. their [Source: Stars and Stripes | Tom Philpott, July 31, 2014]

A MORE FRIENDLY TRICARE WEBSITE

On July 24th, TRICARE.mil unveiled a new design to give TRICARE's 9.6 million bene-

ficiaries clear and easy access to benefit information. Users now have more ways to browse the site. They've added easier navigation, a log-in button for quicker access to their partner's secure services, and a section on the homepage dedicated to life-changing events. They've also streamlined and reorganized the content so users can find what they're looking for in the way they're expecting. They are listening to the beneficiaries. The new design is the result of an ongoing review about what beneficiaries are looking for when they visit TRICARE.mil. They are using satisfaction surveys, analytics, and user feedback to highlight key information. They are also closely monitoring the most visited pages and the most frequent search terms on TRICARE.mil. Some of the most popular thinas that beneficiaries look for include:

- What plan can I use?
- What's covered?
- How do I find a doctor?
- How much will I pay?

TRICARE has paired these findings with an extensive review of 34 government and private sector health insurance plan websites. This allowed them to apply common industry practices of website navigation, organization, content, naming convention. and readability. TRICARE.mil is a powerful educational tool for beneficiaries to learn about their benefits health and stav updated on the latest changes. Visit www.tricare.mil to see the new design and explore the TRICARE benefit. [SOURCE: TRICARE News Release at http://www.tricare.mil/webupdat es080514]

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS !

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 – Steve Toth 832-562-2883 Dist. 16 – Brandon Creighton 936-539-0028 Dist. 126 – Patricia Harless 281-376-4114

FIRST KIA OF THE KOREAN WAR

US Army Private Kenneth R. Shadrick of Beckley, West Virginia, may have been the first soldier to die in combat in the Korean War. On the night of June 25, 1950, 10 divisions of the North Korean army launched a full-scale invasion of South Korea. Advancing with 89,000 men in six columns, the North Koreans caught the disorganized, ill-equipped, and unprepared South Korean army by surprise and routed them. North Korean forces destroyed isolated resistance, pushing steadily down the peninsula against the opposing 38,000 front-line South Korean men. The majority of the South Korean forces retreated in the face of the invasion, and by June 28 the North Koreans had captured the southern capital, Seoul, and forced the government and its shattered forces to withdraw southward.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Security Council voted to send assistance to the collapsing country and U.S. President

Harry S. Truman ordered ground troops to the country. U.S. forces in the Far East had been steadily decreasing since the end of World War II, five vears earlier, and the 24th Infantry Division was the closest to the warzone. Under the command of Major General William F. Dean, the division was understrength and most of its equipment was antiquated due to reductions in military spending. In spite of these deficiencies the division was ordered into South Korea, tasked with taking the initial shock of the North Korean advances until the rest of the Eighth United States Army could arrive and establish a defense.

Dean's plan was to airlift one battalion of the 24th Infantry Division into South Korea via C-54 Skymaster transport aircraft and to block advancing North Korean forces while the remainder of the division was transported by sea. The 21st Infantry Regiment was identified as the most combat-ready of the Division's three regiments, and the 21st Infantry's 1st Battalion was selected because its commander, Lieutenant Colonel Charles B. Smith, was the most experienced, having commanded a battalion at the Battle of Guadalcanal during World War II. On July 5, Task Force Smith engaged North Korean forces at the Battle of Osan, delaying 5,000 North Korean infantry for seven hours before being defeated. The 540-man force suffered 60 killed, 21 wounded and 82 captured, a very heavy casualty rate. In the chaos of the retreat, most of the bodies were left behind, and the fates of many of the missing were unknown for several weeks. During that time, the 34th Infantry Regiment set up a line

between the villages of Pyongtaek and Ansong, 10 miles (16 km) south of Osan, to fight the next delaying action against the advancing North Korean forces. The 34th Infantry Regiment was similarly unprepared for a fight, with few soldiers experienced in combat. Shadrick was part of an M9A1 Bazooka team with 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry.



Moments before his death, Shadrick (right) looks on as another soldier fires a bazooka.

About 90 minutes after Task Force Smith began its withdrawal from the Battle of Osan, the 34th Infantry sent Shadrick as part of a small scouting force northward to the village of Sojong-ni, 5 miles (8.0 km) south of Osan.[The small force, under the command of Lieutenant Charles E. Payne and consisting mostly of bazooka teams and infantry, halted at a graveyard in the village, where they spotted a North Korean T-34/85 tank on a road to the north. Shadrick and the other bazooka operators began firing on the tank from long-range concealed positions at around 16:00 hours. Shadrick fired a round and paused. then rose from his concealed position to see if he had successfully hit the tank, exposing himself. The T-34 returned fire with its machine gun, and two bullets struck Shadrick in the

chest and arm. Shadrick died moments later.

Payne's patrol retreated without destroying the tank, taking Shadrick's body with them as the only casualty. The force returned to the 34th Infantry Command post in Pyongtaek to report to Brigadier General George B. Barth and Colonel Harold B. Ayres, who were commanding the troops in the Also present town. was Marguerite Higgins, a war correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune. Higgins subsequently reported Shadrick's death, referring to him as the first American killed in the Korean War. Shadrick's family was informed of his death by a neighbor who had heard his name on a radio broadcast, and the news from the military came via telegraph several days later. The family was immediately inundated by reporters and local well-wishers. Shadrick's body was returned to the United States, and on June 17, 1951, a funeral attended by hundreds of local residents was held in Beckley, West Virginia. The service was set to coincide with the anniversary of the start of the war. His flag-draped casket was escorted down the streets of the town on a horse-drawn carriage, and he was buried at the American Legion cemetery in the town.

Higgins' account of Shadrick's death was widely republished. **TIME** magazine published a story about Shadrick's death on July 17, 1950, citing Shadrick as the first "reported" death in Korea. **LIFE** magazine reported Shadrick for up to a year as the first US soldier to die in the war, and the claim has often been repeated, including as recently as July 4, 2011, in the local newspaper in Huntington, West Virginia, The Herald-Dispatch. American Legion Post 133 erected a monument to Shadrick at the Wyoming County The monument courthouse. cites Shadrick's unit. date of death, and notes him as the "first casualty of the Korean conflict" with an epitaph that reads, "He stands first in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live, grow and increase its blessings. Freedom lives and through it he lives - in a way that humbles the undertakings of most men." It is one of several memorials to local residents who served in the military.

Subsequent publications have shed doubt on the accuracy of the claims of Shadrick's distinction. Eyewitness accounts at the Battle of Osan point to the first death as a machine gunner in the 21st Infantry Regiment, who had been killed at around 08:30, eight hours before Shadricks death. This soldier was killed when a different T-34 tank was disabled at the battle and one of its crew members attacked nearby troops with a "Burp Gun". In the confusion of the battle, many of the dead and wounded troops were left behind by retreating American troops, and a large part of the force was also captured; consequently, the identity of this first combat fatality remains unresolved. [Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ke nneth R. Shadrick#cite note-Time-1 May 2014 ++]



~ ~ ~**BULLETIN BOARD** ~ ~ ~ WHAT ~ WHEN ~ WHERE

Saturday, September 20; Woodlands National Night Out: This annual event is hosted by the community with the purpose of educating and demonstrating matters of safety. The daylight portion is a public gathering at The Woodlands Northshore Park where local fire, police and EMS responders are on hand to show off their equipment and talk about community safety. The Post/Unit will be present in a booth to meet and greet the public and seek new members, from Noon to 3:00 PM. Volunteers are needed, so dress up and report.

<u>Saturday, October 4; Open House:</u> The Post and Unit are holding an Open House at the Community Center from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The purpose is to draw out seldom seen members and prospective members, present the various programs underway and enjoy a continental breakfast at all hours. There is no charge. Stop by on your schedule.

Thursday, October 16; Oktoberfest Picnic: This annual affair puts the business meetings in the wild and makes them short. Venue and time are, as usual, Shadowbend Park of The Woodlands at 7:00 PM. Suppliers, cooks and bartender to arrive no later than 6:15 PM. All Post and Unit members are invited, plus their family members and friends. The fare (eats) will be traditional burgers, brats, dogs and all the fixin's. Come one; come all! Friday, October 17 & Saturday, October 18: Fall Rummage Sale: How time flies! Two days of hauling out our stash of gently used goods and setting up store at the Robinson Road Community Center, offering the public bargains galore. Friday is set-up day and Saturday sale day. We have a good stock of articles but need volunteers and vehicles to bring forth the goods, then arrange it all in an attractive display, outdoors and in. Sign-up sheets will be at the picnic.

POST/UNIT OPEN HOUSE PREPARATIONS PROCEED

A joint Post/Auxiliary special committee has been formed to prepare for the Open House to be held on Saturday, October 4, at the South County Community



Center. Jenny Hamann, Unit President, is the chairperson. The first planning meeting was held on August 28th. A second such meeting will occur on September 10th at 7:00 PM. Anyone willing to help from either organization should attend.



AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS

Auxiliary President Jenny Hamann



Hello, Fellow Patriots!

August has come and gone without a great deal of fanfare, however, Unit 305 accomplished much. We, with the help of the Post, have made progress on plans for the Open House coming up on October 4th.

We met more of our Girls State attendees at the monthly meeting on August 21st. Our Executive Committee met the following Monday, the 25th of August, in my home. Then, some of the Unit members who volunteered to help in planning the Open House met with members of the Post on the 28th to discuss details for that event. We

hope to greet many guests at the Open House including current members of the Post and Unit 305, other local veterans and their families and friends, and many more people from The Woodlands and surrounding communities. We have a lot of great ideas for the Open House, including а continental breakfast, display and information tables with handouts, a free raffle and more.

I am so proud of all the ladies who come to our monthly meetings and do so much to support the aims and purposes of the American Legion and Auxiliary. They are beautiful and dedicated women who truly live the motto of "Service, Not Self". Beginning with the October issue, I want to use a small portion of my Bugle column each month to feature one of our active members. Read the monthly features to get to know a little about these truly special ladies.

Our ladies also participated in a Craft Fair at Holy Com-

forter Episcopal Church on the very last day of August and distributed pocket soldiers with a card encouraging the recipients to pray for our deployed military members.

The next couple of months hold a great deal of activity for our Unit and Post. See the Bulletin Board on page 6 for details. September and October should be full and fun for all involved. Please join us at as many of these events as you are able. I most especially hope to see you at our September and October monthly meetings, the Open House on Saturday, October 4th, and at our Annual Picnic on Thursday, October 16th. Until then, I pray all will be well with you.

In the Spirit of Service, Not Self,

Jenny Hamann



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CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS					
DAY	DATE	EVENT	LOCALE		
Thur.	Sept. 11	Patriots Day (9/11 Remembrance)			
Mon.	Sept. 15	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM		
Thur.	Sept. 18	Membership Meetings	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM		
Fri.`	Sept. 19	POW/MIA Recognition Day			
Sat.	Sept. 20	Woodlands National Night Out	Northshore Park; Noon to 3:00 PM		
Wed.	Sept. 24 to	Department Executive	Omni Austin Southpark Hotel, Austin		
Sun. Sept. 28		Committee Meeting			
Sat.	Oct. 4	Post & Unit Open House	South County Community Ctr. @ 9:00 AM		
Tues.	Oct. 7	Afghanistan War Began (2001)	Operation Enduring Freedom		
Mon.	Oct. 13	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Ctr. @ 7:00 PM		
Mon.	Oct. 13	Columbus Day (Observed)			
Thur.	Oct. 16	Membership Annual Picnic	Shadowbend Park @ 7:00 PM		
Fri.	Oct. 17	Rummage Sale Set-Up Day	Robinson Road Community Ctr. @ 7:00 AM		
Sat.	Oct. 18	Fall Rummage Sale	Robinson Road Center 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM		
Sat.	Oct. 18	District 7 Fall Convention	Post 95; HEARTS Museum, Huntsville		
Mon.	Oct. 27	Navy Day			
Fri	Oct. 31	All Hallows Eve	Trick or Treat!		
Tues.	Nov. 4	Election Day			
Mon.	Nov. 10	Marine Corps Birthday	Semper Fidelis		
Tues.	Nov. 11	Veterans Day	Lest We Forget!		

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ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS: (To be appointed)						
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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.						
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