



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305

“THE WOODLANDS POST”

THE BUGLE



NOVEMBER 2014

VOLUME 10: ISSUE 11

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

Post Commander

Pete Koch

Is on on holiday in Europe with his wife. He asked me to write his Corner in his absence, but left no list of topics he wanted covered. His trust in me is flattering, and what follows are my own thoughts and opinions. I hope I have done this task true to the Post and Legion.

W. O. Salter
Assistant Editor

COMMANDER’S CORNER

The Open House

The Post and Auxiliary held an Open House on October 4th, conceived by **President Hamann**, planned by a special committee led by the **President** and **Commander Koch**, carried out by task forces of both organizations and ranked in retrospect as “a success”. Its primary purpose was to attract existing members of both units who rarely attend meetings and to attract prospective new members who belong to the statewide Post 345. It gave those attendees and others an overall view of what we do to basically help veterans, their families, active-duty troops and the community. As may have been obvious from the Open House displays, our activities are many-faceted; some in direct support of veterans, like donations to the VA hospital; some secondary in indirect

support of programs, like the rummage sales; and others as defined and prescribed by the American Legion, like selecting high school juniors and sponsoring Boys State and Girls State attendance.

Fixing Problems

There’s no profit resting on these laurels. We need to follow up in many respects toward improving this Post and its Auxiliary Unit. The Post in particular has operational problems which need to be resolved and repaired. The Post has had to proceed since the start of this year with two vacant officer positions, and then soon experienced the resignation of the Second Vice Commander. Only now – four months into the year – have we attracted and elected a Sergeant-At-Arms, but still have no candidates for First Vice and Second Vice. To say we are “just shorthanded” is to discount the importance of membership retention and recruitment and to accept the absence of our Morale Officer as if he or she doesn’t really matter.

Meeting Attendance

Last year, of our 300-plus members who maintain their membership, we saw, on the average, 20 at our monthly meetings, and that counts 12 officers who did exist and usually attended all meetings. Why are we not attracting more members? Our rotation of

officer positions among the same old faces is largely due to not having alternative faces to know and evaluate as officer material, and yet those faces (and brains) must exist among the readers and other Post members.

Post Outreach

It is a fact that most members receive no communication from the Post, year after year. It’s a wonder so many continue to pay dues and stay current. This issue of the newsletter will not reach half of those households unless we change our “delivery system”. You all get terse reminders to pay dues five times a year from National HQ, but virtually nothing from this command.

Years ago, The Bugle was mailed to every member; a means of communicating and staying in touch. Of course, there were many fewer members then, fewer pages and postage was reasonable. As e-mail became more prevalent, we sent The Bugle to those addresses we were given by those electronically connected, where it could be read or even printed out. Then, in 2013, due to volume limits, we stopped all distribution and merely made it available on the Post 305 Website. To the extent The Bugle is a source of Post information about what we are doing or are planning to do, it no longer reaches Post

members with e-mail as a piece of personal communication. On the other hand, the Auxiliary continues to e-mail The Bugle to all of its members and friends.

Put The Bugle To Work

In my biased opinion, our newsletter has value beyond the Post members who rate the privilege of receiving it. Copies should go to several other offices and entities. **Commander Koch** has directed that publicist **Donna Wick Milstead** receive a copy monthly. In my opinion, copies should go to the District, Division and Department – either the Commanders or Adjutants. And, it seems of value to include a few local addressees – the Chamber, the Township and the County Veterans Service Office, for example. Copies, even back issues, should be on public booths and tables where the Post or Unit is set up to enlist new members, as well as to serve other programs.

Glue and Honey

In March 2013, the Post stopped e-mailing The Bugle to members in good standing, and, if those who gave no e-mail address were the same ratio as today, 56% were not offered the newsletter. Today that translates into 175 members, who are entitled to benefits but would not receive The Bugle, nor any other electronic message. We are not servicing our membership nor keeping it informed of our active programs, projects and actions. Given our non-profit mailing status, you should be getting this newsletter by US mail, where such added expense is offset in part by the interest earned monthly on our invested funds. That leaves the

additional work required to be assigned to a fire-team of volunteers: once a month doing the printing, stapling, folding, sealing, affixing address labels and stamps and mailing.

In my opinion, The Bugle is a tool, renewed monthly, but underappreciated as the **glue** which binds us together and the **honey** which could attract meeting attendees and new members.

Win Salter,
Guest Columnist

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (October 16, 2014)

Per tradition, the October meeting of the Post and Unit is our annual Oktoberfest – the picnic. So, “meeting highlights” are mostly described in candid photographs of picnic preparations and devouring the repast, plus all the socializing and exchange of “war-stories” which is a part of this casual get-together. Although no sign-in sheet was kept, the turnout seemed clearly better-than-average. The photos which accompany this column give you who were absent an idea of the event.

There was a short business meeting in advance of the picnic, directed by **Commander Koch**. Two important actions took place: (a) the election of **Joseph Bennett** as the Post’s **Sergeant-At-Arms**, and (b) the vote to accept into the Post members transferring from Post 345. These 13 Legionnaires were largely convinced to join Post 305 by the Open House held on October 4th. In addition, three new Legionnaires who have joined the Post were welcomed and introduced. The new faces were those of:

Transfers From Post 345:

Richard Barrett, William Baxter, Curtis D. Combs, David C. Coward, Robert L. Garza, Larry Hawkins, Jason Lemoine, Michael Lemoine, Justin T. Loop, Craig C. Maloney, Mauthe Martin, Darrin W. Rushing and Felipe G. Villarreal.

New Legionnaires:

Toby Carroll, Anthony Heuermann and Stanley E. Stewart.



(More on next page)



VETERANS ADVOCATE

**VA VACCINATION PROGRAM
NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH
WALGREENS**

In a first-of-its-kind partnership, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced October 2nd that it will join forces with drug retailer Walgreens to provide greater access to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended vaccinations to veterans across the country. This partnership grew out of a successful pilot program that began in Florida to provide flu vaccines to veterans throughout the state. Based on those results, VA is

expanding the program nationwide. Through its nearly 8,200 stores, Walgreens will offer flu and other CDC recommended vaccinations to veterans. Pharmacists can administer vaccinations to veterans and will leverage eHealth Exchange, through its Walgreens Cloud Electronic Health Records platform, to securely share immunization records with VA to help ensure complete patient medical records. Vaccinations are available daily during all pharmacy hours with no appointment necessary. Vaccines are subject to availability. Age, state and health related restrictions may apply. Many immunizations may be covered by commercial insurance plans; Medicare Part B or Medicare Part D. As part of this launch and under the agreement, VA funding can provide approximately 75,000 flu shots for enrolled veterans. Patients are encouraged to check with their health plan for specific coverage details.

To find the nearest Walgreens, veterans can phone 1-800-WALGREENS or visit <http://www.walgreens.com>. For more information about VA's immunization program, visit <http://www.ehealth.va.gov/immunization.asp>. [Source: VA News Release Oct. 02, 2014 ++]

THE MILITARY COALITION

**FISCAL YEAR 2015
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

On October 8th, The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of military and veterans groups, outlined its legislative priorities in the FY 2015 defense authorization bill. The Coalition offered its analysis of the House and Senate versions of the defense bill to the chairmen

and ranking members of the Armed Services Committees. Copies of the letter were also sent to every member of Congress. TMC praised the House and the Senate Armed Services Committees for rejecting many of the proposals by the Pentagon and the administration in the FY 2015 budget to cut costs on the backs of those who serve, including a consolidation of TRICARE options and cuts to commissaries. The Senate was urged to follow the lead of the House and block proposed active duty pay caps, a reduction in housing allowance compensation, and an increase in TRICARE pharmacy fees. A number of other key priorities were included in only one version of the bill.

The letters also called for Congress to reach a bipartisan solution to repeal sequestration. Those automatic, across-the-board cuts in government funding have had a disproportionate effect on DoD. The arbitrary cuts have led to a "benefits versus bullets" debate which is placing readiness and the future of the all-volunteer force at risk. [Source: MOAA Leg Up Oct. 10, 2014 ++]

VETERANS DAY 2014

There are many celebrations of Veteran's Day that you could attend; however, one closest to home is the one being held by the Woodlands Township Board of Directors. The ceremony will be held on Tuesday, November 11, beginning at 4:30 PM. The ceremony will be held at Town Green Park located at 2099 Lake Robbins Drive in The Woodlands. The reason this is the one celebration you should attend is because our **Everett Ison** will be master of ceremonies at the Welcome Home

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celebration and the groundbreaking of “The Way Home” Memorial Monument Project following the Welcome Home Ceremony.

The Welcome Home Ceremony is going to welcome the veterans who have returned from deployment since November 2013. Anyone who meets this criterion and is interested in participating in the Welcome Home Ceremony should contact Miles McKinney at (281) 210-3811.

Following the Welcome Home Ceremony, the groundbreaking for the monument to veterans of all services and times will be held. The monument project which is nearing completion is a 10-year project by members of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Monument will be called “The Way Home” and depicts two of The Woodland’s own sons who were killed in the Persian Gulf war.

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

Wear your Legion cap and name tag during all meetings!

WHEN DID WOMEN START TO FLY IN COMBAT?

Who was the first woman to fly in combat? Until 1993, American women were barred from flying combat missions. Army pilot Major Marie T. Rossi, however, flew support missions during Desert Storm and was killed when her CH-47 helicopter crashed. Her headstone in Arlington National Cemetery reads, “First Female Combat Commander To Fly Into Battle”. Then, Lt. Colonel Martha E. McSally, a USAF A-10 (“Warthog”) pilot and, later, the first woman to command a USAF fighter squadron, flew combat patrols over Iraq and Kuwait in early 1995 and is often described as the first woman to fly combat missions. Colonel Jeannie M. Leavitt became USAF’s first female fighter pilot in 1993, as a first lieutenant and was later the first woman to graduate from the Air Force Weapons School and the first female fighter wing commander. She flew combat missions during Operation Southern Watch in 1996. Since the 1990’s, many other female pilots and aircrew have joined and served well in all of the services. But, the US is a latecomer when it comes to training females to fly warplanes in combat.



USAF Gatling Gunner Vanessa Dobos on AC-130 Gunship

Many sources state that Turkish pilot Sabila Gokcan, the adopted daughter of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, became the world’s first fighter pilot in 1936 and with flying combat missions in 1937. However, Russian women pilots were the first in fighters, the first in combat and the first to be awarded their nation’s highest military honors. Three Russian women first flew recon missions in WWI. During WWII, Russian female pilots flew converted crop-duster biplanes and other obsolete trainers in night bombing and harassing missions against German forces during the 1941 defense of Moscow. They became called the “Night Witches”. [Source: *Air Force Magazine*; October 2014]

INVISIBLE EYES ENHANCE AIRPORT SECURITY

Protecting the flying public will soon involve some eyeball scrutiny. It is already at work in London’s Gatwick Airport. Experts in biometric technology are working with leading airports around the world to conduct successful trials of advanced distance iris, gait and facial recognition systems. Such a system has already been deployed at London’s Gatwick Airport.

Experts in biometric technology and aviation trends agree that biometrics will play a key role in our daily lives over coming years and govern everything we do in the airport terminal – from how we park our cars and pay for a cup of coffee to how we board our flight. But, the prime objective of biometric technology at airports is to ensure that air travel remains safe and

secure for travelers and that border control is effective and seamless. Such systems are designed to eliminate redundant screening or interactions with security personnel. Passive facial recognition and remote iris reading store passengers' facial features as they enter the airport and track them during their journey using biometric recognition systems. Tiny cameras can follow our movements through the terminal at all times. It ensures that the passenger who checks in is the same passenger that boards the aircraft. It also gathers passenger flow information to gauge where queues are long, helping to better plan gate assignments and navigation through the terminal.

Each passenger's unique iris patterns are captured once and matched to their boarding pass to preclude passengers swapping passes with each other. At Gatwick, it allows passengers to check-in using self-service bag drops and register their biometric identity through iris image capture. Passengers can pass through automated self-service gates to board their plane, validating their passage through iris recognition and the boarding pass. System providers believe objections would be to any physically intrusive technology, where travelers must touch a device of some sort. Remote capture and other emerging scanning technologies eliminate such intrusion and will make biometrics more acceptable to airport users.

UPDATE ON AFGHANISTAN CASUALTIES

As of September 17, a total of 2,344 Americans had been killed in Operation Enduring Freedom. The total includes

2,341 troops, plus three DOD civilians. Of these deaths, 1,835 were killed in action with the enemy, while 508 died in non-combat incidents. There have been 19,987 troops wounded in action in the Operation. The highest rank service member to be killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan was USA Major General Harold J. Greene. He was killed on August 5, 2014, when a uniformed Afghan army soldier opened fire on a delegation of coalition forces during a routine visit to Kabul.

"WHEN THE BALLOON GOES UP"

That expression of a future event originated during WWI when British forces in Belgium and France released a balloon to signal to their deployed artillery batteries to commence a planned barrage. Subsequently, the term has been used to apply to many other pending threats which have war-fighting and less dire implications.

Some of us became very familiar with the expression when a constant condition existed which could put the US at war with scant notice. That was the case during the Cold War period, which, in general, occupied the years between the Korean War and Vietnam or perhaps up to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the fragmentation of the USSR. We saw the Dew Line built and manned 24/7; NORAD's control center hardened in the Rockies; missile silos installed, armed and manned in the northern states; bomb-laden B-47's in alert hangars at the ends of runways; and early-warning patrols of AWACS planes on station.

Given where we are today, it seems timely to resurrect the expression's use. The war threats – some would say "actual" war – which are impacting the US today are numerous, while our military strength has been reduced by design to levels not experienced since 1940 as Hitler expanded his Third Reich.

So, what's the point, other than advocating revival of the expression? It is to say, **"It's time to mobilize again!"** Let's start by passing a new selective service act and only require now the registration of all citizens and aliens – both genders -- within a set of age brackets and their initial classification. If an actual draft becomes necessary, that preamble work will have been done. Who knows what event or circumstance will trigger a hot war with our defenses down? Will it be the capture of the crew of a downed US aircraft and their beheading? Will it be the loss of the Iraq "Green Zone" and our embassy? Will it be more expansion of Putin's Russia into the Ukraine or the Balkans? Will it be another attack on the US homeland, like Pearl Harbor or 9-11? Will it be ISIS' advancement into Turkey or Jordan? Will it be another invasion or attack on South Korea by the North? Will it be an initiative by Israel against Iran? Or, will it be a more "natural" emergency, like further invasion of the US by Central and South American peoples, driven by spread of disease or the fear of it?

We are so-o-o-o vulnerable! Unless we shift gears now, we will be sitting totally unprepared when the balloon goes up!

AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS

Auxiliary President Jenny Hamann



Hello Again Friends,

I wish to thank all the ladies of Unit 305 for all you do. You are beautiful and dedicated women and I am proud to call you friends. We had a truly wonderful October. Post 305 and Auxiliary Unit 305 worked hand-in-hand on many projects. Commander Pete Koch and I are both very impressed with the cooperation between the ladies and gentlemen we serve in Post/Unit 305.

We hosted our first **Open House** on Saturday, October 4. Many Post and Unit 305 members participated in organizing, planning and implementing the event. We welcomed our guests and informed them about our mission, the work we do and the fun we have. We fed them well and invited them to join us. And when it was all over we worked well together to clean up and leave the Community Center.

A lot of work went into the Open House, but it was a great deal of fun, also. The display tables were

beautifully decorated. Many of the trophies and awards were showcased and the food and refreshments were not only delicious but presented in such a delightful display that it was truly a work of art.

We were quite successful in our three-fold objective. 1) Existing members were actively engaged, 2) Both the Post and Unit realized new members. 3) We connected well with our local community.



Additionally, we welcomed visiting District and Department officers who were so impressed with the success of our Open House that they requested we develop guidelines to help other Posts and Units host their own open house events.

A week later, October 11th, we assisted the Post with the **BBQ Feed Hosted by the County Sheriff**. Then, our Post/Unit 305 **Annual Picnic** at Shadowbend Park took place on Thursday, October 16th. We didn't hold a full business meeting, but kept it short and sweet then got on with the food and fun.

Unit members again assisted with the **Rummage Sale** on October 17-18 and we sent four delegates to the **Seventh District Fall**

Convention on October 18th.

October Lady of Service

Rosalie Fryer is my **October Lady of Service**. Whenever I need an answer, no matter what the question, **Rosalie** has it. She is always available when help is needed. No matter what job needs to be done she will either do it herself or find someone to do it. Because she is so dependable, I feel she is much taken advantage of. But, in spite of it all, she is always cheerful and smiley in any office she is asked to fill. She has been a devoted ALA member in all phases of the organization from President to Vice President.

She is and has been a respected member of our Unit at many State, Division and District conventions. Everyone knows and respects **Rosalie**. She has also been a great asset to Legion Post 305, assisting them in many of their functions. The Auxiliary and Post are both stronger organizations due to **Rosalie's** unwavering support over the years. For several years now, **Rosalie** has coordinated our Poppy Program. The poppy is beautiful to behold and is a symbol of great sacrifice. Like the poppy, **Rosalie** is a flower that is not only beautiful, but she symbolizes dedication and personal sacrifice that inspires so many.

For all you do, **Rosalie**, we give you our unending thanks. God bless you.

Jenny Hamann

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