



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305

"THE WOODLANDS POST"

THE BUGLE



DECEMBER 2014

VOLUME 10: ISSUE 12

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 have just returned from a wonderful and educational vacation in the Eastern Bloc Countries of Europe. My wife and I had a wonderful time and had a real education as to the status of the socialist countries in Europe. America is still the best country going. I would like, also, to take the time to thank three individuals who kept the Post running in my absence i.e.; **Everett Ison (Acting Commander)**, **Win Salter** (Commanders Corner) and **Kim Biggerstaff** (problem solving).

We had the honor of having the **7th District Commander (Ed Jarvis)** in attendance for the October meeting. He will be completing his two-year stint as District Commander at the District Spring Convention next year, and our very own **Kimberly Biggerstaff** (Past Post Commander) will be running for that position. Let us wish **Kimberly** all the luck in obtaining something she has worked very hard for.

We also have two other resolutions that will be submitted at the District Spring Convention, and they are as follows: **John Hince** for Commander, Dept. of Texas, (2015-2016) and **Earl Graham**, Vice-Commander, Dept. of Texas, (2015-2016). Let us wish them all well in their endeavors.

I understand, after careful review, the membership status of Post 305 stands as follows: The current Post roster lists 376 members with only 29 in arrears. That means we have 347 members in good standing (until the 2014 members fail to pay for 2015). That is high for us. Usually "in good standing" is nearer 300 members. Congratulations to all but let's keep up the good work and increase that number. There are over 8,000 veterans in the Post "footprint", and we should, with a little bit of work, get more of them. We gained at least 13 who transferred in and three new Legionnaires since the Open House.

Thanks to **Service Officer Dayton Denton**, the November meeting, honoring the Boys State grads went extremely well. Eleven boys were present, out of the 18 we sent. Now, on to the 2015 year and more good lads going to Austin. Please work with Dayton if he asks for your help in interviewing these wonderful boys.

In July, the Post's History Book for 2013-2014 was judged by the Department as "best in Texas" and was forwarded to the National Contest. National just informed (author and) **Historian Win Salter** that it took second place in its category! Congratulations go to **Win**. This is not the first time he

LATE BREAKING NEWS

On Wednesday, November 26, Former Post Commander, **Max "Dutch" Dettinger** left this world and reported to Final Muster. He was a Legionnaire for 32 years and was Commander in 2005.

has placed high in the standings. In 2011-2012, the History Book came back from National in third place.

Almost five months since the election, we still have two critical positions open on the Executive Committee: First and Second Vice Commanders. These positions are critical in the running of the Post. We all joined the American Legion to help our fellow vets and their families, and we can't do it if everyone wants to come for the social hour and nothing else. Please step up and help your Commander in maintaining Post 305 as one of the best and most active Posts in the State. I have full confidence in each and every one of you in being able to handle the positions, and the past Vice Commanders will help you to "learn the ropes" and become confident in either of these new positions.

Each meeting during the year, our Auxiliary Unit spends a lot of time and effort to assure the pot-luck dinners get prepared and served, following the meetings. As your Commander, I am going to make a command decision that for the December meeting, the Post presents these wonderful members of the Auxiliary with a catered dinner, which will also be enjoyed by the Post and guests. In order to pay for it, the Post will pass the hat

during the December 18th meeting. Please be generous as they of the Unit deserve it.

For God and Country,

Pete Koch

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS **(November 20, 2014)**

In the absence of **Commander Koch**, who was still on holiday across the "pond", presiding was **Acting Commander Everett Ison** (usually **Judge Advocate**), who opened the meeting in the usual manner. The first order of business was the clearing of two sets of minutes. Since the last meeting was the picnic, with a short agenda, those minutes as well as the minutes of the September meeting had been tabled and not approved. Those minutes were read and approved, excepting the following. The only past motion which was set aside was a motion to consolidate the General Fund and the Money Market Fund, so this action proceeded. With the minor interest it earned and the need for a little more cushion in the General Fund, the motion to consolidate the two funds passed. There was little benefit in maintaining the separate Money Market Fund, so it will be rolled into the General Fund.

Next, the **Acting Commander** asked if there were any new members and **Dennis La Plante** was welcomed. He was voted upon and approved. The **Acting Commander**, in his remarks about membership, noted that there are over 8,000 veterans in The Woodlands and its environs, many or most of whom are eligible for membership in the American Legion.

The financial report was given by **Finance Officer Jim Bolin**,

to wit: the General Fund held \$2,211.50; the Money Market Fund \$6,215.41; and the Investment Fund \$30,077.23; for a Total Assets of \$38,504.14.

Calling for **Chaplain Glover's** report, the **Commander** thanked her for her services at the Town Green Park groundbreaking, where she rendered to the unplanned service. **Chaplain Glover** reported next and updated us on the health status of **Joe Watz** and **Dutch Dettinger**, who both are under hospice care at comfortable locations. She also reported that **Gene Wilson** is scheduled for back surgery and could use our good wishes.

Historian Win Salter reported he had received the Post's History Book back from the National Contest and learned it placed second in its category. A modest round of applause followed. **Service Officer Dayton Denton**, in his report to the membership, said that he and **Steve McKinsey** will be taking personal care and morale items, ball caps, and lap robes to the VA hospital on Friday.

Under New Business, the Post considered two resolutions of endorsement: One for the candidacy of **John Hinds** for Department Vice Commander, and another for our own **Kimberly Biggerstaff** for 7th District Commander. The Post supported both as viable candidates for the elections in June.

There being no other business to come before the membership, the **Acting Commander** closed the meeting in the prescribed manner, then turned the meeting over to **Dayton**

Denton to honor our most recent group of Boys' State attendees. We sent 18 boys this year, and **Dayton's** goal for next year is a "bus full".

A special Thanksgiving pot-luck supper, prepared by the Auxiliary, was enjoyed by members and guests alike.

HONORS TO OUR **18 BOYS STATE GRADS**

On Page 5, in this issue, is a report on the presentations and honors given to the 18 boys sponsored through and by Post 305 this year. We need to thank the presenters enlisted by **Dayton Denton** who assisted in conveying the certificates to each of the eleven boys present. They were **District 7 Commander Ed Jarvis** and **Deputy Director Cathie Spivey** of the 8th Congressional District of **Congressman Kevin Brady**.



Commander Jarvis and Deputy Director Spivey making a presentation to Austin Lacross of Oak Ridge High School



Dayton Denton introducing the two other donors present who sponsored Boys State selectees

Dayton Denton had large medals on red, white & blue ribbons made for award to those individuals and other donors who assisted the Post in sponsoring boys in addition to those budgeted by the Post. Singled out and present were Beth Grijalva, daughter of John Nanninga (deceased Post member), Cynthia Cook (College Park High Counselor) and Dayton Denton himself. All donors present left looking like first-place Olympians.

UNDER OLD "OLD BUSINESS"

The Bugle files and past issues often reveal old Post business which has become forgotten business or unresolved issues, some time-critical; others just out there. Here are three examples:

~ At our June meeting (of last year - 2013-2014), The Commander, in an effort to better unite us, offered to help pay for a regulation cap for each new member going forward: \$10 from his pocket; the balance as a loan from treasury, to be repaid over an extended period. Although reminders of this incentive have appeared in the Bugle, none was included since our Open House, where several new members have joined. If you are capless or wear other-than a Post 305 cap, and have joined this Post since the June 2014 meeting, see **Adjutant Jones** for help in ordering a cap or for reimbursement.

~ It is not too early for you amateur cooks and saddle tramps to consider whether or not you will compete in the Post/Unit Annual Chili CookOff at the January meeting. It will be Unit versus Post again.

~ Last February, the VA began issuing its new Veteran Health Identification Card to newly enrolled veterans and those not

previously issued the old ID card. **Service Officer Dayton Denton** has offered to assist Post members to obtain the new card, which is available at the Conroe VA Clinic. It also can be applied for online or by phone: <www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll> or 1-877-222-8387. You will need two forms of identity to apply and your picture will be taken.



VETERANS ADVOCATE

2015 CHANGES IN VA'S ELIGIBILITY RULES FOR HEALTH BENEFITS

To align VA's healthcare program with the financial assessment requirements for other federal healthcare programs, the VA has approved a process change to cease collection of veterans' net worth information for purposes of means testing for health benefits. Effective January 1, 2015, VA will only consider a veterans' previous year's gross household income (earned and unearned income) and deductible expenses to determine eligibility and/or copay responsibility for purposes of VA healthcare enrollment/benefit entitlement. Note that this does not impact net-worth estimates for purposes of VHA's

Extended Care Services or VBA's Pension Program. Software changes to remove the net worth prompts from VistA and the Enrollment System are expected to be released in the second quarter of FY 15. Until the software is implemented, VA intake staff will enter "zero-dollars" (\$0) into the net worth prompts for new applicants' or when updating an existing enrollees' Means Test. Changes to the online application and VA Forms 10-10EZ /EZr and 10-10HS are expected to be available by January 1, 2015. VA will be sending letters to current enrollees who may benefit from this change. Point of Contact: Ms. Benita Miller, Health Eligibility Center Director, Benita.Miller@va.gov or (404) 828-5300. [Source: NAUS Weekly Update Nov. 7, 2014]

VA REVISES ACCESS TO OBAMACARE (ACA)

The Department of Veterans Affairs updated its website with a new page containing information on the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The page is easy to navigate, and is broken down into different links for veterans already enrolled in VA care, un-enrolled veterans, and family members. Those who are not enrolled yet can use the site to learn more about eligibility, begin the enrollment process, or initiate an online chat for more help. There are also various fact sheets and FAQs available. As a reminder, all enrolled veterans, TRICARE beneficiaries, and CHAMPVA family members already meet the minimum standard for coverage required by the ACA. To visit the website go to <http://www.va.gov/health/aca>. [Source: VFW Action Corps Weekly, October 31, 2014]

HOMELAND SECURITY AND MILITARY NEWS

ARMY AND MARINES MAY BENEFIT FROM NEW CONCEPT IN FIGHTING VEHICLE

Since WWI there has been a constant arms race between the development of anti-armor weapons and ground-vehicle protection systems. As anti-tank weapons continued to get more effective, old solutions of simply increasing the level of armor may make future armored vehicles too large, heavy and expensive to be useful. This challenge was taken up by DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) – the challenge being to identify ways to break the “more armor” paradigm that has been the answer to vehicle protection for the past century. The goal is to make the next-generation armored vehicle smaller, faster and more maneuverable than current vehicles. DARPA is adopting the Air Force concept of “X-plane” development which has improved aircraft capabilities by engaging in ground-breaking fundamental R&D. In August 2014, DARPA started a new program with the technical goals of:

- ~Reducing vehicle size and weight by 50 %.
- ~Reducing crewmember needs by 50 %.
- ~Increasing vehicle speed by 100 %.
- ~Accessing 95 % of terrain, and
- ~Reducing detectable signature (visible, infrared, acoustic and electromagnetic)

In May, DARPA announced its “Ground X-Vehicle Technology” (GXV-T) program, and the Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and



Engineering Center (TARDEC) made public 24 pages of concept drawings of possible GXV designs. Some of the vehicle features and capabilities included (a) a swiveling turret which could “sense” an enemy sniper and destroy the threat, (b) capability of an air-drop – eight GXV’s in one C-17 – and transporting up to 96 soldiers over rough terrain and urban environments, (c) four independent tracks that can maneuver like wheels, and (d) “movable armor” which can deflect incoming rounds and stopping rocket-propelled grenades in mid-air using an undefined weapons system.

On September 5, 2014, DARPA held a “proposers’ day” event to clarify to potential contractors and other stakeholders the project’s requirements. Initial development contract awards are planned for April next year or sooner. [Reference: Army Times; September 10, 2014]

PEARL HARBOR

December. This is the month when we wish one another a merry Christmas and a happy new year; or perhaps other faith-based greetings. Since 1941, we added to those expressions “Remember Pearl

Harbor”, just as earlier generations remembered the Alamo and the USS Maine. No one alive in 1941 will ever forget the “day which will live in infamy”, unless they were too young, and later learned of the attack as history. The US Pacific Fleet seemed virtually crippled, and we lost over 2,400 servicemen killed and another 1,100 wounded. In the aftermath of the attack, the US declared war on the Empire of Japan and went to work to crush that menace. The ensuing mobilization of the US was total – industry, the military, the administration and the home-front. Pearl Harbor overnight silenced the considerable number of “America Firsters” and other isolationists. And, we had the will and leadership to not just “turn the other cheek”. A similar reaction was seen following September 11, 2001, as “Remember 9-11” was added to our inspirational mottos.

In today’s world, it could happen again. Not a surprise attack on an Oahu naval base, but some enemy or terrorist action just as hurtful and damaging. Let us pray we have the leaders and sense at all levels to respond as well as our 1940’s team did.

18 BOYS STATE GRADS RECOGNIZED

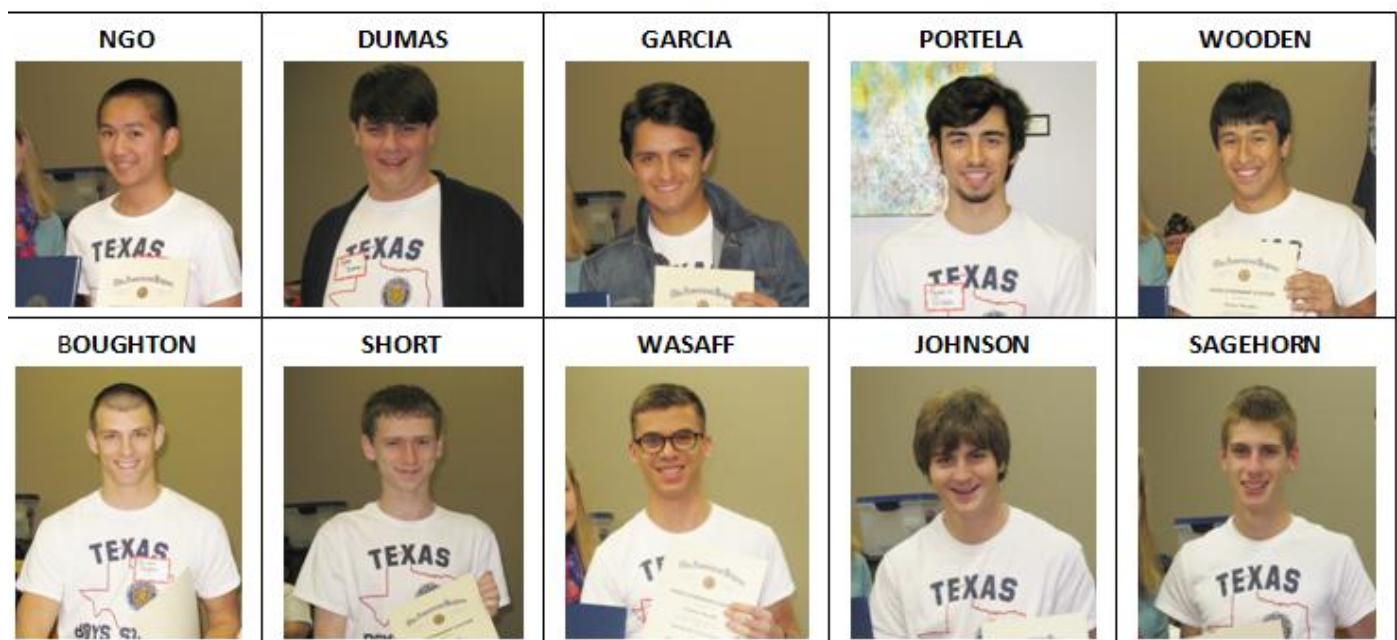
Each year, Post 305 sponsors the sending of local high-school juniors to the Department's Boys' State Convocation. This year (2014) the Post sponsored 18 boys to attend the week-long session in Austin. Per tradition, all grads were invited to attend the Post's November meeting and to bring their parents and other family members. Eleven of the 18 boys appeared on November 20th to be recognized and honored.

The Post owes the success of this program to its Service Officer, **Dayton Denton**, and to the high-school counselors who nominated the boys for consideration and interview by the Post Selection Committee. No one will take issue with the effective leadership of **Dayton** in the annual achievement and success of the Boys State Program.

In attendance, in addition to the boys and their families, were special guests including: **District 7 Commander, Ed Jarvis; Deputy Director Catie Spivey of Congressional District 8**, high-school counselors and staff members: **Tracie Turner** (Woodlands H/S), **Cynthia Cook** (College Park H/S), **Sheila Doakes** (Oak Ridge H/S) and **Peggy Burrell** (John Cooper School).

Following the close of the business meeting, **Dayton Denton** presided as the award of certificates was made to the eleven boys present. The actual award of certificates was made by **Catie Spivey** and **Ed Jarvis**, and that included a certificate from the House of Representatives, thanks to US **Congressman Kevin Brady**, and the Post's American Legion Certificate. In addition, **Congressman Brady** donated an American Flag which had flown over the US Capitol. It was given to one of the 18 boys, selected by chance; the winner being **Christian Boughton**.

The 11 boys present were: From Woodlands H/S -- **Alex Ngo, Ryan Dumas** and **Ignacio Garcia**. From John Cooper School: -- **Federico Portela** and **Parker Wooden**. From Oak Ridge H/S: **Christian Boughton, Austin Lacross** and **Wesley Short**. From College Park H/S: **Charles Wasaff, Luke Johnson** and **Walter Sagehorn**. The seven boys not present were: From Woodlands H/S – **Charles Hill, Corey Sanders, Jacob Coll, Ryan Sylvester** and **Steven Schmulson**. From John Cooper School: -- **Brian Lue**. From Oak Ridge H/S: **Sam Alvarez**.



AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS

**Auxiliary President
Jenny Hamann**



Hello Friends and Patriots,

November is a wonderful time of year. It starts with All Saints Day. The clocks get set back giving us the illusion of an extra hour. Also, November brings Election Day, Veterans Day with the poppies, Thanksgiving, lovely autumn colors, Black Friday, the beginning of Advent and lots of occasions to spend with friends and family.

The Ladies of Unit 305, with help of some of our Legionnaires, kept a proper focus on Veterans Day by distributing poppies in honor of veterans at multiple locations and were pleased to accept donations to benefit our VA&R programs.

I was sad to miss out on Post / Unit 305's Thanksgiving party following the monthly meeting due to a stomach virus, but heard it was a delightful time. I wish to thank **Dayna Salter** and

Rosalie Fryer for running the meeting on my behalf.

We are looking forward to a special social period after the December meeting – a Christmas Party! The Post is graciously planning to provide a catered meal so that the ladies of Unit 305 won't have to prepare all the food and can just enjoy ourselves. I hope to see all of you there.

In a Spirit of Service,

Jenny Hamann

November Lady of Service

Unit 305 is blessed with a kind and loving lady who always gives her very best. **Joan Sparks** puts so much love into everything she does with great attention to even the smallest details. We have come to realize that, if **Joan** takes on a project, it will be completed with great care and quality.

Enthusiastic, inquisitive and eager, **Joan** sets a beautiful example for the ladies of the American Legion Auxiliary. She consistently honors the sacrifice of our service men and women, past and present, through her dedication to our Americanism and Children and Youth programs, combining the two programs beautifully.

School children love Joan, because her love for them knows no bounds. Joan is a true patriot and it shows when she goes to any of the local schools to educate the young and to share her love of country with them.

Reverence for the flag of the United States of America inspires **Joan** to intervene whenever she sees a faded or tattered banner. Often, she reports to Unit 305 about the letters she has sent to various entities, thanking them for flying the flag and tastefully calling their attention to the need to retire the spent colors and replace them with new stars and stripes, thus encouraging proper respect for Old Glory.

John Sparks supports **Joan** by driving her where she needs to go. This husband and wife shine as examples of Post and Unit collaboration.

Joan, your dedication is moving and inspiring and we thank you with all our hearts. God bless you.



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CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

| <u>DAY</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>EVENT</u> | <u>LOCALE</u> |
|------------|--------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sun. | Dec. 7 | Pearl Harbor Day (1941) | |
| Mon. | Dec. 8 | US Declares War on Japan (1941) | |
| Mon. | Dec. 15 | Executive Committee Meeting | So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM |
| Thurs. | Dec. 18 | Membership Meetings (Xmas Party) | So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM |
| Wed. | Dec. 24 | T'was the Night Before Christmas! | |
| Thurs. | Dec. 25 | Christmas | Jingle Bells; Jingle Bells |
| Wed. | Dec. 31 | New Years Eve | Welcome 2015! |
| Wed. | Dec. 31 | WWII Officially Ends (1945) | |
| Thurs. | Jan. 1 | New Years Day | |
| Sat. | Jan. 3 | National Mails Third Dues Reminder | |
| Mon. | Jan. 12 | Executive Committee Meeting | So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM |
| Thurs. | Jan. 15 | Membership Meetings (Chili Fight) | So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM |
| Thurs, | Jan. 15 to | Dept. Mid-Winter Conference | Omni Austin South Park Hotel, Austin |
| | Sun. Jan. 18 | | |
| Sat. | Jan. 17 | Persian War Began (1991) | |
| Mon. | Jan. 19 | Martin Luther King Day | |
| Thurs. | Feb. 12 | Lincoln's Birthday | |
| Sat. | Feb. 14 | Valentines Day | |
| Mon. | Feb. 16 | Presidents' Day | |
| Mon. | Feb. 16 | Executive Committee Meeting | So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM |
| Thurs. | Feb. 19 | Membership Meetings (4 Chaplains) | So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM |

POST CONTACT INFORMATION (2014-2015)

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Tel. Number</u> | <u>E-Mail Address</u> |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| COMMANDER: | Pete Koch | (936) 273-3588 | petekoch76@gmail.com |
| FIRST VICE CMDR: | (Candidates Being Sought) | | |
| SECOND VICE CMDR: | (Candidates Being Sought) | | |
| ADJUTANT: | Pickens Jones | (281) 367-7631 | pickensjones@usa.net |
| FINANCE OFFICER: | Jim Bolin | (281) 251-2352 | jpb20006@sbcglobal.net |
| SERVICE OFFICER: | Dayton Denton | (832) 928-6054 | whselfstorage1@yahoo.com |
| SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: | Joseph Bennett | (832) 928-3818 | joseph@bennettrealestate.com |
| ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS: | (To be appointed) | | |
| CHAPLAIN: | Victoria Glover | (832) 813-9415 | alpost305chaplain@gmail.com |
| ASS'T CHAPLAIN: | (To be appointed) | | |
| JUDGE ADVOCATE: | Everett Ison | (281) 298-9524 | everett.ison@sprint.com |
| HISTORIAN: | Winfield Salter | (281) 370-1912 | flintyeye@gmail.com |
| <u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:</u> | | | |
| Position 1: | Carl Smith | (281) 367-4714 | carl12024@yahoo.com |
| Position 2: | Emery Heuermann | (281) 362-8431 | emeryheuermann@charter.net |

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WEBMASTER: (open) WEBSITES: www.alpost305.org and www.mypost.org
FACEBOOK MANAGER: Kimberly Biggerstaff kimbiggerstaff@icloud.com
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.