



**AMERICAN LEGION POST 305**  
**“ THE WOODLANDS POST”**  
**THE BUGLE**



**DECEMBER 2015**

**VOLUME 11: ISSUE 12**

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

**POST COMMANDER**  
**JIM BOLIN**



**Commander’s Corner**

November was a busy time for me. There was a lot of Post activity going on. Those seemed to come off well, as I know it.

~ The Boys State/Girls State gathering on November 3<sup>rd</sup> was a great success. We may again separate normal business from honoring another flock of fine teenagers next year.

~The November Membership meeting was well attended, but too many left before the traditional turkey supper was served. The Post and the Auxiliary need to coordinate better their business closures when a hot meal is waiting. It seemed like we had a lot of food left over and that is unusual.

~ For those of you who don’t know the way to our meeting, the Auxiliary treats both groups to a light meal (“pot-luck supper”) after the business meetings each month, similar to a reception you may have

**Seasons Greetings and a Joyous New Year**

attended. We socialize and chew the fat!

As you can tell from the red and green above, it’s December, and 2015 has only a few weeks remaining, The significance here is my amazement that more members have not (yet) avoided the Post dues increase as of January 1<sup>st</sup> by renewing now. Pay your \$31 now or pay \$36 next year. Last year, without this incentive, we had around 318 renewals during the year. Right now, we have about 207 renewals. It makes sense to renew now, before December turns into January. If we can achieve 100% renewal this year (that’s 322 members), we will gain some recognition and qualify for some awards.



**Santa Mapping His Route**

Renewing your own membership is much less difficult that enlisting new Post members, a task we all must keep in mind. So, that’s the effort each of us needs to make in the holiday

season! I am instituting a **BOLO** (“Be On The Lookout”) campaign for 2016. Any member who is responsible for getting a new member to Post 305 in 2016 (other than the Membership Chairman) will be duly recognized by certificate and cap pin. Reach out to your veteran friends, after your renewal, and tell them you belong to the American Legion and are in The Woodlands Post. Ask them whether they considered joining The American Legion. I just talked to a friend this week, and he had no idea how to become enrolled for VA benefits. All Legionnaires know enough to get VA benefits or have easy access to Service Officer Toby Carroll for guidance. And, don’t be restrained by your feelings you may not know enough about the Legion to answer questions. If faced with a question you are unsure about, look it up on the Internet, or in the four-book set of the ALEI, or call one of our officers. At least know the War Eras for eligibility; those are on the Application Form.

Our December meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> will do something to recognize the Holiday Season. Remember our comrades who are serving away from their homes and loved ones during this holiday time.

Jim Bolin  
 Commander

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**  
**(November 19, 2015)**

Commander Bolin opened the meeting in the usual manner. The **Commander** broke the usual conduct of the meeting by Draping the Charter in memory of **William A. Odom, Sr.** His daughter, **Post Chaplain Victoria Glover**, did an outstanding job of holding her cool while she conducted the prayer in the ceremony.

When called **Sergeant-at-Arms Smith** reported that there was one guest, **Dora Blue**, a potential Post member. **Dora** gave a brief description of her military service so we could get to know her. She had been a Marine, stationed mostly at MCAS Cherry Point, NC, maintaining AV8-B Harriers, a "jump jet".

**Finance Officer Emery Heuermann** gave his report, which started with the month of July and ended with the month of September. He had not been able to give a report since the election due to getting settled in the job. The General Fund has \$10,670.86 while the investment account (Fidelity Bond FAFIX) is worth \$30,367.38, for a total of \$41,038.24. The **Finance Officer** suggested the Investment Subcommittee needs to review the Fidelity Bond to see if we can up-grade the holding to another bond offered by Fidelity which would include more equities and less as bonds, with some uptick in risk.

**First Vice Commander Koch** had just one topic to report on. He cited there would be a first meeting of the LegionAir radio committee next Monday at the offices of WICKed Publicity.

The **Adjutant** and **Chaplain** had nothing to report.

**Judge Advocate Everett Ison** stated he would be drafting changes to the Post Constitution and By-Laws. One change he favors is the option of allowing selected officerships be held dually when the Nominating Committee fails to find a willing and able candidate for an open position. The **Service Officer, Toby Carroll**, indicated he had obtained copies of the VA publication "Know Your Benefits", and he had copies for members who needed one. The book is the 2014 edition, and Toby senses the VA is cleaning house for a later edition.

**Dayton Denton, Member-at-Large**, noted that the Rummage Sale for Spring 2016 has been moved from April to June 3rd and 4th. Some other renter took our customary times in April. **Denton** continued about our VA hospital program – we are not keeping up with our past rate of collecting and giving. He mention this to the Chamber, where a red collection barrel is available. A Chamber staffer assured him that she would try to change that. At Denton's request **Steve McKinsey** gave a status report on our donations. [See the separate article in this issue about the DeBakey VA donations.]

Lastly, **Denton** reminded members it was time to prepare the Post's recommendation if it was intending to submit such for the Department's Volunteer-of-the-Year award. He offered to assist with the paperwork which is due before December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Under "New Business", the Post members supported three motions of the Executive Com-



**THE BUGLE**

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**Monthly Meetings:** 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, except in October\*. The Center is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Lake Robbins Drive and Grogan's Mill Road, next to the library. Meetings are followed by a pot-luck supper provided by the Auxiliary.

\*In October, a combined, short meeting precedes the Annual Picnic in Shadowbend Park.

mittee to make certain financial gifts: (a) spend \$50.00 per month on personal care items for donation to the VA hospital; (b) Move \$50.00 from treasury into the VA&R dedicated account; and (c) Assign 20% of each rummage sale gross take to the Auxiliary, for its support on site.

Under "For-the-Good-of-the-Legion", **Dayton Denton** and **Emery Heuermann** made a point jointly: That the Post should make it better known when it does something benefiting our veterans. We need to "toot our horn" more.

There being no further business. The Commander closed the meeting in the prescribed manner, and reminded all that a buffet turkey dinner awaited.



**VETERANS ADVOCATE**

## **THE NEW DoD ID CARD**

In 2011, DoD officials began replacing the Social Security Administration Number (SSN) with a 10-digit number unique to the Department of Defense on all ID cards. Retirees, their family members and survivors with an "INDEF" expiration date may not have replaced their ID card before and may therefore still have an SSN printed on their card. DoD officials are urging people who have an ID card with an "INDEF" expiration date to visit a DoD ID card facility for a new ID card with the SSN replaced by a new DoD number to reduce the risk of identity theft. Officials stress that until a card with a printed SSN expires, it remains a valid card and does not need to be confiscated or replaced.

In time, every ID card will bear a printed DoD number instead of an SSN. Family members and survivors will have their own DoD ID number printed on their cards – not that of their sponsor. Because DoD ID cards will no longer have the sponsor's printed SSN, cardholders may be asked to provide it verbally. To find your closest DoD facility, visit:

<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsi>

or call the Total Force Service Center qat 1-800-525-0102. To confirm required documentation, refer to the Pre-Arrival Checklist at [www.cac.mil/docs/required\\_docs.pdf](http://www.cac.mil/docs/required_docs.pdf). Note that the nearest facility does not have to be an Air Force installation in order to serve Air Force retirees and their family members. People should check with the issuing facility to verify appointment requirements and hours of operation. [Source: *AFTERBURNER* – Spring-Summer 2015 ++]

## **OLD AGE IS COMING AT A REALLY BAD TIME!**

Why plan for getting older? It's so easy to get comfortable with the "I'm going to live forever!" mentality. But, the reality is we all get older. We can't predict the future, but we may be able to influence future decisions. If you are reading this, you have gotten this far despite your wartime military service! For the other half of your life, the VA can help – with Shared Decision Making and Advance Care Planning. Many of us to work hard to protect our money – how we spend it; where we keep it; and who will get anything that's left over when we die. But, a lot more Americans, including veterans, leave many other issues related to getting older and eldercare to chance. They don't realize that 70% of us will need long-term care at some point. Most say they want to stay in their own home, but fail to plan for changes that will make "aging in place" much easier. They stop focusing on wellness habits, even though research shows that staying active, eating healthy and sleeping well make a difference.

### **Know Your Options:**

More than half of our nation's veterans are over age 65. Many veterans do not know about all of their options if or when the time comes to depart. VA's website for elder veterans and their family caregivers detailed home and community-based services, residential settings, and nursing homes. It provides valuable Worksheets for veterans and family members to guide them in the process of making shared decisions with their VA healthcare providers and social workers. The website also has helpful

sections on paying for long-term care and well-being. Refer to:

[~ www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/Shared Decision Making Worksheet.pdf](http://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/SharedDecisionMakingWorksheet.pdf)

[~ www.va.gov/geriatrics/Guide/LongTermCare/AdvanceCarePlanning.asp](http://www.va.gov/geriatrics/Guide/LongTermCare/AdvanceCarePlanning.asp)

### **Shared Decision-Making and Advance-Care planning Can Help:**

The goal of shared decision making is for you to get the services and support that best meet your needs and preferences. You can use more than one service at a time. And, you can change the mix of services as your needs and preferences change. Advance care planning is the process where you identify your values and wishes for your health care at a future time when you may be no longer capable of making choices for yourself. Part of the process is filling out a VA Advance Directive at: <http://va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-0137-fill.pdf> This is a legal form that helps your loved ones and doctors understand your wishes about medical and mental health care. At [www.va.gov/geriatrics/images/Advance\\_Care\\_Planning\\_Values\\_Worksheet.pdf](http://www.va.gov/geriatrics/images/Advance_Care_Planning_Values_Worksheet.pdf) can be found VA's one-stop website for aging veterans which provides a Values Worksheet to help you get started as well as resources ([www.va.gov/geriatrics/Guide/LongTermCare/Advance\\_Care\\_Planning.asp](http://www.va.gov/geriatrics/Guide/LongTermCare/Advance_Care_Planning.asp)) for talking with family members and your health care provider. We all get older – it's never too early to plan. [Source: Veterans Health | Sheri Reder & and Taryn Oestreich |November 3, 2015 ++]

### **TAPS FOUNDER AWARDED PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM**

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (“TAPS”) was founded by Air Force Major (Retired) Bonnie Carroll. She, along with 16 other luminaries, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Obama on November 24<sup>th</sup> in the West Wing of the White House. Major Carroll was the wife of Alaska National Guard Colonel Tom Carroll, Commander of the Alaska ANG, who died in an Army plane crash in Alaska’s Chilkat Mountains in 1992. That tragic event drove Major Carroll to found TAPS, where she is its current president.

TAPS was conceived and founded by Carroll to provide support to grieving U.S. military families. At the time of her husband’s death, there was no organization to help those left grieving after the death of someone in the military. The military quickly adopted the program, and it has been replicated in other nations – U.K., Australia, Canada, Israel, Germany and others. TAPS includes peer-based support, a help-line, seminars and retreats. Carroll says: “Twice a year, we bring widows and parents from around the country to Anchorage to participate in healing activities.” The White House, where Bonnie Carroll once served, said: “Bonnie Carroll is a life-long public servant who has devoted her life to caring for our military and veterans. TAPS brings healing comfort and compassion care to the living legacies of our nation’s service and sacrifice.”

### **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](http://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

### **THE BLUE STAR BANNER**

The Blue Star Service Banner was designed and patented in 1917 by WWI Army captain Robert L. Queisser of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry. His two sons were serving in the front-line trenches. The display banner quickly became the unofficial symbol for parents with a child on active military duty. On September 24, 1917, an Ohio Congressman read the following into the Congressional Record: “The mayor of Cleveland, the Chamber of Commerce and the Governor of Ohio have adopted this service flag. The world should know of those who gave so much for liberty. The dearest thing in all the world to a father and mother: their children.”

During WWII, the Department of War issued specifications on manufacture of the flag, as well as guidelines indicating when the service flag could be displayed and by whom.

On December 1, 1967, by DoD Directive 1348.1, which implemented an Act of Congress, the Department of Defense authorized the service flag and service lapel pin. The Blue-Star Banner, in the dimensions of the U.S. flag, displays one to five dark blue stars – each representing a family member on active duty with any of the U.S. armed forces. In the event of the death of such serviceman or woman, a blue star is replaced or covered by a gold one.



During WWII, the banners were a common sight in front windows of homes and businesses and in the rear windows of autos, but as the Korean War raged, the custom became less used. Thereafter, its use was virtually abandoned until the 9/11 attacks. The American Legion rekindled that spirit of pride after September 11, 2001, and as middle-east military operations commenced. The American Legion provided banners to military families.

The Post 305 Public Relations Plan recommends the Post advertise the availability of a Blue Star Banner to any South County and Spring family with an active service member. Such free gift requires only the family member complete a short application form, naming the serviceman or woman.

## DE BAKEY VA HOSPITAL STILL NEEDS OUR DONATIONS

Most readers know that Post 305 and its Auxiliary Unit maintain an ongoing program of collecting certain non-cash, new or gently used articles for donation to the Michael L. DeBakey VA Medical Center. We have done well in that respect, under the leadership of **Dayton Denton** and the collection, delivery and presentation services of **Steve McKinsey**. But, our flow of donations has been slackening off, noticeably. This is not a program with a sunset conclusion. It is continuous so long as there is a VA hospital and wounded, injured or sick veterans in need of medical or other care. So, this is a renewed reminder of the need for non-cash donations, which is easily done by bringing such to the next Membership Meeting. It is fitting more so in this season of giving.

At the November meeting, **Dayton** called on **Steve** to outline the current needs. **Steve** stated that recently the shelves at the hospital's volunteer room were absent of shaving cream! But, all kinds of personal toiletry items are always needed. We have made many such donations of unopened, travel-size items that we obtained from doctors' and dentists' offices, from motels and hotels, and from other sources. Those are free. It is an option to go to CVS, Walgreens, Family Dollar or Target and purchase such. **Steve** makes the point that pre-teen **Marcela Dreesen** puts us to shame with her donations, many crafted by her. The Post and Auxiliary have responded by donating items other than

toiletries, including books – both hard-cover and paperback, ball caps, current magazines, audio books, lap robes, DVD's, playing cards, board games and new or gently-used clothing items. Through District 7 conventions and its challenges, we have donated socks, coffee and other targeted items. Unacceptable items include anything glass, alcohol, tobacco, computers, VHS tapes inappropriate reading material, puzzles, custom-made prosthetic items, wheelchairs and crutches.

Quoting from the MEDVAMC website: "Every donation, no matter how large or small, makes a difference in the lives of our veterans. We could not provide many of the services for our veterans if it were not for the generosity of people in the community, the veteran service organizations, fraternal organizations and businesses."

Although we as Post or Unit emphasize non-cash donations, there are other ways volunteers can help, both at big DeBakey and at the Conroe Clinic. For example, van drivers are needed in several communities, including Conroe and Willis, to assist outpatients receiving treatment or therapy or keeping their appointments at their care center. To qualify, you need a current driver's license, automobile insurance, and a physical exam.

Cash donations are always welcome by credit or debit card through Treasury's secure site [www.pay.gov]. The minimum amount of a donation online is \$5.00. E-Donate donations can be directed a specific DeBakey fund (e.g. "Recreation Patient Activity" or "Fisher House") or can be in honor of or in memory of a person of your choice.

## POST 305 AUXILIARY UNIT NEWS

President: Jenny Hamann



Dear Friends,

As the year draws to a close, there is no shortage of charities and other philanthropic organizations seeking your financial support. Before the holiday distractions take hold, please use this time of the year to remember the sacrifices made by the men and women serving in the U.S. military, and support causes that help them when they return home. Please consider making your year-end financial contribution to the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation or to our very own American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 305.

Donations to Unit 305, The Woodlands, may be general, allowing us to use it as we see fit, or you could request that we apply it to one of the many programs we actively support.

One such program is VA&R, which stands for Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation. **December is VA&R month.** This month Unit 305 is providing support to needy female veterans. We are sponsoring three female veterans who are either homeless or at risk. One of the three

is raising her children alone, and we are sponsoring them as well. We provide Christmas gifts to each woman and, if applicable, to any children. We also support the VA hospital and collect necessities for the veteran patients resident there.

Following is an excerpt from our National website.

*“Coming home may be the end of one journey for many veterans; it is also the beginning of a new journey to transition to a “new normal.” Helping them get there is at the core of the purpose and service of the American Legion Auxiliary. Members are passionate about providing care and comfort to our heroic U.S. service members who are so highly deserving of everything we can possibly do for them.*

*“At VA facilities, Auxiliary-sponsored gift shops and holiday parties have become a revered tradition and valued program. Members, units, and departments also purchase essential equipment and supplies for these facilities.*

*“The Auxiliary joins with the VA as a national co-sponsor of the [National Veterans Creative Arts Festival](#). Through this sponsorship, the Auxiliary supports special visual and performing arts therapies for veterans.*

*“Whatever a veteran needs – job assistance, transportation, food, clothing, etc. – Auxiliary volunteers will do their best to provide it. With troops constantly deployed during our nation’s longest period of war and with many of our volunteer service members serving multiple deployments, our mission to assist veterans and*

*their families as they transition back to civilian life has never been more relevant than it is today.”*

So as you can see, the VA&R is a very worthy program which is why we actively support it.

Please keep our active duty service men and women and the veterans who have served in the past in your thoughts and prayers during the Holidays this year.

A Very Merry Christmas,

Jenny Hamann



## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCALE</u>
Mon.	Dec. 7	Pearl Harbor Day	"A Day Which Will Live In Infamy!"
Mon.	Dec. 14	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Dec. 17	Membership Meetings (Holiday)	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Dec. 24	Christmas Eve	"The Stockings Were Hung By The Chimney With Care!"
Fri.	Dec. 25	Christmas Day	
Thur.	Dec. 31	New Year's Eve	Auld Lang Syne
Fri.	Jan. 1	New Year's Day	Happy New Year!
Fri.	Jan. 1	Post Dues Just Increased By \$5 to \$36 Per Annum	
Mon.	Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Day	
Mon.	Jan. 18	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Jan. 21	Membership Meetings (Chili Night)	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Wed.	Jan. 27 to Sun. Jan.31	Dept. Mid-Winter Conference	Omni Austin Southpark Hotel
Sun.	Feb. 14	Valentines Day	
Mon.	Feb. 15	Presidents Day	
Mon.	Feb. 15	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Feb. 18	Membership Meetings	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM

### POST & AUXILIARY UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION (2015-2016)

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>TEL. NO.</u>	<u>E-MAIL ADDRESS</u>
<b>POST 305</b>			
COMMANDER	Jim Bolin	(281) 251-2352	jpb20006@sbcglobal.net
FIRST VICE CMDR.	Pete Koch	(936) 273-3588	petekoch76@gmail.com
SECOND VICE CMDR.	(Open)		
ADJUTANT	Pickens Jones	(281) 367-7631	pickensjones@usa.net
FINANCE OFFICER	Emery Heuermann	(281) 362-8431	emeryheuermann@charter.net
SERVICE OFFICER	Toby Carroll	(281) 323-4985	toby.carroll@sbcglobal.net
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Carl Smith	(281) 367-4714	carl12024@yahoo.com
ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS	Harlen Thornhill	(409) 273-2287	harlen@consolidated.net
CHAPLAIN	Victoria Glover	(832) 813-9415	alpost305chaplain@gmail.com
ASS'T CHAPLAIN	(Open)		
JUDGE ADVOCATE	Everett Ison	(281) 298-9524	everett.ison@sprint.com
HISTORIAN	Lacey Homan	(832) 704-2732	lkhoman44@aol.com
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:</b>			
POSITION ONE	Dayton Denton	(832) 928-6054	whselfstorage1@yahoo.com
POSITION TWO	Win Salter	(281) 370-1912	flintyeye@gmail.com
<b>AUXILIARY UNIT 305</b>			
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SECRETARY	Sandy Holtzinger	(281) 364-8590	zing1991@yahoo.com
TREASURER	Dayna Salter	(281) 229-1365	dayna.salter@ymail.com
HISTORIAN	(Open)		
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PARLIAMENTARIAN	Rosalie Fryer	(936) 520-8895	rcfryer@consolidated.net
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Annie Smith	(281) 757-3967	carl12024@yahoo.com
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POSITION THREE	Mary Bolin	(281) 251-2352	jpb20006@sbcglobal.net