



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 “ THE WOODLANDS POST” THE BUGLE



SEPTEMBER 2015

VOLUME 11: ISSUE 9

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

**POST COMMANDER
JIM BOLIN**



COMMANDER’S CORNER

As we go to press, I am recovering from a pesky infection which found me soon after the last membership meeting. So, if I sound a bit weak and hoarse, you now know why.

I hope you enjoyed our guest speaker **Jack Hickey** last month, since he was my choice – a bit of light entertainment at the start of our formal business. Any of you who have a suggestion for a speaker or presenter who will fit a limited slot in our schedule, let me know. With almost 400 members to draw from, there must be a few with an interesting tale to tell or a career event or circumstance worth sharing. How about a talented musician or picker ‘n singer? We seem to have a piano nearby, too. Do any of you have a “garage band” who will take a public service gig?

We are well into the new year, and I gave you a brief outline of

what I want to accomplish in the July issue. With more time to ponder such matters, I have made up a more specific list of goals for the year – some minor, others more important. These are the things I want to focus on this year, Some are continuing; some are old business; others are proposals applauded but ignored. I won’t pretend this expanded list is complete because events not anticipated can alter what needs to be done. Without implying any priority nor sequence and knowing our resource limitations, I want us to work toward these goals:

~ By any means, maintain at least the same level of membership in good standing that we ended 2015 with, but strive to reach the 322 target. That goal requires some success in retention and recruitment. **First Vice Commander Pete Koch** will be spearheading such effort but “membership is everybody’s business”. I want to see a one-page monthly status report on membership, as was directed in the past.

~With or without a Second Vice, improve our membership meetings so as to attract more members and keep them coming.

~ Brainstorm ideas by which we increase the net take of existing and new fund raisers. To carry out the selected programs and projects, to make donations to worthwhile causes, and to maintain our meager assets, we

must raise funds, and last year saw some disappointing results.

~ Improve contact with the membership with good reason to do so.

~ Take better advantage of the resources of WICKed Publicity, including implementing more of the actions and operations of the Public Relations Plan.

~ Adopt a new Code of Accounts in the financial area and define the Line Item inclusions.

~ Restart the “Know Your Comrade” program where one Post member per meeting tells his or her “war story”, be it hot or cold.

~ Match the 2015 Boys State sponsorship total or better.

~ Produce a Post Roster Booklet by which we all know one another and where each resides and can be contacted.

~ Complete the review of the Constitution & By-laws, noting needs for change or discussion toward that end. Aim for a final draft for reading and accord by next July.

~ Advance the Post-Specific Procedures and adopt and apply those as they are completed.

~ Train additional members to serve on the Color Guard.

I do not think any of these 12 goals is beyond our joint capability, even compounded, but I need your help, and I am not just addressing the officers and committeemen. I am speaking to all members within “earshot” of my voice. I will be

looking for responsible task leaders (some are obvious), their plans for achieving goals and their monthly status statements, so stand by!

Jim Bolin
Commander

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS **(August 20, 2015)**

Prior to the membership meeting, the Post, with the Auxiliary members observing, conducted the postponed Unserviceable Flag Disposal Ceremony. For the first time in recorded history, Post 305 held the ceremony indoors to avoid the seasonal heat. This was possible because we cannot fire-up the burn barrel at the SCCC location. The prescribed officers of the Post assumed their positions, and **Sergeant-at-Arms Carl Smith** commenced the procedure by informing **Commander Jim Bolin** he had been given torn, faded and worn-out US flags for proper disposal. Present and participating was **District 7 Commander Kim Biggerstaff**.

Upon completion of the Flag Disposal Ceremony, **Commander Bolin** opened the meeting in the usual manner. The first order of business was the offering by the guest speaker, **Jack Hickey**. He provided some entertaining memories of his military service late in WWII and the Korean War. His original Army unit was the 88th Infantry Division with a tour of duty in Italy. After VJ Day, following discharge, he enlisted in the reserves; continued his college; and became a journalist in Midland, Texas. Then North Korean forces invaded the south, and Hickey was recalled to active duty. He was assigned to an Engineer Company and flown to the war

zone. He survived the Korean War; refused to extend his enlistment; and returned to civilian life. An entertaining speaker.

The next duty was to Drape the Charter in respect and honor of long-time post member **Rudy Charest**, a 33-year Legionnaire, who went to Final Muster in June. **Rudy** was the Post Chaplain, taking over after we lost **Sam Maiolo**, and served in that position until health issues prevented his continuing. He participated, along with Joan, in most Post events, especially the rummage sales.

The Commander called on the **Sergeant-at-Arms** to cite any guests, and only **Jack Hickey** was named and already introduced. Next, the minutes of the July 16th meeting were read in silence and approved. The minutes of the August 17 meeting of the Executive Committee were distributed also. The **Finance Officer, Emery Heurman**, was called on for his report. He explained he was just taking over, but did cite the investment account value as of July 31 as \$30,582.33, a respectable gain for an ultra-conservative fund. Next, **Judge Advocate Everett Ison** reported out the results of the financial audit just completed and distributed copies of his report. He presided over the audit and was assisted by **Carl Smith** and **Pete Koch**. Also, sitting in were the past and incoming **Finance Officers Bolin** and **Heurman**. The essence of the audit report was that the financial records were in order and all balances verified. There were a few recommendations: Need to separate the debit/credit outstanding amounts from cleared checks: Correct the EIN at the

investment house: Locate the fiduciary bond policy and renew it: Have the Finance Officer sign the bank reconciliation report: Obtain a safe deposit box at the bank. **Judge Advocate Ison** distributed copies of the amended Post Constitution & By-Laws, which now permit the Post to form and maintain a Legion Riders unit. **First Vice Commander Pete Koch** updated the members on discussion he had with Department representatives about the possibility of starting an Internet radio talk-show program based in Conroe. He found some encouragement but no real help or experience with setting up such and running it. It has been the Post's conclusion that it alone cannot do it and such should be at least a District program or higher. **Pete** went on to deal with membership, saying the Post had (as of July 31) 356 members. He has downloaded data on Post 345 members residing in Post 305's footprint, and will reach out to find new Post members. **Adjutant Pickens Jones** had nothing to report, and it was too soon to count paid-up member totals.

Chaplain Victoria Glover reported sadly that her father, **Bill Odom**, had been put under hospice care, a result of his untreated cancer. **Historian Lacey Homan** had nothing to report. **Service Officer Toby Carroll** was absent, in Germany with his wife Kathy. **Committeeman Win Salter Denton** had no report and **Dayton Denton** was absent.

Under "New Business", a \$100 donation was granted to "Veteran Warrior Weekend"; an endorsement of a candidate for Department Commander was tabled; and a change of date for

the 2016 rummage sales was announced (They will be one week earlier to avoid conflict with District 7 conventions).

District 7 Commander Kim Biggerstaff then spoke of a likely increase in dues by National if adopted at the National Convention in Baltimore. The amount being considered is \$5.00 per member, effective January 1, 2016. If that takes place, every Post will have to consider what its dues will become. **Kim** went on to remind all of the Fall District 7 Convention on October 17 at Post 615 (New Caney) at East Montgomery County Improvement District building, and the Division 2 Training session on October 24 at Post 490 in South Houston.

There being no other business to come before the Post, the **Commander** closed the meeting in the prescribed manner.



VETERANS ADVOCATE

TWO VA REFORM BILLS AWAIT SENATE ACTION

In late July, the House passed two pieces of VA reform legislation. The “VA Accountability Act of 2015” and the “Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015”. House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Chairman Jeff Miller reacted: “I applaud my colleagues for stepping up today

to address the troubling lack of accountability eroding VA’s ability to care for our veterans. The VA Accountability Act will provide the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs the ability to make real reforms and bring much needed accountability to the Department. Today, we stand with our veterans because the status quo has failed them and the American people for far too long. Just over two weeks ago, the Department announced that because of its inability to budget, VA hospitals around the country would be shutting down in August. Today’s actions, if supported by the Senate, will ensure that does not happen. The “Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act” is designed to rescue a mismanaged VA, providing the resources to keep the doors open, expanding access and choice to veterans and setting the stage to consolidate VA’s uncoordinated and wasteful non-VA care programs into the Veterans Choice Program. I urge the Senate to take up both of these measures immediately. We cannot allow VA’s incompetence to continue to harm America’s veterans. And, I sincerely ask President Obama to sign both into law.”

DECEASED VETERANS STILL AWAITING VA HEALTH CARE

An internal review of veteran death records provided to the Huffington Post found that, as of April 2015, of 847,822 veterans in the pending backlog for medical care, some 238,647 were already deceased. The report, when verified by VA’s Health Eligibility Center in Atlanta, stated the Department of Veterans Affairs cannot subtract dead applicants from

the list and that some may never have completed an application but remain on the backlog list. The news comes as VA warned Congress that it needs to fill a \$3 billion shortfall or risk closure of VA hospitals in August. House Committee Chairman Jeff Miller remarked: “At a time when they are asking for flexibility to spend an additional \$3 billion on health-care funds and they can’t even tell us who is on the wait list? I’m very disappointed in the mid-level management at VA.” He said he knows VA Secretary Robert McDonald is trying to change the culture at the agency “but his people are not serving him well.”

TRICARE INFORMATION TOOLS ARE ON YOUR COMPUTER

TRICARE offers several tools to make sure you understand your healthcare plan. TRICARE TV videos on YouTube provide short, monthly videos that discuss a specific aspect of the TRICARE benefit. Also, a weekly audio Podcast recaps the week’s health news and highlights. You can sign up for upcoming webinars on the archives page. Fact sheets about specific parts of the benefit are available on the “TRICARE SMART” site. You can also interact and get daily news and information on TRICARE’s Facebook page.

PISTOL-PACKING NAVAL OFFICER WILL NOT FACE CHARGES

Stars and Stripes reports that LCDR Tim White, the Navy officer who fired a sidearm in defense during the attack on the Navy Operational Support Center in Chattanooga will not face charges. White was

reported to be one of two service members carrying sidearms at the time of the attack, which could have led to charges. DoD prohibits all military personnel other than security forces from carrying arms while on base unless they are in a combat zone. The Navy is still investigating the shooting, where a lone terrorist attacked two separate military facilities. The shootings caused the deaths of four Marines and one sailor.

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

PAY NOW OR PAY MORE LATER

The National Convention, ongoing in Baltimore, is expected to deal with the matter of DUES and its increase for all Legion members. Although any such action has not yet taken place, the scuttlebutt is that it will and that a \$5.00 increase will be approved, effective January 1, 2016. So, the odds are each (non-PUFL) member of Post 305, who has not paid his/her current dues in this calendar year, will be paying a higher dues rate. Per our By-Laws (Article V; Section 1), the amount of Post annual dues per member is a matter to be

resolved by the Executive Committee, and any dues are due and payable by October 20th for 2016. (Members not paying their dues by January 1, become deemed “delinquent”).

The last dues increase was in 2007, but Post 305 elected to maintain its \$31.00 rate, absorbing the increase and reducing the increment which stays in The Woodlands. The Executive Committee will not take up a dues increase until the National action is completed, if any. But, among Committee members, there is little hope we can avoid an increase in dues. That should say to you; “Pay your 2016 dues at \$31.00 clearly before December 31, and avoid not only the unknown increase but also becoming delinquent.”

It is also probable that the scale of the one-time cost (which is age-based) for enjoying Paid-Up-For-Life will be revised to higher rates as part of a National increase in dues. If you intend for a long life and American Legion membership, this may be the last chance to join the other 40 Post PUFL’s by payment of a lower rate. See **Membership Chair Pete Koch** for more information on PUFLing.

UNIFORM-OF-THE-DAY

Long gone has been the need to check the barracks or BOQ bulletin board to see which uniform was ordered for that day. Conformance in dress has not been encouraged at Post 305, unlike a VFW Post, a Marine Corps League Detachment, a CAF Wing or a Boy Scout Troop, to cite some. Although Immediate Past Commander Koch advocated that Post members attend Membership Meetings and public events in common garb, such uniformity has only been applied to the Color Guard and has been

adopted by a few officers and members.

Well, the topic has become real: The Executive Committee has jelled on a preferred uniform shirt to be worn by all officers at Membership Meetings and public events. Acting Quartermaster Bolin made the selection; took size orders; placed a first order; and is “selling” the selected and ordered shirt to those who placed orders. That uniform was not prevalent at the August 20 meeting because of the need for Color Guard participation in the Flag Disposable Ceremony and the shirt’s ongoing distribution.

The uniform depends on the Navy blue polo shirt with stars and piping at the collar and short sleeves. Officers will find their name and Post name embroidered on the left chest. Ideally, that shirt, when worn with dark blue or black trousers, skirts or slacks; black shoes and socks; and the uniform cap, will create a respectable uniform. It is encouraged that the regular meeting attendees and past officers also adopt and wear the uniform, although the tiler at the door will not deny entry to otherwise dressed members. (If you want the spec or catalogue item number for the selected polo shirt, contact the Adjutant or the Commander.) The selected shirt feels great; should wear well; will never need washing and ironing – a real keeper!

If you need to be told, dressing uniformly for a military-based association gives members and observers a better sense of “oneness”; of unity; of recognition; of belonging. It adds esprit de corps where it is needed and attracts new members.

AMENDING THE US CONSTITUTION

Of late, there has been a lot of reference to what is “constitutional” under the US Constitution – parts of the 1st Amendment, 2nd Amendment, and 14th Amendment, for example. Most concerns derive from interpretation and

original intent and to what Congress was empowered to do in enforcing an Article “by appropriate legislation”. It seems timely to review not any particular Article or Section, but how changes to the Constitution can be effected when there is enough reason to do so. The Constitution is the basic “law of the land”, and it underlies all other federal laws, although the connection at times may seem obscure. There are four paths to amendment, as permitted by the Constitution, and two of them have never been used or tried. A third was used once; and the fourth used in all other cases. Preceding a change, there are two ways to propose an amendment, but only one has ever been used. That method requires both houses of Congress pass a bill by a two-thirds majority in each chamber, defining the proposed change; then sending the bill to each state for approval (ratification). The bill becomes law (an amendment) when three-fourths of the states (38 today) have ratified it. Some amendment bills have stipulated a time limit for a bill to be approved as an amendment, typically seven years.

The other method toward amending is for two-thirds of the state legislatures (34 today) to call for a “constitutional convention” to take up one or more amendment subjects. If such convention produces a bill, it goes back to the states where approval by three-fourths of the legislatures make it law. This untried, untested method warrants several clarifications and interpretations, like how such convention would be convened, before it is used.

The states can originate an amendment if they draft a bill by joint convention and then see it ratified by either state conventions or state legislatures. Neither of these methods has been used to date. Alternatively, Congress can originate an amendment, followed by ratification by a sufficient number of state conventions or state legislatures. In only one case was an amendment ratified by state

conventions – the 21st Amendment, which specified the convention route. (Amendment 21 imposed prohibition and was ratified on December 5, 1933.) All other amendments were ratified by the requisite three-fourths of the state legislatures.

There are today 27 amendments, including the first ten (the Bill of Rights). Fifteen were ratified in the 19th century or earlier; 12 in the 20th century. The most recent – the 27th – was sent to the states on September 25, 1789, and ratified on May 7, 1992, the longest pending bill of all! It prevents a sitting Congress from changing the salary of its members until after the next term of House members.

There are now four pending amendments, awaiting ratification by a sufficient number of states. They were sent to the states for action in 1789, 1810, 1861 and 1924. There have been two other proposed amendments which died of failure to reach the stipulated level of approval by their stated or extended time limit. In one case, the “Equal Rights Amendment” fell short of the needed 38-state approval by just three states, but then (in 1977) five states rescinded their ratification before the March 22, 1979, deadline. Congress extended the deadline to June 30, 1982, but no further ratifications were forthcoming.

VIDEO GAMES DESIGNED TO HELP YOUTH COPE WITH CANCER

The objective of a set of six video games called “Re-Mission 2” is to kill cancer before it kills you. The games arm players with weapons like “chemo bombs” and antibiotics to fight the leukemia monster, destroy bacteria, rescue healthy cells and annihilate tumors, all while collecting points and advancing to higher levels. For people who are battling cancer themselves, winning in the virtual world have profound implications for their health in the real one. Researchers at the HopeLab, the California non-profit that created the game, say children and young adults who play it understand their disease better and show improved adherence to their medications as a result.

“It is one thing for people to self-report that they feel better or that they have a better sense of control, but it’s another to look at their blood profile and see it has changed as a result of the game,” says Kevin Nielson, a spokesman for HopeLab, which was founded by former cancer researcher Pam Omidyar, wife of eBay Chairman Pierre Omidyar. “That’s a whole different kind of validation.” [Source: U.S. News & World Report; May 29, 2015]

HOW GOOD IS YOUR MEMORY OF SOCK-HOP TUNES?

Those few of you who attended the Legion’s Beaumont Department Convention may have taken in the assembly themed “Rock ‘n Roll to the Top for Our Vets”. By way of trivia nostalgia, how well can you recall the vocalist or singing group who had “chart-busting” success with the following hits? It was the age of Dick Clark’s “*American Bandstand*”, broadcasting from Philly, and gym dances where shoes were banned to save the floors. The answers are found on the next page.

1. At the Hop
2. My Guy
3. Stop! In the Name of Love
4. Then He Kissed Me
5. It’s My Party
6. One Fine Day
7. Earth Angel
8. Save the Last Dance For Me
9. Only You
10. Tears on My Pillow
11. Will You Love Me Tomorrow?
12. Cathy’s Clown
13. Sixteen Candles
14. My Boyfriend’s Back
15. The Twist
16. It’s All In the Game
17. I Will Follow Him
18. Little Darling
19. Rock Around the Clock
20. Puppy Love

POST 305 AUXILIARY UNIT NEWS

President: Jenny Hamann



Hello My Friends,

The American Legion Auxiliary matters. One may think that most of what we do seems very small and insignificant, but often the value of our efforts cannot be measured. There is a great deal of love poured out by the Ladies who work hard to care for and serve our veterans.

During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the Ladies of Unit 305 volunteered nearly 7,000 hours in service of our veterans and community. Although we also donated financially to our programs, our time remains our single greatest asset. Consider the little feature from ALA's national website in the next column box.

Why We Matter

The 2013 estimated value of one hour of volunteer service is \$22.55, according to the Independent Sector, a coalition of charities, foundations, and corporations that publishes research important to the nonprofit sector. American Legion Auxiliary members have volunteered more than 9.3 million hours for a collective value of service to our veterans, service members, and their families of more than \$2.1 billion. That's quite a global impact, and a powerful number that accentuates who we are, what we do, and why we matter!

<https://www.alaforveterans.org/about/>

I wish to commend all of our Ladies of Service for their dedication and perseverance.

This past summer was a difficult one for me and my family. My Mother, **Mary Lee Mulvihill**, the first Lady of Service featured in this column, was diagnosed with breast cancer and began a challenging

fight for her life. She is beautiful, strong and inspiring. I and all the Ladies of Unit 305 miss having her with us at our meetings and all the other times we get together, whether it be to distribute Poppies, provide refreshments for cyclists riding to benefit the children of Purple Heart Recipients, walking in the 4th of July parade and handing out mini flags, or pitching in on a pot luck dinner. She still has a ways to go before she can join us again. In the meantime, I ask you to pray for her health.

My Dad, **Jerry Mulvihill**, has proven to be a good caregiver for Mom. It hasn't been easy, but Dad rose to the challenge showing his great love for Mom in all new ways. I am so proud of him.

Well, it's back to work for me and I look forward to getting back into a routine. Next month I will start up the "**Featured Lady of Service**" again so be watching to find out who she is. Until then be strong like my Mom.

Your Servant,
Jenny Hamann

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ANSWERS TO ROCK 'N ROLL QUIZ

In most cases, more than one recording artist recorded the Quiz pieces, but the following were the most popular.

1.....Danny and the Juniors
2.....Mary Wells
3.....The Supremes
4.....The Crystals
5.....Lesley Gore
6.....The Chiffons
7.....The Penguins
8.....The Drifters
9.....The Platters
10.....Little Anthony and the Imperials
11.....The Shirelles
12.....The Everly Brothers
13.....The Crests
14.....The Angels
15.....Chubby Checker
16.....Tommy Edwards
17.....Little Peggy March
18.....The Diamonds
19.....Bill Haley and the Comets
20.....Paul Anka

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCALE</u>
Fri.	Sept. 11	Patriot Day ("9/11")	
Mon.	Sept. 14	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Wed.	Sept. 16 to Sept. 20	Department Executive Committee Meeting	Omni Colonnade Hotel, San Antonio
Thur.	Sept. 17	Membership Meetings	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Wed.	Oct. 7	Afghanistan War Began (2001)	
Mon.	Oct. 12	Columbus Day	
Mon.	Oct. 12	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Oct. 15	Membership Meetings	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Fri.	Oct. 16	Fall Rummage Sale – Set-Up Day	Robinson Road Community Ctr. @ 7:00 AM
Sat.	Oct. 17	Rummage Sale – Sale Day	
Sat.	Oct. 17	District 7 Fall Convention	Post 615; New Caney
Sat.	Oct. 24	Division 2 Training Session	Post 490; South Houston
Tues.	Oct. 27	Navy Day	
Sat.	Oct. 31	Halloween	Trick or treat!
Tues.	Nov. 3	Election Day	
Tues.	Nov. 10	Marine Corps Founded (1775)	
Wed.	Nov. 11	Veterans Day	
Mon.	Nov. 16	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Nov. 19	Membership Meetings (Boys State)	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM

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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.