



AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 "THE WOODLANDS POST" THE BUGLE



OCTOBER 2016

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 10

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

POST COMMANDER VICTORIA GLOVER



COMMANDER'S CORNER

September has come and gone. Now, we are on to the next month. I have been trying to figure out what all I would like to accomplish for the Post as Commander.

I would like us to be more active in the community. We were invited to the Kevin Brady Blues and BBQ event which I did attend. We have an invitation for the D.A.R. Veterans Appreciation with the Color Guard on Nov. 15th along with an invitation to the Veterans Day Breakfast November 12th at Mercedes of The Woodlands. In October we have our rummage sale and picnic. Also, I would like to look at honoring our First Responders and our area Eagle Scouts. We already work with the Boys State, and the JROTC with the schools. I would like to have some volunteers to help get some of these committees going.

Our membership committee is working hard on getting new members and getting our past members back in good standing, which helps increase our membership numbers. We are planning on an Open House set for October 21, 2017. We should be able to add to our membership numbers. Along with that we can look at doing a membership drive but need help with an idea as to how, when and where.

I would like to get an Activities Committee going as well, and start doing Post activities that do not consist of just one activity. I know there were several over the years I have been in the Post. More participation is needed and interesting ideas. Maybe a family fun day picnic on a Saturday, or trip to the downtown museums, maybe work at getting a deal for game tickets to the Astros, Rockets, Skeeters. Maybe even go to the theater. Just a few ideas. If we can gain interest in doing activities that are fun and interesting maybe, we can gain and keep the younger veterans. To plan and do this will take members stepping up and helping out, not just the Executive Committee. I know **Jim Bolin** is in charge of the activities, but it takes more than just him.

For us to accomplish the goals, we need to work together and get active outside of our monthly meetings. We do not

have to do activities every week or month but we need to do something. It doesn't have to be expensive. We all have to work together to make things possible for the Post. Just like making dinner or dessert, you have to have all the ingredients and add what is called for. We are a melting pot of different generations coming together to serve all our veterans and their families. As I have said and asked for before, if you have any Ideas that you think might be good to try, bring it to us. Young and old alike, we are family.

Let us ever be reminded to never forget our fallen, POW/-MIA's, veterans, active duty troops and their families. Keep them and our First Responders in our prayers!

Victoria Glover
Commander

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (September 15, 2016)

The meeting was opened in the usual manner at a little past 7:00 PM by **Commander Glover**. Next, she directed attention to the minutes of the last membership meeting and the Executive Committee Meeting, which were read and approved as recorded by voice vote. Approval was gained. Next, **Finance Officer Emery Heuermann** gave the Finance Report. As of the close of August, there was \$8,161.67

in the General Fund and \$31,688.13 in the Investment Fund, for a total of Cash Assets of \$39,849.80. After the report, **Heuermann** turned attention to the proposed 2016-2017 budget for the Post. It was noted that the proposed budget had not been presented to the Executive Committee, hence could not be adopted by the membership. Further, there were omissions for expenses which were certain (e.g. open house). One impact was that no checks could be written in the new year. Following much discussion, **Second Vice Commander Jim Bolin** proposed a temporary "fix" as a motion, and that was approved. It set, in summary, income at approximately \$18,987 and expenses at \$18,501. The Post's usual commitments to its annual programs will continue (Boys State; VAVS; etc.)

Next, **First Vice Commander Pete Koch** reported that last year we missed our goal by seven members who did not pay dues for last year. He also noted that he had formed a Membership Committee comprised of **Scott Hebert, Art Eipper, Win Salter** and **Dora Blue**, with himself as Chairman (ex-officio). The Post's goal for this year is 323 members. Then, **Koch** reported that on the advice of his doctor he needed to resign as First Vice Commander, but would remain active in the Membership Committee.

Second Vice Commander Jim Bolin noted that he had distributed a sign-up sheet for possible workers at the rummage sale on the 7th and 8th of October. He also reminded the membership that the next meeting would be our yearly picnic at Shadowbend Park.

The following officers had no reports to make: **Adjutant, Chaplain, Historian, At-Large Members** and **Sergeant-at-Arms**. But, **Judge Advocate Everett Ison** had two important topics to present. First, he reported out on the annual financial audit and distributed copies of the Audit Committee's August 30th meeting and its findings. He walked through the summary report commenting on the proceedings. It concluded with just a few findings requiring action, but generally the post was in good shape.

Continuing, **Ison** took up the required changes to the Post's Constitution and By-Laws. Copies of the imposed revisions were distributed, and members were asked to read them. This constituted the required Second Reading prior to a vote for acceptance. A motion was made to accept the changes, and the motion carried. The changes will have profound impact on all Posts.

Service Officer Toby Carroll reported he had run upon the 2016 Edition of the VA's benefits booklet. It is now magazine-sized, 50 pages, and will be available as a series of Volumes under the title "Health Care Benefits Overview". He had copies of Volume 1 available to the membership. He felt he had discovered the mother-load of information on veterans' benefits. He also cited You Tube as a source of benefits information.

Old Business: The Boy's and Girl's State ceremony will be on November 3rd, at 7:00 PM at The Woodlands High School and all members of the Post are invited. **Dayton Denton** had requested an allowance of \$200



THE BUGLE

The Bugle is the monthly newsletter of American Legion Post 305; "The Woodlands Post"; Department of Texas. All Post and Auxiliary Unit members in good standing are entitled to a copy of *The Bugle*.

Editor: James Bolin

Assistant Editor: Win Salter

Distribution: Emery Heuermann

Webmaster: Emery Heuermann

www.alpost305.org

Facebook: Kim Biggerstaff

kimbiggerstaff@icloud.com

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Tel. No: (281) 298-2440

Mail Address:

American Legion Post 305
P.O.Box 9336
The Woodlands, Texas, 77387

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.

for décor for the affair and it was approved.

Under **New Business, Commander Glover** reported that the Post and the Auxiliary were preparing for the proposed Open House on January 21, 2017, and we are in need of volunteers to help organize the event.

Under **Good of the Legion:** The District 7 Fall Convention will take place on October 15th at Post 95 in the meeting hall at the H.E.A.R.T.S. Museum, 463 State Highway 75 North, Huntsville. The Traveling Trophy is the most pairs of White Socks, men's and women's. (Not the Chicago kind!)

The **Commander** noted that with Koch's resignation, she will seek nominations for another First Vice. She also announced that the Color Guard will appear at a DAR event on November 15th.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was closed in the appropriate method, and adjourned. The membership enjoyed a meal prepared by the Auxiliary of casseroles, salads and desserts.



VETERANS ADVOCATE

**VA HEALTH CARE
ENROLLMENT APPLICATION
BY PHONE**

Veterans can now apply for Veterans Affairs health benefits over the phone. The VA published a final regulation on September 12th that allows former service members to complete VA health care applications by calling **877-222-8387**. The line is manned by VA employees who walk the veterans through the process, including providing them with information on copayment requirements and third party insurance. Previously, VA required veterans to apply in person at a VA medical center or submitting a paper application to the Department. But the system was beset with problems, creating a backlog of 847,882 applications that stretched back nearly 15 years and included submissions from more than 300,000 deceased veterans. After the VA Inspector General released a report on the backlog a year ago, VA took steps to change the application process, to include removing a requirement that veterans physically sign the necessary paperwork. It also embarked on an effort to clear the backlog, starting with 30,000 combat veterans who should have automatically qualified for the benefit but were placed in the system by mistake. Veterans can continue to apply for benefits in person as well, according to the Department. [Source: Military Times | Patricia Kime, September 12, 2016 ++]

**LIFE SAVING GENETICS
TESTING NOW AVAILABLE
TO VETERANS**

Scottsdale-based Advanced Genomic Solutions (AGS), an international leader in Pharmacogenomics (PGx), announced an agreement with Genelex, the makers of YouScript, to bring

the life-saving benefits of PGx testing to veterans and their doctors at the VA. Pharmacogenomics (PGx), the study of how an individual's genetic makeup affects their response to drugs, can help get veterans on the correct medications and start saving lives immediately. Every day an average of 20 veterans commit suicide. Many of these veterans are unknowingly prescribed the wrong medications, which can contribute to worsening depression associated with PTSD, suicidal ideation and other mental health issues.

PGx testing is gaining praise within the medical community, because it allows physicians to identify which medications their patients' will fail to process appropriately. With a simple cheek swab to collect a DNA sample, doctors can avoid the trial and error prescribing process and choose appropriate medications to achieve the desired results more rapidly. AGS is a champion for veterans and is bringing them ready access to this revolutionary technology. While VA physicians have the ability to prescribe the test to veterans, few are aware of test availability or fully understand the benefits it offers.

Helping veterans is more than good policy to AGS leadership; it's personal. Lance Bennett, managing partner at AGS, is a West Point graduate and former Army Military Intelligence Officer. "In the U.S. alone, AGS completed more than 5,000 patient tests in 2015, but not one of those tests were for a veteran through the VA," Bennett said. "Partnering with Genelex to promote the PGx test will have a hugely positive impact on the lives of veterans

in this area, as well as the physicians that work so hard to provide them excellent care.”

Nationally, the VA is currently contracted with Genelex to conduct comprehensive PGx testing. To help veterans, AGS has entered into an agreement with Genelex to help increase the number of local veterans and physicians using PGx testing. “We’re thrilled to join with the talented and dedicated team at AGS to help veterans ... take advantage of Genelex’s YouScript driven PGX testing,” said Howard Coleman, Chairman of Genelex. “We expect, with AGS’ ‘boots on the ground’ assistance, that VA facilities will serve as a national model for how to bring the benefits of PGx testing to veterans nationwide, and we’ll be able to expand the offering much more rapidly.” [Source: AZ Business Magazine | September 6, 2016 ++]

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

DRONES IN WAR ZONES

Normally, U.S. forces combat personnel, deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan for example, live,

work, fight and endure the conditions of whatever base, camp, FOB or airfield where their unit is stationed, surrounded by other members of the same unit and other jointly serving units. Their families and loved ones are far, far away, under comparatively safe conditions. But, not so with the Air Force pilots who fly “remotely piloted vehicles” (RPV’s) or military drones. RPV pilots are specially-trained Air Force officers. Some may have at one time flown fighters or bombers but such experience is not a prerequisite. Mary “Missy” Cummings, former Navy pilot (F-4’s and F/A-18’s), of MIT’s Human and Automation Lab, states: “Experienced pilots do not make the best UAV (“unmanned aerial vehicle”) pilots. They are dependent on cues from the buffeting wind, the whine of the engine, or the shimmy of the airframe. They lose those cues when they go from the cockpit to a computer console and crash more often than those with no piloting experience.”

A satellite airfield of Nellis Air Force Base (Nevada) sits 50 miles north; 35 miles from Las Vegas. It is in the town of Indian Springs – population: 1,000 – a wide place along U.S. 95. The airfield was once named Indian Springs Army Airfield and served to support the Nevada Test Range. The base was reactivated in 2005 and renamed Creech AFB, home of the Air Force Special Operations Command / UAV-Logistic and Training Facility. The 3rd Special Operations Squadron at Creech was the first unit to employ the “Predator” drone. In November 2006, the 42nd Attack Squadron was formed and first operated the “Reaper”. In 2007, Creech personnel of the 432nd Aircraft Maintenance

Squadron were deployed to Iraq’s Imam Ali Air Base, also known as “Tallil”, one of the war- zone base of drones.

Creech AFB is unique as a work place and training facility in that no troops or airmen are stationed there. There are no barracks, family quarters or BOQ’s – no commissary, no schools, no day-care centers. The trainees, airmen, pilots and support staff all live off-base, mostly in the Centennial development of northwest Las Vegas, with its park-‘n-ride connections. They get allowances for off-base services and expenses normally provided by the Air Force and have privileges at Nellis AFB, including its medical center. The base does have security and maintenance personnel and a medical aid station. Its “daytime”, non-resident population numbers about 3,000.

Historically, unmanned aircraft have existed since June 1914, when Lawrence Sperry and his mechanic, while airborne in a Curtiss C-2 biplane, climbed out of the cockpits and stood on the wings to demonstrate the world’s first autopilot. In WWII, drone-rigged heavy bombers, loaded with explosives, were guided to northern France by chase planes and directed at German targets where they crashed and exploded. Enthusiasts have built and flown radio-controlled model airplanes for generations. Drones, as we know them today, were a natural development and have gone through a series of sizes and models with aerial reconnaissance the original objective – Gnat 750, Albatross, Amber, Aquila, Condor, A160 and Dark Star. A prominent developer is General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, but Northrup-Grumman, Lockheed-Martin and

others are in the business. Three years ago, U.S. military forces had about 8,000 UAV's; today, many, many more. Deployed UAV's with their maintainers are in the war zones, but, in most cases, the pilots – men and women – are stateside, in particular at Creech AFB. At first these UAV's were used for real time intelligence gathering, aerial photography, then TV signal streaming back to computer consoles and monitors where pilots guide the UAV's and trigger cameras. Then bigger, armed drones evolved, carrying laser-guided missiles, like the AMG-114 or "Hellfire". The current MQ-9 "Reaper" has a payload capacity of 4,000 pounds of ordnance. Other members of the fleet include the MQ-1 "Predator", the RQ-170 "Sentinel", and RQ-4 "Global Hawk" (also used by NASA). Drone pilot training begins on simulators at Randolph AFB in Texas. Training with the real thing goes on at Creech.

There is Air Force awareness that flying drones as a pilot, sitting in the air-conditioned comfort and safety of a U.S. base building, has its impact on those pilots; more than those flying real warplanes in war zones. When an F-16 or F/A-18 is called on for close air support, the pilot is guided to the target, gets within range, fires several missiles and is gone, leaving behind fires, destruction, smoke and dust. Even slower CAS aircraft (e.g. the A-10 "Warthog") cannot loiter long to assess damage after the air clears. These "fast-movers" cannot witness the results of their attack; it was just another mission to relieve a threat to our "groundpounders" or to destroy an enemy facility or vehicle. Not so in the case of

RPV pilots. The drones can and do circle the attack site, using their very sharp vision to assess damage inflicted. These same pilots, when their shift ends, go home to their family and loved ones just down the road and try to assume civilian life for a few hours. That alternating contrast is causing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on the "stay-at-home" pilots.

Former drone pilot Brandon Bryant makes the point: "The smoke clears, and there's pieces of the two guys around the crater. And there's this guy over here, and he's missing his right leg above the knee. He's holding it, and he's rolling around, and the blood is squirting out of his leg, and it is hitting the ground and it's hot. His blood is hot. But, when it hits the ground, it starts to cool off; the blood cools fast. It took him a long time to die. I just watched him. I watched him become the same color as the ground he was lying on."

After watching such a hit, with their own variations, is it any wonder that drone pilots, who do not just return to base or carrier where they are debriefed, end their day by driving home and try to forget, and then repeat that cycle week in and week out. Those job circumstances have caused such stress as to be diagnosed as PTSD. War is Hell even where no enemy is trying to kill you!

NEW FRIENDS FROM AFAR

I don't know about you, but for the past many months the mailman (or letter carrier) has filled my mailbox with letters from friends I don't know or don't remember! Now, I am not complaining because when you're as old as I am, your friends have largely passed on. At first I

thought these letters were intended for someone else, but that can't be so – my name and address are right there.

These new friends write nice long letters, sometimes four pages or more. And, they often enclose pictures of themselves and sometimes the whole family. Many send me calendars to hang up. I have enough calendars to last a lifetime. Only problem; they are all for 2017. And then, there are the frequent survey forms – an unusual way of asking about me and how I'm doing! I got so fed up with those stupid questions, I just toss those out now.

Frequently, these thoughtful letters include some small token or item of value – an unused first-class stamp or money! Yes! Although some folks include a nice check all made out, but put "non-negotiable" on it (whatever that means). Often there's a real penny or nickel or dime stuck to the letter. In one letter – I couldn't believe it – was a \$2 Federal Reserve Note! And on two other occasions I found a crisp \$1 silver certificate, and once I got a Kennedy half-dollar! I greatly appreciate such little gifts and look forward to receiving more.

Now, you might think these letters are from old neighbors who moved away, but I don't remember them at all. Besides, they live all over, almost none in Texas. I mean New Hampshire, Utah, Louisiana, Wisconsin, for example, places I've never lived! Many seem to be seeking election to some public office. Others want money from me! Like the "Wounded Veterans of the Cold War" or some museum that wants to be one! My kids say; "That's just junk mail; toss it out. Don't waste time opening any of it." Well, when I see a shiny nickel peeking through the window of the envelope, I can't just discard it! These are my new friends, and I am not apt to toss out their letters unopened. There's no telling, there may be a dollar or half-dollar in one, although I don't bother reading what they write anymore!

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS

President Jenny Hamann



Hello again my friends.

Now that it is officially Autumn, hopefully we are past the worst of the summer heat. The last few days of September kept temperatures under 90°F. The heat may penetrate October as well. Post and Unit 305 hold our Annual Picnic on the third Thursday in October (the 20th this year) and I hope all of you come out to join us for barbeque and fixings.

The Post provides the meat and buns for burgers, bratwurst and hot dogs and the Unit brings condiments, side dishes and desserts. Many of the Ladies of the Unit signed up to bring needed items. We still need people to bring the following:

Mustard
Mayonnaise
Sliced tomatoes
Tossed salad
Salt & Pepper
Desserts

Saturday, October 15th, Rosalie Fryer and Geri Mulvihill will join me in Huntsville for the Seventh District Fall Convention. Geri still serves as District Chaplain and will help facilitate a Memorial Service honoring all the Legion and Auxiliary mem-

bers of the Seventh District who have passed away since the Spring Convention.

We are collecting toiletries and completely white socks to take with us to the Convention. The items will go to the VA Hospital in Houston for use by patients there. The Post/Unit family that contributes the largest number of items will take home the Traveling Trophy. If you are able to contribute to our collection please contact Rosalie, Geri or me. We can arrange to get them from you before the Convention. It would be helpful if you count the number of items you bring so we can update our tally easily.

The Ladies of Unit 305 also help out our Post with its Rummage Sale on Friday and Saturday, October 7th & 8th. Yes, it is work but it is also fun. Please come out and support us either by volunteering for some of your time, adding to the sale items or just shopping.

So here are some October meetings/events to put on your calendars:

- October 7th & 8th: Fall Rummage Sale.
- October 15: 7th District Convention.
- October 17: Open House Planning Meeting (6:15 PM) & Executive Committee Meeting (7:00 PM).
- October 20: Picnic at Shadowbend Park (7:00 PM). Any cooks arrive early!

Reminder: The Open House will be held on January 21, 2017 at the South County Community Center.

Have a Fantastic October!
Your Servant,
Jenny Hamann
President

ALA Vision Statement:

The vision of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion while becoming the premier service organization and foundation of every community providing support for our veterans, our military, and their families by shaping a positive future in an atmosphere of fellowship, patriotism, peace and security.

New York's World Trade Center After 9/11 Attacks



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

DAY	DATE	EVENT	LOCALE
Fri	Oct. 7	Operation Enduring Freedom Began (2001)	
Fri.	Oct. 7	Fall Rummage Sale (Set-up Day)	Robinson Road Community Ctr. @ 8:00 AM
Sat.	Oct. 8	(Continues – Sale Day)	
Mon	Oct. 10	Columbus Day	
Thur.	Oct. 13	US Navy Established (1775)	
Sat.	Oct. 15	District 7 Fall Convention	Post 95, Huntsville
Mon.	Oct. 17	Executive Committee Meeting	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Oct. 20	Membership Meetings	So. County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Mon.	Oct. 31	Halloween	Trick or Treat!
Thur.	Nov. 3	Boys/Girls State Honor Ceremony	The Woodlands High School at 7:00 PM
Tues.	Nov. 8	Election Day	Trick or Treat!
Thur.	Nov. 10	US Marine Corps Formed (1775)	
Fri.	Nov. 11	Veterans Day	WWI Armistice (1918)
Mon.	Nov. 14	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Nov. 17	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center @ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Day	Gobble, Gobble!
Wed.	Dec. 7	Pearl Harbor Day	"A day which will live in infamy!"

POST & AUXILIARY UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION (2016-2017)

POSITION	NAME	TEL. NO.	E-MAIL ADDRESS
POST 305			
COMMANDER	Victoria Glover	(832) 813-9415	ALPostcmdrvickie@gmail.com
FIRST VICE CMDR.	Pete Koch	(936) 273-3588	petekoch76@gmail.com
SECOND VICE CMDR.	Jim Bolin	(281) 251-2352	jpb20006@sbcglobal.net
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	Bruce Carter		
ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS	Carl Smith	(281) 367-4714	carl12024@yahoo.com
CHAPLAIN	Larry Reynolds	(254) 482-0003	lbr725@gmail.com
ASS'T CHAPLAIN	(Open)		
JUDGE ADVOCATE	Everett Ison	(281) 298-9524	everett.ison@sprint.com
HISTORIAN	Lacey Homan	(832) 704-2732	lkhoman44@gmail.com
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:			
POSITION ONE	Dayton Denton	(832) 928-6054	whselfstorage1@yahoo.com
POSITION TWO	Art Eipper	(832) 567-5806	artstarr99@yahoo.com
AUXILIARY UNIT 305			
PRESIDENT	Jenny Hamann	(281) 907-3430	ala305pres@gmail.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Kathy Carroll	(281) 323-4985	kcarroll47@sbcglobal.net
SECRETARY (Act'g)	Thars Higginson	(713) 851-9337	tharshigginson@comcast.net
TREASURER	Dayna Salter	(281) 229-1365	dayna.salter@ymail.com
HISTORIAN	Joan Charest	(281) 363-9710	rrge26@aol.com
CHAPLAIN	Geri Mulvihill	(832) 620-6265	gerimulvihill@outlook.com
PARLIAMENTARIAN	Rosalie Fryer	(936) 520-8895	rcfryer@consolidated.net
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Annie Smith	(281) 757-3967	carl12024@yahoo.com
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:			
POSITION ONE	Nancy Woloszyn	(619) 985-0486	above4000feet@aol.com
POSITION TWO	Veronica Maiolo	(832) 228-4403	sammaiolo@sbcglobal.net
POSITION THREE	Mary Bolin	(281) 251-2352	jpb20006@sbcglobal.net