



THE BUGLE

FEBRUARY 2018

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AMERICAN LEGION POST 305 OF THE WOODLANDS

POST COMMANDER
VICTORIA GLOVER



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

How the time has flown, it is February already. I would like to congratulate our January Chili Cook-off winner, **Kimberly Biggerstaff**. She took 1st place. **Geri Mulvihill** took 2nd place and **Jim Bolin** took 3rd place. We only had three entries this year so we combined the contest. It was hard to decide the winner because they were all good.

This month we have Valentine's Day! Also, we will be doing the Boys State interviews and selections. Though we usually hold the Four Chaplains Service this month, our two Chaplains have postponed it until the March meeting. There is not a lot of activity going on this month.

We need to get active on recruiting new members. Our numbers nationwide are dropping. Just the other day, I talked with an Army veteran that just retired and was looking to join a veterans group. I was wearing my Legion ball cap and he approached me. I talked with him and gave him my card. He was looking for assistance

with the VA, I was able to let him know our **Service Officer Toby Carroll** could assist him in that area and invited him to join us. With this simple act of my wearing the ball cap, I was able to recruit someone. I also had folks ask me due to a simple bumper sticker or window decal. You never know when someone is looking and wanting to join up with the American Legion. We can hold all the Open Houses we want, but we need to do more to recruit the veterans. Yes, we do the Poppies with the ladies, and, when we set up at Veterans Day and Memorial Day events, just a single person wearing a hat can help.

Just a heads up, we do have Post Elections coming up in May. We are looking to get folks involved and become officers of the Post. Let's get some new blood up on the podium. New folks with new ideas are always welcome.

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

**Victoria Glover
Commander**

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS (January 18, 2018)

Prior to the beginning of the meeting, the food tables were filled with chili pots ready to be part of the Chili Cook-off Contest, 2018. (Actually, only three entries were made – by Jim Bolin, Geri Mulvihill and Kim Biggerstaff.)

At 7:07 PM, **Commander Victoria Glover** called the meeting to order and executed the stipulated ritual, aided by **Sergeant-at-Arms Bruce Carter** and **Chaplain Bill Houghton**. The **Commander** asked the **Sergeant-at-Arms** as to whether a quorum was present (which it was). The **Commander** then turned her attention to copies of the minutes of meetings that had been distributed by **Adjutant Pickens Jones**, covering the November 16th Membership Meeting and the January 17th Executive Committee Meeting. The first order of business was the review and approval of those meeting minutes. The November 16th approval was accomplished by motion, second and vote, whereas **Everett Ison** moved for a set-aside for consideration of the other at a later part of this meeting.

Finance Officer Emery Heuermann was called on to give his



financial report. Due to the bad weather the report spanned two months; November and December 2017. **Heuermann** cited the salient points and the 12/31/2017 totals: to wit – General Fund @ \$8,792.78; Investment Fund @ \$33,674.66; and Total (Liquid) Assets @ \$42,467.44. In response to a question, **Heuermann** stated that upon further consideration it appears that not much would be gained by changing to another Investment Fund from Fidelity's FASIX fund, the original inception choice. A motion, presented in response, passed endorsing his thinking. The entire report was approved subject to audit.

First Vice Commander Jim Bolin reported on the level of membership renewals paid to recent date. The Post has current dues payments from 217 members. With an annual goal of 322, that puts the Post at 67.39% of goal. Not yet included in the 217 may be payments made on-line, which take time to become known to the Post, unlike checks which arrive in the mail.

The **Adjutant, Chaplain, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Service Officer**, had nothing to report. The **Historian** and both **Committeemen** were absent.

The **Commander** then began to identify members of the Legion that were in need of our prayers (e.g. the passing of John Palasota). At this point, **Everett Ison** exercised a Set-Aside to discuss the reason why we should not send money to the Palasota family at this time. As a result, the motion to send \$100 to the family was changed to indicate that we would send that money at a future time. The **Commander** then noted that **Win Salter** was

doing well after his surgery. **Sergeant-at-Arms Bruce Carter** requested time to describe his father's military accomplishments. His father passed away in December, and, as reported by Bruce, had a wonderful military career.

Everett Ison reported that he has taken over seeing that the Boy's State Ceremony will go on as planned. **Jim Bolin** noted that the Birdies for Charity will be conducted the same as last year. He will have the required participation forms on February 5. **Emery Heuermann** reported on the communications that he sent out to people association with the Post.

Under "New Business", the **Commander** invited members to attend the speech by General Jameson on Saturday January 27th from 1:00 to 3:00 PM at Lone Star College.

The **Commander** then recognized **Kim Biggerstaff**, who is currently serving as Sergeant-at-Arms for the Department. **Kim** discussed a 50-year Time Capsule that the Department is going to bury. She noted that she would like to gather pictures from various aspect of the Post which would be then sent to the Department to include within the capsule. The membership approved that idea with thanks to **Kim** for bringing it to our attention.

Under "For the Good of the Legion", **Everett Ison** said he would like to get a group together to ponder what we might due to improve our recruiting. He noted that as recent as a few years ago, the Post was over 100% of goal. He offered to meet with others a little before each meeting to see if we could come up with



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 at Henry's Home Horse and Human Sanctuary in Conroe.

how we could improve our recruitment.

At that point the Post closed the proceedings and there was a mad rush to the chili pots, as we began to test the Chili-con-Carne offerings to pick the best. As a result of our testing, **Kim Biggerstaff** was the winner for the second time in a row, but this time with a lamb-based chili! She lambasted **Geri Mulvihill** and **Jim Bolin**, the second and third-place winners! Congratulations to **Kim**.



Top: Post and Auxiliary members prepare the combined array of chili offerings, prior to taste-testing. Bottom: "And the winners are---!"; Post member Jim Bolin – Third Place. Rosalie Fryer, Auxiliary, Judge. Geri Mulvihill, Auxiliary member, Second Place. And, Kim Biggerstaff, Dual member, First Place.

THE 2017 BOYS STATE GRADS ARE FETED

The tradition of recognizing and honoring the high-school junior boys who were sponsored last year by or through Post 305 to attend the Legion's Boys State program was maintained on the eve of January 30th. That

ceremony, where the honorees and their parents and siblings gather to be recognized, saw 18 of the 38 boys the Post sponsored in attendance, representing seven schools. Each boy was introduced and awarded an Olympic-size medal, letters of commendation from **Congressman Kevin Brady** and Certificates of Merit from Post 305.



Top: Dayton Denton presents the 18 boys in attendance. Bottom: Heather Washburn and Commander Glover present commendations to Boys State grad Travis Washburn.

Special guests included **Heather Washburn**, representing Congressman Brady; **Peter Koch**, CEO, Constitution Education Foundation (and Post 305 Past Commander); **Ed Jarvis**, Commander, District 7, Dept. of Texas; and **Bill Springfield**, Boys State Committee Chairman, Post 615 (New Caney). The start of the ceremony was aided by the trooping of the colors by The Woodlands High School JROTC Color Guard.

Presiding was Post 305 **Commander Victoria Glover**. Master of Ceremonies was Post

305 **Boys State Committee Chairman Dayton Denton**. Both **Heather Washburn** and **Peter Koch** addressed the gathering. Light snacks and refreshments were provided.

Dayton Denton had obtained an American flag, through Congressman Brady's good offices, that once flew above the Capitol, and it was awarded by draw to one of the Boys State grads. About six other Post members assisted the **Commander** in staging this event, including **Everett Ison**, who could not attend himself.



VETERANS ADVOCATE

VA NOW PROVIDING SAME-DAY SERVICE

On January 12th, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced a major milestone, that 100 percent of its more than 1,000 medical facilities across the country now offer same-day services for urgent primary and mental health-care needs. Same-day services means a veteran with an urgent need for primary care and mental health-care receives services that may include: a

face-to-face visit with a clinician; advice provided during a call with a nurse; a telehealth or video care visit; an appointment made with a specialist; or a prescription filled the same day, depending upon what best meets the needs of the veteran. "We made a commitment to our nation's veterans that we would work to reduce wait times and improve access, and we are doing it," said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "We were able to meet this goal, in large part, because of the concerted focus of our staff who care for our veterans in facilities across the country."

Since 2014, VA has concentrated its efforts on improving access and meeting the urgent health-care needs of veterans. In 2016, all of VA's medical centers offered same-day services for primary and mental health services. In addition to offering same-day services, VA has reduced patient wait times. VA also implemented a new process to ensure timely follow-up appointments for time-sensitive medical needs. More than 100,000 such appointments have been completed. In 2017; veterans completed over 57.5 million appointments and VA clinicians saw almost six million patients. To view access information about each facility nationwide, go on-line and visit www.accesstocare.va.gov. The information provided at this link is not offered by any major national hospital organization in the country. [Source: VA News Release | January 12, 2018 ++]

MARINE CORPS DROPS MOS **0351 – INFANTRY** **ASSAULTMAN**

It is a sad day for many Marines around the world. The Marine Corps has decided to eliminate the military occupational

specialty (MOS) known as the "Infantry Assaultman". What can we say about the Infantry Assaultman? He was a renaissance man of the infantry. Need a hole blown in a wall or door with a sophisticated demolition charge? He could do that. Are you in need of shooting a rocket into a building to ruin some badguy sniper's day? Signal backblast area "all clear" and he was your man with a SMAW rocket on target. Were you perhaps short on manpower and needed someone to man a machine-gun and understand how to employ it? The 0351 Infantry Assault-man easily slipped into roles that were not his own and excelled. Why? Nobody really knows, it was just what he did. Nobody knew what to do with the assaultmen, so while they maintained their specific MOS skills, they also learned and picked up the skills from others as well.

The Infantry Assaultman was smart. He had to be. His job required that he be able to distinguish between friendly and enemy tanks through a thermal optic, memorize several different equations for demolitions and numerous explosive values, all in the blink of an eye. He was known as the Ph.D. of the infantry. With abnormally high ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) scores, the assaultman was a bit of a nerd in the infantry community, but lovable at the same time. He was a nerd, but he was the infantry's nerd.

With the reassignment of the Javelin anti-tank missile to the TOW missile gunner MOS, it was only a matter of time before the assaultman went the way of the buffalo. We'll forever hold you in our hearts, 0351 Infantry Assaultmen, and we'll

miss the days of clearing your backblast before you sent a rocket of doom to the faces of insurgent terrorist towelheads. [Source: American Grit | John Fanin | January 5, 2018 ++]

TWO TRICARE NOTICES OF **POTENTIAL INTEREST**

1. TRICARE Group A & B -- Current and new enrollees now have distinct enrollment fees and out-of-pocket costs based on when your sponsor entered the uniformed services. Beneficiaries are divided into two categories, Group A and Group B enrollees.

~ **Group A enrollees** are those whose military sponsor's initial enlistment or appointment occurred before January 1st, 2018.

~ **Group B enrollees** are those whose military sponsor's initial enlistment or appointment occurred on or after January 1st, 2018.

Enrollees in TRICARE Reserve Select, TRICARE Retired Reserve, TRICARE Young Adult and the Continued Health Care Benefit Program are considered Group B regardless of when the sponsor first joined the military. Because this designation is based on when your sponsor entered active duty, this category cannot be changed by any action taken by the beneficiary. For example, by switching plans or failure to pay. For the most up-to-date information about changes to TRICARE, get on-line and visit www.TRICARE.mil/changes.

2. Pharmacy Copayments -- On February 1st, 2018, copayments for prescription drugs at TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery and retail pharmacies will increase. These changes are required by

law and affect TRICARE beneficiaries who are not active duty service members. While retail pharmacy and home delivery copayments will increase, prescriptions filled at military pharmacies remain available at no cost. You can save the most money by filling your prescriptions at military pharmacies. Military pharmacies and TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery will remain the lowest cost option for TRICARE beneficiaries. Using home delivery, the copayments for a 90-day supply of generic formulary drugs will increase from \$0 to \$7. For brand-name formulary drugs, copayments will increase from \$20 to \$24, and copayments for non-formulary drugs without a medical necessity will increase from \$49 to \$53. At a retail network pharmacy, copayments for a 30-day supply of generic formulary drugs will increase from \$10 to \$11 and from \$24 to \$28 for brand-name formulary drugs. In some cases, survivors of active duty service members may be eligible for lower cost-sharing amounts.

TRICARE groups pharmacy drugs into three categories: generic formulary, brand name formulary and non-formulary. You pay the least for generic formulary drugs and the most for non-formulary drugs, regardless of whether you get them from home delivery or a retail pharmacy. To see the new TRICARE pharmacy copayments, go on-line and visit

[TRICARE.mil/pharmacycosts..](http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacycosts..)

[Source:

<http://www.tricare.mil/podcast> |

January 5, 2017 ++]

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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e-mail: toby.carroll@sbcglobal.net

VA Houston Regional Office: (713) 383-7842

VA Conroe Outpatient Clinic: (936) 522-4024

Texas Veterans Commission Hot Line: 1(800) 252-VETS

County Veteran Service Centers:

Montgomery County - Conroe: (936) 539-7842

Harris County – Houston: (281) 876-6600

Military Veteran Peer Network: Conroe: (936) 521-6132

STATE LEGISLATORS:

Dist. 3: Cecil Bell Jr. – Magnolia: (281) 259-3700

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Dist. 126: Kevin Roberts – Houston: (281) 444-1814

Dist. 150: Valoree Swanson –Spring: (281) 257- 4222

“THE WAR DEPARTMENT DEEPLY REGRETS TO INFORM YOU THAT ----“

Jerry Schwartz heard the crying before he saw the tears. “What’s wrong?” the 8-year-old boy asked the kid living next door to him on Blake Avenue in Brooklyn, across the street from Public School 175. It was early February, 1943, and the Western Union boy was peddling his bike out of the neighborhood as fast as he could. Like a posse was chasing him. Nobody wanted to see that uniformed delivery boy riding his bike down their street. World War II was at its peak, and he was making minimum wage – 40 cents an hour – delivering horrible news to people. A young “Grim Reaper” riding a bike, they called him.

Schwartz thinks it was the Gross family that got the bad news that day 75 years ago. There were other families living on his block that got that knock on the door, too. The woman living on the ground floor flat opened her front door, and saw the Western Union kid standing on her stoop holding a telegram that had ripped the hearts out of thousands of mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers in this country.

“The War Department deeply regrets to inform you,” it began. Her son had been one of 672 soldiers and sailors who died when the *USAT Dorchester*, an Army transport, sank off the coast of Greenland after being torpedoed by a German submarine. She dropped the telegram and let out a wail. Her son was gone. There would be no Norman Rockwell homecoming for him. “Within minutes, the whole neighborhood was talking about it,” said Schwartz, who went on to serve three years combat duty during the Korean War. “You saw mothers crying up and down the block.” They all saw their son’s and brother’s name on that telegram.

It was only later when Schwartz, who lives in Santa Clarita, learned about the four Army chaplains who also lost their lives on the *Dorchester* that day – how they became memorialized forever in U.S. history. In 1988, when Congress declared February 3rd “Four Chaplains Day”, but it slipped by earlier this week with hardly a mention in the news, and that’s been bothering Jerry Schwartz. “Why not even a little mention in the local paper?” he asks. Because. Well, Jerry, I

don't know. Nobody cares anymore? It was 75 years ago. Let it go?

No, don't let it go, Schwartz is telling me. Shut up, pay respect, and remember. So, we do so because he's right. A war-weary country gave the four chaplains their own day in history. It gave them a U.S. postage stamp in their honor, and a stained-glass window in the halls of power and respect. Their story is too important and poignant to be passed over. It needs to be delivered, and not by Western Union. The more the years slip by, the more we tend to forget.

The military history books tell us it was an icy dawn that February morning when the *Dorchester* – an old ship hastily pressed into service as a troop transport – was battling angry, North Atlantic seas with 902 American servicemen bound for Greenland. Only 230 would make it, and they weren't in any condition to fight. A Nazi submarine had been stalking the convoy, which was escorted by three US Coast Guard cutters, and now, with Greenland just over the horizon and protective air cover beyond reach, it struck – sending a torpedo into the old ship's flank. It exploded in the boiler room, killing the kid living on Blake Avenue, and a lot of his buddies. Panic spread throughout the ship as everyone desperately tried to reach the deck to see how bad it was. The four chaplains were already there trying to calm everyone down.

George Fox was a Methodist minister; **John Washington**, a Catholic priest. **Alexander Goode** was a Jewish rabbi, and **Clark Poling**, a Dutch Reformed minister. They

moved about the sinking ship, handing out life jackets and helping injured soldiers toward the life boats and rafts. When the order came to abandon ship, they had already exhausted the supply of life jackets available, and there were still at least four men left who needed one. The four chaplains took off theirs, and gave them to the young men. Then, they locked arms, bowed their heads in prayer, and went down with the ship together.

They never asked the men who got their life jackets if they were Jewish, Protestant or Catholic. It didn't matter. And, that's the heart of the story of the four chaplains. When the end came for these brave men of different faiths, they never asked. They just locked arms and prayed. They knew they were all going to the same place.

The chaplains were awarded the Purple Heart and Distinguished Service Cross medals in 1944, and later a Medal of Valor and Special Medal for Heroism by the U.S. Congress. A postage stamp honoring them was issued in 1948, and stained-glass windows depicting their faces were installed at



the Pentagon, at West Point and in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. And, there is a local display in their honor aboard the S.S. Queen Mary in Long Beach, California.

And, thanks to Jerry Schwartz – we may be a few days late – we remember the Four Chaplains, the kid from Brooklyn, and all the others aboard the *USAT Dorchester* who died that day.

[This story of the Four Chaplains appeared as a column by Dennis McCarthy on Feb. 6, 2014. It has been updated and edited by *The Bugle* staff.]

THE TALE OF “OLD 666”

Before Pearl Harbor, a civil engineering graduate of M.I.T., Jay Zeamer, Jr. joined the Army Air Corps, winning his silver wings in March 1941. When the U.S. entered the war, Zeamer was a B-26 bomber co-pilot.. Although his flight school classmates rapidly became lead pilots and squadron commanders, Zeamer could not pass the pilot check tests despite trying numerous times. He was a good pilot but couldn't seem to land the medium bomber, the Martin B-26 Maurader, and “landing” was one of the more important qualifications for a pilot. As Zeamer's squadron was deployed to Pacific bases, friends were being promoted and given more responsibilities. He lost all motivation, relegated to the right-hand seat. The situation worsened when he fell asleep on a bombing run through heavy antiaircraft fire, and woke up only when the pilot beat him on the chest because he needed help. That failure earned him a transfer to a B-17 unit, the 43rd Bombardment Group / 65th Bombardment Squadron, based at Papua, New Guinea. Zeamer was allowed to fly as a reserve navigator and occasionally as co-pilot. Squadron-mates like him well enough, but no one wanted to fly with him. He

managed to get into the pilot's seat by volunteering for a photo-recon mission when the scheduled pilot became ill. That mission, an extremely dangerous one over the Japanese stronghold of Rabaul, won Zeamer a Silver Star, despite the fact he had not been qualified as a pilot in the four-engined B-17.

Zeamer became Operations Officer of the 43rd Air Group, a ground position. Still, despite the lack of qualifications, managed to fly as a B-17 fill-in pilot fairly often. He found he enjoyed flying photo-recon missions and sought to do it full time. But, without an airplane or a crew, and no formal qualifications, that seemed only an ambition. With a bit of questionable luck, he sought every misfit, ne'er-do-well and maverick in the 43rd Air Group. He gradually recruited those crew members no one else wanted – renegades and screw-ups, and they gravitated into an effective team. The airplane came later when an old, worn-out B-17E named "Lucy", which had seen better days, arrived at the base to be scavenged for parts. It had been used for photo-recon missions and had camera positions and cameras aboard. It was transferred by the 19th Bomber Command to the 43rd. Captain Zeamer had a better idea. He and his misfit crew decided to use their spare time, and there was plenty, to rebuild the veteran Flying Fortress. They saw there was no other way to fly, and it remains puzzling how they completed the restoration when its parts had been relegated to "spares" to be used on other planes. They replaced all four engines and removed 2,000 pounds of ammo feed trays, using instead cans of belted bullets on the floor at each gun.

"Lucy" became "Old 666", borrowing from its tail number, 41-2666.

Once "Old 666" was flyable, the base commander congratulated Zeamer's crew and told them he would find a new crew to fly it. That was not what Zeamer and his "rebuilders" wanted to hear. They began sleeping in the plane with the 50-caliber machine guns loaded, just in case anyone wanted to 'liberate' it. Due to the shortage of planes, the Squadron Leaders and Group Commanders did not take issue with such "mutiny". They let the misfits fly but expected they would take on missions others did not want.

The misfit crew welcomed the challenge and hung around the Operations Center, volunteering for every mission other crews were reluctant to accept, if they had such choice. The misfits earned the nickname "The Eager Beavers", and, as more photo-recon missions came their way, they made more modifications to Old 666. They replaced all of the light 30-caliber machine guns with heavier 50-caliber weapons. Then, where the 50's were mounted, they were replaced by twin 50's. Zeamer had another pair of remotely-controlled 50's fixed to fire forward like a fighter. In case a gun jammed or malfunctioned, the crew stored extras in the plane.

In these early months of WWII, the South Pacific theatre was a chaotic area, scattered over thousands of miles with inadequate war-fighting equipment. Having a heavy bomber with an apparently nutty crew who volunteered for every awful mission, caused the CO's look the other way.

In June 1943, the Marines and Army had secured Guadalcanal, and knew the Japanese had a huge base at Rabual. Other outlying airfields were being built in the Northern Solomons by the enemy. Thus, the Group Commander needed aerial photos of Bougainville Island where a large field was being built at Buka on the north side of the island. Pacific Command anticipated we would eventually have to invade Bougainville, and needed to assess the island and activity there. The photo-recon mission was considered near suicidal – flying hundreds of miles through enemy airspace in a single, slow bomber. Further, a photo-recon mission required straight and level flight; not taking evasive action over the target.

The only crew to volunteer was the Eager Beavers, including the bombardier, an 18-month's veteran, scheduled to go home in three days. The mission had no need for a bombardier, but if his friends were going, he had to too. And, the bombardier was the forward aerial gunner in the nose "greenhouse".

There was suspicion of how complete the Buka airfield was and no way of finding out until it was in sight. As soon as it was in sight, the Eager Beavers saw numerous fighters taking off to deal with the lone B-17. Although a quick reversal of course and aborting the mission was the logical thing to do, Zeamer and his photo-recon officer knew the photos would be invaluable to the Air Corps and Marines planning to attack and invade the island later. The photo runs were started, giving about 20 enemy fighters plenty of time to reach the 28,000-foot altitude of Old 666. They carefully set up the attack, circling the B-17. The fighter

pilots had no knowledge of the B-17's increased fire-power, but with those odds, it did not matter. In the first fighter pass, the bomber was hit by hundreds of machine gun bullets and cannon shells. Five crewmen of the B-17 were wounded, and the plane was heavily damaged. All of the wounded crewmen stayed at their stations and were still firing when a second pass was made, adding to the damage. Hydraulic lines and cables were cut; holes the size of footballs appeared in the wings; and the front plexiglass was shattered. Zeamer was wounded by the second pass but kept the run straight and level, until his photo-officer, William Kendrick, called out that the photos were completed. Only then did Zeamer move the B-17 from side-to-side, allowing his gunners better shots. But, the third pass blew out the oxygen system. Despite the structural damage, Zeamer dove for a level where his crew could survive. During the dive, a 20-mm cannon shell exploded in the navigator's position and blew the navigator-gunner to beneath the flight deck. Another crewman helped him to his upper turret, noting a huge wound in his side. The mortally wounded gunner crawled back to his guns, where he was now exposed to 300-mph wind. He shot down one more fighter before he died a minute or so later.

The running battle continued for over 40 minutes. The Eager Beavers shot down several fighters and heavily damaged several others. The B-17 was so heavily damaged no one expected it to make the several hundred-mile-long flight back home. The Japanese fighters were out of ammo and fuel and returned to base. With the

navigator dead and five others severely wounded, Zeamer continued to pilot the plane, despite a broken leg and his multiple wounds. He lost consciousness from loss of blood, but regained it when he was lifted from the pilot's seat and laid on the cockpit floor. Because the co-pilot – 1st. Lt. J. T. Britton -- was the most qualified to care for the wounded, one of the gunners who frequently rode the jump seat and watched the pilots fly, took over the left seat with Zeamer advising him from the floor.

Zeamer, doubtful they could clear the Owen Stanley Mountain Range to reach Port Moresby, directed Co-pilot Britton, who took over as pilot for landing, to divert to Dobodura Airfield. With no brakes or flaps. Britton ground looped the bomber to a stop. A medical triage team went to work, removing Zeamer first, as his wounds appeared mortal. Amazingly, undamaged were the engines and fuel system, and, most importantly, the cameras and invaluable photographs. All of the wounded recovered, but it was touch-and-go for Captain Zeamer. Even a death notification was sent to his parents prematurely. He spent the following year in hospitals, served long enough to attain the rank Lt. Colonel, and lived a long and happy life, passing away at age 88.

Both Capt. Jay Zeamer, Jr. and Navigator 2nd Lt. Joseph

Sarnoski were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for valor in combat. The other crew members were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. The MOH awards were the only time in WWII that two servicemen from one plane

received it. The most decorated combat flight in U.S. history did not take place in a major battle, but on a photoreconnaissance flight of "Old 666" in June 1943.

Footnote: At the same time Capt. Zeamer and his misfits were making field modifications on Old 666 to increase its defensive armament, an Eighth Air Force B-17 squadron, based in England, was tasked with evaluating the Boeing YB-40, a variant of the B-17F, converted to be a gunship which would "hide" among other bombers and help defend the formation from German fighters. The plane carried no bombs, but had 16 50-cal. machine guns, including a second top turret, twin 50's at the two waist positions and a chin turret remotely controlled at the unneeded bombardier's position. Although the YB-40 was flown on several missions, it was not deemed a success. The problems included weight distribution, where the center of gravity was shifted aft, and on the return leg of missions, the still heavily-laden gunship (ammo) could not maintain its place among the lighter bombers, which had shed their loads.



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 305 NEWS

President Kathy Carroll



It's hard to believe that this is the first of February. I hope that everyone had a safe and happy holiday season.

January is always a busy month for us. Our Annual Chili Cook-Off Contest was held at the regular meeting and, although it was sparsely attended (mostly due to weather), it was still a good time for all. Next year can only be better. Department of Texas Mid-Winter Conference was held in Austin January 26-28, 2018. We attended a very good leadership training session on Saturday. I always learn something new no matter how many times I attend this type of training, and it reinforces things I already know. Listening to how others run a meeting or handle a situation gives us new ways to do things. At the joint session with the Legion, the guest speaker was **State Senator Susan Campbell, MD**. She was an energetic speaker (reminded me of the energizer bunny), and she is the Chairwoman of the State Committee for Veteran Affairs and Border Security. The State of Texas offers our veterans some great benefits, and she seems passionate about continuing and enhancing these benefits. Since a large part of our mission is to advocate for veterans, I strongly encourage anyone who has concerns or questions about what our State does for veterans to contact her at (512)463-2211 or veteranaffairs@senate.texas.gov. Also, if you want to receive their monthly newsletter, send them an email with the word "subscribe".

Interviews for the Girls State candidates are in full swing. **Geri Mulvihill** has already met with some of the girls, but there are still many more to talk to. If you are willing to help with some of these interviews, please contact **Geri** at (832) 620-6265 or gerimulvihill@outlook.com. The more people we have to do the interviews, the less everyone has to do.

Birdies for Charity is back again this year. We will receive the forms at the February meeting, and they will be due back to **Rosalie Fryer** in March. This is a big fundraiser for us and the profits are a significant part of our budget. I hope everyone will participate and make this a big success.

We are still not at 100% for our membership. If you have not renewed and paid your dues yet, please send them to me at 31322 Whispering Oaks Lane, Spring, TX 77386, or you can register online or you can give me your renewal at the meeting this month. Dues for the 2018 membership year are still \$27 for Seniors and \$7.50 for Juniors.

District 7 Annual Convention will be held at Post 618 in Willis, TX, on April 21, 2018. I hope many of you will be able to attend. This also means that our Unit reports need to be submitted before the convention. So I will be looking for your input and the hours of service that you have put in since April 1, 2017. I will need these hours reported to me in March. Keep in mind that these are hours that you have provided service to veterans and anything that you have done to contribute to our community. I think we often underestimate how much we do for others. Remember that your hours include your driving time and preparation time for your service.

We still have two ongoing projects. **Gene Watz** is sending at least two packages/month to a Marine unit in Iraq. If you have items to donate or would like to give money to purchase items, contact **Gene** or

any of the officers of the Unit and we will arrange to get them from you. You can also bring items to the meeting. We also have our Kick-the-Can-for-Cancer research challenge at every meeting. Our goal is to collect a penny per day per person for one year. Each person would donate \$3.65 per year. If every ALA member in Texas did this, we would collect an additional \$62,000+ this year. You never know if that little extra is just enough to make a breakthrough in combating cancer.

Here are two important dates to **mark on your calendar – March 25, 2018**, for Red, White and Bike. This is something we have supported for many years, and it is always a good time for all. More information will be available next month. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, February 15, 2018, at the South County Community Center. This month we will be providing soup and salad for our veterans after the meeting. If you would like to bring something for our social, please contact **Rosalie Fryer** (936-520-8895 or refryer@consolidated.net) and let her know what you would like to bring. If soup or salad is not your thing, we also need bread, crackers or desserts.

On a very personal note, many of you know that January was a very difficult month for me with the death of my mother on January 12th. Since she did not live in Texas, this also involved a lot of traveling for my family and I feel like I have been out of touch with things at home. I would like to thank all of you for your prayers and good wishes during this time. It helped me a lot to know that you were thinking of me and carrying on with our work.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our February meeting. God bless our veterans, our men and women in uniform, and God bless the United States of America.

**Kathy Carroll, President,
ALA Unit 305**

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCALE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Mon.	Feb. 12	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Wed.	Feb. 14	St. Valentine's Day		
Thur.	Feb. 15	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Mon.	Feb. 19	Presidents' Day		
Mon.	Mar. 12	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Mar. 15	Membership Meetings (AL Birthday)	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Sat.	Mar. 17	St. Patricks Day	Wearin' of the Green	
Sun.	Apr. 1	Easter Sunday & April Fool's Day		
Mon.	Apr. 16	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Thur.	Apr. 19	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Sat.	Apr 21	District 7 Convention	Post 618, Willis	
Tue.	May 8	VE Day (1945)	WWII Ends in Europe	
Sun.	May 13	Mother's Day		
Mon.	May 14	Executive Committee Meeting	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Thur.	May 17	Membership Meetings	South County Community Center	@ 7:00 PM
Sat.	May 19	Armed Forces Day		
Mon	May 28	Memorial Day (Observed)	Troop the Colors at the National Cemetery	

POST & AUXILIARY UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION (2017-2018)

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>TEL. NO.</u>	<u>E-MAIL ADDRESS</u>
POST 305			
COMMANDER	Victoria Glover	(832) 813-9415	ALPostcmdrvickie@gmail.com
FIRST VICE CMDR.	Jim Bolin	(281) 251-2352	jpb20006@sbcglobal.net
SECOND VICE CMDR.	(vacant)		
ADJUTANT	Pickens Jones	(281) 367-7631	pickensjones@usa.net
FINANCE OFFICER	Emery Heuermann	(281) 362-8431	emeryheuermann@charter.net
SERVICE OFFICER	Toby Carroll	(281) 323-4085	toby.carroll@sbcglobal.net
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Bruce Carter	(281) 844-0836	bruce4482@att.net
ASS'T SGT-AT-ARMS	(vacant)		
CHAPLAIN	Bill Houghton	(281) 367-3159	whoughcloc@aol.com
ASS'T CHAPLAIN	Larry Reynolds	(-----)	
JUDGE ADVOCATE	Everett Ison	(281) 298-9524	everett.ison@sprint.com
HISTORIAN	Win Salter	(281) 370-1912	flintyeye@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	Kathy Carroll	(281) 323-4085	kcarroll47@sbcglobal.net
VICE PRESIDENT	(vacant)		
SECRETARY (Act'g)	Dayna Salter	(281) 229-1365	dayna.salter@ymail.com
TREASURER	Dayna Salter	(281) 229-1365	dayna.salter@ymail.com
HISTORIAN	Jenny Hamann	(281) 907-3430	ala305pres@gmail.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	Joan Charest	(281) 363-9710	rrge26@aol.com
POSITION TWO	Sandie Holzinger	(281) 364-8590	zing4@earthlink.net
POSITION THREE	Veronica Maiolo	(832) 228-4403	sammaiolo@sbcglobal.net