

American Legion Post 13 December 2021 Newsletter

2021-2022

Officers

Commander:	Stephen Blanton	Sr Vice:	Dan McSwords	Adjutant:	Clayton Roberts
Jr Vice:	Bill Dimsdale	Jr Vice:	RD Martin	Fin. Off.:	Doug Cox
Judge Adv:	Phil Youngblood	Serv. Off:	Ed Kent	Historian:	Henrietta Traynor
Sgt @ Arms:	Ray Meeks	Asst Sgt @ Arms:	Jimmy Traynor;	Members at Large:	
Tim Oliver, Robert Culpepper and David Guest					

COMMANDER'S CORNER:

I Salutations to the Post 13 Family Groups

The year 2021 is coming to a close and 2020-2021 memberships will expire December 31st. If you haven't renewed your membership please do so. Our Post 13 Home is a historic building and it is the legionnaires of the Post 13, members of SAL Squad 13, members of the ALR Post 13 and members of Aux unit 13 that make the historic building into the American Legion Post 13 Home. Last year the Christmas party was cancelled due to Covid. This year we could have made the easy choice to cancel a Christmas gathering but we have decided to make the right choice to gather together and what better time than in the Christmas season. We are not sure how many or who will come, no reservations by phone will be required and we will have a Christmas gathering on, Saturday December 11th, 2021 at the Post 13 Home. Dress code is Christmas Casual and stick on name tag to make conversation easy to start. Social hour is starting at 6 pm. The Lounge and Bar will be open and each member and guest will be given one complimentary choice of beverage. Beverages of choice will then be available for purchase. There will be background Christmas music that will not hamper conversation as members reacquaint after this long time of the Post 13 inactivity. Masks are not required but are individual choice. A traditional Christmas Dinner will be served at around 7:30 pm. Meal will be prepared and served by Post volunteers at the Post. Bill of fare: Ham, Turkey, Seasoned Greens, Sweet Potato Soufflé, Seasoned Green Beans and Glazed Carrots and yeast roll. Dessert will be Pumpkin Pie. Drinks Tea or Water. Coffee will be available on request. Dinner will be followed with drawings for gift cards. The goal of this gathering is to renew acquaintance,

friendship and camaraderie. Merry Christmas to all and remember to help a Veteran in need during this Christmas season.

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Stephen Blanton Cmdr

Adjutant

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From the Post Leadership we would like to congratulate Julian Copeland on winning the Early Bird Drawing held at the October Membership Meeting!

I want to apologize to all who has renewed their membership on line, there has been many difficulties with the new Legion.org system and I am now able to get up to date info. Your membership cards will be in the mail by 3 December.

Service Officer

Covid-19 Misinformation: VA Will Not withhold Benefits for Those Refusing Shots

A Department of Veterans Affairs hospital in Georgia sent an emergency email alert 22 OCT about a false news story on a satirical site that veterans are misconstruing as true. The false article states President Joe Biden ordered the VA to withhold health care benefits from veterans who refuse to receive coronavirus vaccines. The story was published by DelawareOhioNews.com, which describes itself as a satire and parody entertainment website. The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center in Dublin, Ga., issued the email alert to inform veterans that the article is not true. "It's sick," the email reads. "There is nothing funny about spreading false stories of stripping our heroes of their hard-earned benefits." The false article was posted online in September. It was shared widely after a Republican lawmaker from Iowa, Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks, tweeted about it. Along with a link to the story, she tweeted: "If true, this is insane!" As of 22 OCT, Miller-Meeks' tweet had not been deleted, despite the story being marked as satire.

In a legal statement on its website, DelawareOhioNews.com states “all stories herein are

parodies (satire, fiction, fake, not real) of people and/or actual events.” The VA urged people to stop sharing the false article. “The president has not and will not withhold benefits to veterans who choose not to be vaccinated,” said Terrence Hayes, the VA press secretary. “The spread of this misinformation is extremely detrimental to our veterans and their families and should cease immediately.”

Widowhood & SSA: Financial Impact

When a spouse dies, not only is there the profound emotional loss but also there's frequently a financial one as well. While a widow receives Social Security survivors' benefits, she can't receive the same amount of Social Security income that she and her deceased spouse enjoyed before. And, while Social Security income drops, the effective tax rate tends to increase due to the change in filing status. To top it all off, there are a host of bureaucratic hoops to jump through when a spouse passes away. Here's a few of the most important:

- You must return the Social Security benefit that your deceased spouse received for the month of death, and any received thereafter. You are not allowed to keep Social Security checks received for the month a person dies, even when the death was on the last day of the month. If your spouse passed away in September, the September benefit is the check received in October. That money must be returned to the Social Security Administration, even if you were dealing with piles of medical bills in your spouse's last month of life.
- You will not receive a survivor benefit in addition to your own retirement benefit. You receive the higher of the two and, for the overwhelming majority of women, that means giving up your own retirement benefit to receive the higher survivors benefit.
- If you receive your own retirement benefit, rather than a spouse benefit, your benefit will not automatically convert to a survivors benefit — you must apply. You cannot apply online however, and you must get an appointment from the Social Security Administration. Survivors must contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to request an appointment. News reports suggest this has been huge problem for many eligible beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to staffing shortages and closed local offices. TSCl is still sorting through Social Security survivor data, which appears to be lower than the 5,886,000 forecast by the Social Security Trustees in 2020. We are not certain whether

some of this is because of deaths due to COVID-19, or problems that eligible beneficiaries may have had in scheduling appointments to file claims for survivor benefits, or both.

· Your tax filing status and exemptions change. Tax rates and exemptions tend to be more favorable for married couples filing jointly. When a spouse passes away, you will file as a “single” taxpayer in the following tax year. Single taxpayers often must pay a higher effective rate than married couples, and you don’t qualify for the more generous standard exemption for joint filers. Several approaches to modify Social Security benefits in order to aid widows are available to Congress. One widely discussed option would boost the widow’s benefit to a percentage of the couple’s combined Social Security benefit (such as 75% of the combined benefit) when the deceased spouse was alive, allowing the widow to choose the higher of the new boosted benefit or what she would otherwise receive as a widow’s benefit.

Combat Vets and the Holidays

I came across this yesterday and thought it appropriate given the time and season we’re now in. Not a bleeding heart, but some thoughtful notes about most of us. Enjoy.

Friends and Family: If you have a Combat Vet in your family and don’t like their moods and behavior around the holidays, please consider these 6 things:

1) Your Combat Veteran has served in countries where people are blessed to receive a tattered pair of shoes or have clean water to drink, he/she no longer lives the “first world illusion” and no longer cares that if you buy one play station you can get a second one for fifty percent off. In fact, they find it hard to appreciate any of the gluttonous commercialism and overindulgence that permeates American holidays. Standing watch, boring as it was, had so much more purpose than going to the mall.

2) Your Combat Veteran is thankful for the most basic things; not thankful for mega-sales and million dollar parades. They are thankful to be alive; thankful to have survived both the wars far away and the wars they struggle with inside.

3) Your Combat Veteran is thankful that it wasn’t them that got killed, but their celebrations are forever complicated by guilt and loss over those that were. Some of the most thankful times in their life were the most scariest. Their feelings of thanks and celebration often conjure memories that are equally painful.

4) Your Combat Veteran is not like you anymore. At some point, for some period of time, their entire life boiled down to just three simple things: when will I eat today, when will I sleep today, and who will I have to kill or will try to kill me today? They are not like you anymore.

5) Your Combat Veteran does not need a guilt-trip or a lecture; they already feel detached in their grief while others so easily embrace the joy of the season. They need understanding and space; empathy not sympathy.

6) Your Combat Veteran does love his/her family and is thankful for the many blessings in their life...and They are thankful for you.

Ed Kent kentj2@bellsouth.net

From the Desk of Tim Oliver, Member at Large and Military Living Historian:

The WW2 Flight Training Museum in Douglas, GA will be hosting a WW2 Living History Open House on Saturday, December 4th. The event will include the indoor museum and outdoor living history displays from multiple branches and theaters of the war. WW2 vehicles will be on display as well as WW2 aircraft in the original hangars and on the ramp. Douglas Army Air Field was the site of primary flight training for US Army Air Force pilots from 1942 to 1945, conducted by the AAF 63rd Flight Training Detachment. All of the original barracks, offices, hospital and classroom buildings remain standing making it the only fully intact AAF training facility of its kind in the country. Gates open to the public from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Food vendors will be on site and souvenir items are available for purchase at the indoor museum. Street address is 3 Airport Circle, Douglas GA off Hwy 221.

The 63rd Signal Battalion Reenactor Unit (our local WW2 living historians) will be hosting their annual WW2 battle reenactment and living history event on Saturday, 15 January 2022. Location is the Camp Patten Boy Scout Camp at 247 East Burnt Church Road, Lakeland GA. Indoor displays of military equipment and historical items will be available for public viewing from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM as well outdoor displays of WW2 vehicles, Allied and German encampments and other military equipment. A battle reenactment recreating a

Battle of the Bulge engagement from December 1944 will take place for public viewing in the afternoon around 2:00 PM.

For more information on either event, please contact Tim Oliver at (229) 561-5251.

Ladies Auxiliary

Happy Holidays Members of Aux. Unit 13

We have had a successful year. Aux. Unit 13 purchased and delivered Christmas gifts for the Veterans in all area Nursing Homes. The money Unit 13 received from parking cars for Football games enabled Unit 13 to complete several projects. Remember if you have not renewed your membership please do so. Happy Birthday to all members with birthdays in December.

Sheila Blanton

President Aux. Unit 13