

# Harding-Blaine Post 321

“Flagship of the Fourth District”

Member of TEXALPA and NALPA

## Secretary Shinseki Releases Hospital Report Card (December 9, 2009) Transparent Look at Quality and Safety Gives VA High Marks



WASHINGTON – For the second consecutive year, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has released a “hospital report card” as part of VA’s effort to provide the public with a transparent accounting of the quality and safety of its care. “This report demonstrates VA’s determination to be open and accountable,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “As a health care organization, transparency of information is essential to providing quality care for our Veterans.” In addition, for the first time, data from both the 2008 and 2009 reports will be available to the public in machine-readable format on Data.gov. To empower Veterans and the public at large to track quality, safety and access to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities, VA’s hospital report cards include raw data on care provided in outpatient and hospital settings, quality of care within given patient populations, and patient satisfaction and outcomes. VA issued its first facility-level report on quality and safety in May 2008. As part of the

Obama Administration’s commitment to open government and accountability, VA highlights its rigorous quality programs and actions taken to address the issues VA identified from the last report. The report gives the health care system high marks; with VA facilities often outscoring private-sector health plans in standards commonly accepted by the health care industry. “Patient-centric care is our mission,” said Shinseki. “As Secretary, I am committed to continuing to meet and surpass our high standards of care each and every day.” In addition to allowing VA to demonstrate the quality and safety of its care, the report card provides opportunities to enhance health services.

Some of the marked improvements that VA showed in 2009 include:

- Smoking cessation counseling provided to 89 percent of Veteran patients, a 6 percent improvement from 2008; and
- Among all ages at risk, 94 percent of Veterans received a pneumonia immunization, a 4 percent improvement.

The report notes there is more

to be done for women Veterans. To address this priority and provide women Veterans with the highest quality care VA has implemented several initiatives, such as placement of women advocates in every outpatient clinic and medical center and creating a “mini-residency” program on women’s health for primary care physicians. The report also found minority Veterans are generally less satisfied with inpatient and outpatient care than other Veterans. In addition to targeting outreach efforts to these Veterans, a minority Veteran program coordinator has been placed in every medical center. “VA’s hospital report card will become a valuable resource of information for Veterans, stakeholders and the department.” said Shinseki. “It will allow VA’s health care system to be forward looking and focused on advancement.” VA’s 2008 and 2009 hospital report cards can be found at <http://www.va.gov/health/HospitalReportCard.asp>.

**CHECK OUT OUR  
WEBSITE**

[www.al321tx.org](http://www.al321tx.org)



## Commander's Corner

I would like to thank the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Riders for their great support when we had the patients from the Bonham VA Hospital here this month. All of the patients had a great time and a lot of food. Thanks to Judy Reyna and Renee May for the great job they did in cooking the southern pan fried chicken.

I would like to also thank Melissa Davis and the great ladies on her Children and Youth Committee for the great job they

did for the Children's Christmas party. We were blessed to have 27 children in attendance. It was really great to see that many kids back in the post enjoying the party.

We still have a long way to go, but business is picking up and volunteerism is also picking back up which is really great to see. There are a lot of projects that we need to do to get the post fixed up and will be looking for more help when we get to that point.

This has been a long and hard year, but I am looking forward to a better one in the upcoming New Year. I would also like to take this time and wish every one a Happy New Year and a prosperous one. Please be careful and enjoy life to the fullest.

*For God and Country  
Terry L. Cloninger, Commander*

## Elected Officers 2009-2010

### American Legion

Commander	Terry Cloninger
1st Vice	Toby Wine
2nd Vice	Mark Gojer
Adjutant	Jim Williamson
Asst. Adjutant	Bob Allison
Finance Officer	Larry Lawson
Chaplain	Charles Scholander
Judge Advocate	Fletcher Sharp
Historian	Carey Augustine
Service Officer	Jim LaBelle
Sgt-at-Arms	Mike Carlock
Exec. Committeeman	Wayne Morgan
Exec. Committeeman	Dennis Ott
Past Commander	Steve Cockerham

### American Legion Auxiliary

President	Charlie Dew
1st Vice	Linda Wilmeth
2nd Vice	Lynn Marie Johnson
Recording Sec.	Cindy Scholander
Treasurer	Lavada Newell
Chaplain	Bernadine Smith
Correspond. Sec	Phyllis Price
Historian	Cheryl Styers
Sgt-at-Arms	Cindy Bray
Asst. Sgt-at-Arms	Melissa Davis
Executive Comm.	Cindy Oldroyd
	Jean Kelly
	Judy Reyna

### Sons Of The American Legion

Commander	Abel Silva Jr.
1st Vice	Eddie Olivera Jr.
2nd Vice	Jimmy Gray
Finance Officer	Jay Terwort
Adjutant	Ray Hartline
Judge Advocate	David Dew
Chaplain	Jeff Saul
Historian	Larry Cobden
Sgt-at-Arms	Jimmy Jackson
Asst. Sgt-at-Arms	Franklin Nagy
Liaison	Fletcher Sharp
Past Commander	Bryan Vinson

### American Legion Riders

Director	Larry Lawson
Assistant Director	Stuart Potter
Secretary	Liz Pitts
Treasurer	Kimberly Potter
Chaplain	Michael Horak
Historian	Jorja Morgan
Sgt-At-Arms	Randy Rouse
Membership	Wendy Rouse
Communication Chair	Wendy Rouse
	Liz Pitts
Run Coord.	Allen Pitts

### Membership

Org.	Goal	Paid	%
AL 10	1020	559	54.80
ALA 10	194	65	33.51
SAL 09	213	149	69.95



# TOGA PARTY

## JANUARY 9<sup>TH</sup>

7 P.M. TO 1 A.M.

COME ON OUT TO THE  
"ANIMAL HOUSE"  
AND HAVE SOME FUN!!!

MUSIC BY "CALVIN & THE VAULT"

SHIS-KABOBS  
POTATO SALAD  
FRUIT TRAY  
BEANS BY CLEO  
"GARBAGE CAN" PUNCH  
WHEEL SPIN  
50/50 DRAWING  
BEST-DRESSED CONTEST

YES, IT IS A TOGA PARTY BUT.... PLEASE DON'T  
SHOW TOO MUCH!!!  
(THE CANTEEN DRESS CODE WILL BE ENFORCED)



## UNIT 321

I hope this finds everyone doing well after a wonderful holiday season.

Last month, the veterans from The Bonham Veteran's hospital came for their annual Holiday meal. They were served pan fried chicken with all of the fixings. Calvin Nagy was generous to furnish them with Karaoke, which was enjoyed by all. Thanks Calvin. Judy Reyna and Renee May were the head cooks with a horde of people there to assist in the preparation and serving of the meal to the veterans. The ALR escorted the bus and we do appreciate you so much. We are truly an American Legion family once again.

With January here again this will start a huge membership push within the American Legion family. If you have not renewed your dues you are now delinquent. If dues are not paid this month, you will no longer receive canteen privileges.

The Auxiliary's Children's Christmas party was a huge success this year. There were 28 children in attendance, with Santa not only presenting gifts but also free pancakes during the brunch. I think everyone had a great time. Speaking of brunch, this month's brunch was shared with the Unit and SAL Squadron benefiting the

American Legion Post 321 Building Fund. As most of you know the American Legion Post 321 is in much need of repair. The Unit and Squadron are working together to help raise funds for this repair. If you have extra funds or skills that would assist us in this endeavor, please contact one of the Officers.

The Unit will be hosting the Friday Night Dinner on Friday, Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>. With it being on this date, the members have decided they will be serving Chicken Fingers with all the fixings. Please come out and support the Unit.

The Cancer Research Annual Benefit is right around the corner. Look through this newsletter for an article with pertinent information.

It is very important that we support our home post. Please come out to one of the functions of just drop by to say hello. If you haven't paid your dues, it would be appreciated more than you know. Even if you cannot be very active in our family, your dues help work the pro-

grams of our organization.

Hope to see you soon.

*For God, Country and Veterans,  
Charlie Dew, Unit 321 President*



## Squadron 321

Happy New Year! Hope all of you had a great Holiday. January is here and it is the beginning of the diets, resolutions and goals for the New Year. Good luck to all of you in your endeavors. The busy part of the year is coming up. Please try to support all of the functions; they are what we work for. Dues are now due. Those of you that have not paid will lose club privileges and will not have access without the new key card. Key cards are only given to paid-up members. Please see me or Ray Hartline to pay your dues.

*For God, Country & Veterans,  
Able Silva, SAL Commander*

## CANCER RESEARCH BENEFIT

Mark your calendars for the Cancer Research Benefit, February 6, 2010. The money goes to a good cause and we always have a lot of fun. We will have a full day of activities this year. We will be partying like we were at Mardi Gras. We will be serving food during the day and into the evening. (Jambalaya, Gumbo, Red Beans and Rice). We will have many activities during the day and evening. We will have Silent auctions during the day as well as in the evening. There will be raffles, drawings, Cake Walk, Food and Fun... Please plan to attend and have a great time. Stay tuned for more announcements to come.....*Renee May and Judy Reyna, Cancer Research Committee*



There will be a CASI Chili cook off at the post January 16, 2010. Everyone is welcome to participate whether you cook or would like to be a judge.

Thank you to everyone that has supported us throughout the year.

On behalf of the American Legion Riders Post 321 we wish you a Happy and prosperous New Year.

Larry Lawson (Taz)  
ALR Director

## Service Officer

Another year behind us and I hope that everyone made it through the holidays. It is less than 6 months before the next election and still we have the same problems. We still are short of funds for building repairs and lack of attendance to the monthly general membership meetings. There is a popular belief that Post 321 will always be here. I hate to say this but unless we get together and solve our money problems we

will not have a post to enjoy. Please become involved, attend the meetings and hopefully keep our flagship post afloat.

On 9 Dec 2009 the House and Senate conferees approved the Fiscal year 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Bill. The bill includes \$109.6 billion for 2010 projects and programs crucial for our nation's veterans and their families plus \$48.2 billion in advanced appropriations for veterans medical care during fiscal year 2011. This report will go in front of the House of Representatives as early as next week. As both wars continue the VA health care system will be stressed to meet the needs of sick and disabled vets returning. The conferees approved \$747 million more then the administration requested for VA funding. To read the entire article, refer to [www.dav.org/news](http://www.dav.org/news).

The Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veteran's Assistance was created by the 80th Texas Legislature in 2007 to provide aid to the veterans and their families. A Veterans Cash scratch-off was created and sales have provided over \$1 million for the fund. The Grant

will be used to provide emergency financial needs of veterans and their families. For more info about the TVC, visit [www.tvc.state.tx.us](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us).

## Finance Officer

Just a short note to let everyone know that beginning in February, you will be able to post your business card in the news letter for ten dollars a month, payable in advance.

I wish everyone a prosperous and Happy New Year.

Larry Lawson (Taz)  
Finance Officer

## Honor Guard

Happy Christmas and New Year's holidays to all at our Post! Not a lot to talk about as we approach the Holiday season; your Honor Guard was quite busy with Veteran's Day events in early November, and for the first time, we visited three local Nursing Homes, including one that does a lot of Alzheimer patient work. Our visits were well received, and offers were made to several of the more mobile members of these homes to attend our Holiday dinner with the Veterans from the Bonham VA hospital. Two of the local vets who at-



## January Football At The Post



**The month of January changes the football season in a big way!  
Check the football schedules and c'mon up and watch the games.**

tended were WWII veterans; one was in the Navy and the other in the Army and they both enjoyed the camaraderie of being with other fellow veterans. In the past 30 days, we've only done a couple of funerals, which is a good thing, as it means more of our veterans are living longer!

On a cautious note: Lauren "SARGE" Fair, a very long time member of our Post, is at home under hospice care. His loving wife Maxine is taking good care of Sarge, and we're all hoping he can hang on until the New Year comes around. His Doctor has advised Sarge's kidney's are starting to fail, so I would ask that all of you who have known Sarge and Maxine over the decades, please offer up your prayers and good thoughts for the entire family.

We're still looking for new HG members; anyone who is a Veteran or member of the SAL that is interested, we always meet on the Sunday prior to the second Friday of each month at noontime in the Post Hall.

*For God & Country,  
Fletcher Sharp, Post 321 HG Commander*

**WE**



**ARE**



**FAMILY**

**American Legion**  
**Paid Up For Life**  
**1/2 price drinks every**  
**Saturday 10am till 9pm**

*Don't Forget to come up  
for a great Brunch on the  
third Sunday of every  
month!*


*10:00 am to Noon*

**Members Birthday's  
January 2010**

1. Amanda McKee, Joseph D Shea, Joseph Williams, David Hammel
2. Roy Petrich
3. Lynn High
4. Walter Gottschalk, Liam Kelly, Jan Marshall, Thomas Newcomb, Kathryn Rodriguez
5. Myrl Ball, Joy Litteral
6. John Kusior
7. Debbie Morrison, Brant Spinn, Maddelynn Troxclair
8. Kenneth Hiltz Jr, Fred Nolte, Kimberly Russell, Henry Venell
9. Richard Cahill, Bill Early, Daniel Flanigan, A Mitchell
10. Roy Cross
11. Aaron Marks
12. Thomas Astle, Gerald Bolton, David Collins, Harrison Williams
13. Cory Hooten, Thomas Kelly
14. Derek Lowe, Colleen Maguire, Robert Nowak
16. Robert Judikinas, Francis Leonard, Calvin Vestal Jr, Paul Wellborn
17. John Davidson, Thomas Milam
18. Phillip Nest, Joseph Patterson, Clifton Pratt II
19. Paul Kelley, Robert Silva
20. Phillip Estes, Michael Hall, Robert Junes, Elizabeth Wirt
22. Norman Ayotte, Louise Costa, Randy Nagy
23. Gerald Buchta, Charles Gue, James White
24. Sheri Armour, Bill Larrow
25. Barbara Brandow, Jimmy King
26. Chris Baylor, Eric Roberson, Stephen Sappelt, Heather Tackett
27. Gerald Gooding, Robert Hughart
28. Charles Keszler, James Parmer, Stephen Tomac
29. Conley Hartline, Nocholes Jones, Antonio Silva
30. Phillip Hildebrandt, Densmore Ken, Betty Pruitt, Robert Spottswood
31. Debbie Bruno, A Gordon Fuller Sr, Gerry Garner Jr, John Pitts

**DAVID DEW**  
**FOR**  
**SAL NATIONAL COMMANDER**  
**2010—2011**

**Numbered  
Belt Buckle  
\$25.00 Donation**



**Pins  
\$3.00 Donation**

**If you see any error on this list,  
contact : Adjutant at 972-423-5423**

## Chaplain's Thoughts

The Saga of the Four Immortal Chaplains- the U.S.A.T Dorchester was once a luxury coastal liner and was later converted into a Army transport for WWII use. On Feb 2, 1943 the 5,649-ton vessel was one of three ships in the SG-19 convoy and was carrying 902 service men, merchant seamen and civilian workers. The convoy was moving steadily across the icy waters from Newfoundland toward an American base in Greenland. The SG-19 convoy was escorted by Coast Guard Cutters Tampa, Escanaba and Comanche.

Hans J. Danielsen, the ship's captain, was concerned and cautious. Earlier the Tampa had detected a sub with its sonar. The captain knew this was dangerous waters even before this information was presented to him and ordered his men to sleep in their clothing and keep life jackets on. The men disregarded the order because the ships heat and the jackets were very uncomfortable.

On Feb, 3 at 12:55 a.m. the German submarine U-223 periscope broke water and through the cross hairs an officer spotted the Dorchester. After identifying and targeting the officer gave orders to fire five torpedoes, a fan of 3 were fired. The one that hit was deadly striking the starboard side far below the water line. At this point the Dorchester was only 100 miles from its destination of Greenland. The Dorchester was taking wa-

ter rapidly and sinking, the order was given to abandon the ship. The hit had knocked out power and radio contact with the three escort ships.

Aboard the Dorchester panic had set in. With the help of the escort ships around 230 survivors were rescued with the third ship, Tampa continued escorting the remaining two ships. The blast killed scores of men while others stunned by the explosion were groping in the darkness.

Through this, according to those present, four Army chaplains brought hope in despair and light in darkness. Those chaplains were Lt. George L Fox, Methodist; Lt. Alexander D Goode, Jewish; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed. The four chaplains spread out among the wounded to calm the frightened, tend the wounded and guide the disoriented toward safety. The men were working their way to the topside of the ship and the chaplains were distributing life jackets. When there were no more lifejackets the chaplains removed theirs and gave them to frightened young men. When passing out the lifejackets none of the chaplains ever called out for members of their faith. They simply gave their lifejacket to the next man in line. As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains-arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers. The Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart were awarded to the

next of kin on 19 December 1944.

We will be holding the Four Chaplains Service in February. More information will be in the February 2010 newsletter.

*For God, Country & Veterans,  
Charles Scholander, Chaplain*

## Recipe of the Month

### New Year Bean Casserole

By Oye LaBelle

1/2 pound sliced bacon, diced  
1/2 pound ground beef  
1 cup chopped onion  
1 can (28 ounces) pork and beans  
1 can (15 to 16 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
1/2 cup barbecue sauce  
1/2 cup ketchup  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
2 tablespoons prepared mustard  
2 tablespoons molasses  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon chili powder

In a large skillet, cook bacon, beef and onion until meat is browned and onion is tender; drain. Transfer to a greased 2 1/2 qt. baking dish. Add all of the beans and mix well. In a small bowl, combine the remaining ingredients; stir into beef and bean mixture.

Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Uncover; bake 15 minutes longer. Yield: 12 servings.