



Bennett and Dennis Herrick Memorial American Legion Post 626 Gladstone, MO.

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(Quarterly)

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*Post meetings held the 4th Thursday of each month in the Gladstone Community Center at 7:00 p.m.
All members are invited to attend.*

INTRO

Welcome to a new Quarter. May is going to be a busy month so let's use April to ensure we have all those ducks in a row. May brings us the Gladstone's inaugural Armed Forces and Memorial Day celebration as well as a flag pole dedication, Memorial Day ceremony, our Poppy Sale fundraiser and some of us assisting a Heartland Honor Flight. We are sure to find something for June also!

We need your help! Your Post along with the City of Gladstone and VFW 10906 has been hard at work organizing the first annual Armed Forces and Memorial Day Celebration that will be held on May 24th at Linden Square in Downtown Gladstone. We are looking for Veterans either with or without uniforms to fill the ranks. It is NOT going to be a parade. We will form up out of sight of the Square and then march around the corner and reform in front of the stage. If you have a period uniform you will be staged in that period, those without uniforms will fill in the periods to make them even.

If you're thinking that others will do it, so you don't have to raise your hand, you are mistaken. Since our last letter to the membership we have heard from one that can and one that can't. Maybe that was too far out to make a commitment. Now it is right around the corner. We would like you to be there, to be recognized by your friends and family for your service. Please contact Wayne so that we can start a contact roster. As always, the sooner the better!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Post 626 extends a warm welcome to our newest members: Ray Suiter, a Navy Veteran from WWII transferred in from Post 1000. We also had 4 Legionnaires who completed the Post 1000 transfer and are all Vietnam era Veterans; James Crenshaw (Marine Corps), Gene Stattelmann (Air Force), Clifford Sparks (Navy) and Edward Vandenburg (Army).

Welcome All!

WHAT HAPPENED (OLD BUSINESS)

The **3rd District oratorical contest** took place at Post 33 in Cameron on 5 January 2014 at 1400. Out of four candidates only two competed due to the snow and ice, Therin Showalter of Kearney High School and Jessica chamberlain of Lawson High School. The winner was determined to be Therin Showalter with Jessica Chamberlain as the runner up.

Four of our members made it to the **District 3 meeting** on 12 Jan which was hosted by Post 61; Robert Box, Nelson Duncan, Gerald Braton SR and Douglas Millison. The highlights were: members should be utilizing myLegion more, the District CDR is looking for someone to Chair an American Legion Centennial Committee, District 3 endorses Calvin Bumgarner as Zone CDR in the next elections, and there is a call out for every member to donate \$1 to the NEF.

The main topic for the **January Post Meeting** was the upcoming Military Appreciation Day activities and getting the flag pole purchased and installed prior to the Memorial Day Ceremony. A Fundraising Letter was created and the Commander mentioned the need for cold calling our membership to get them involved.

The **Zone 2 Oratorical Competition** took place 26 January at the Community Center in Concordia at 1300. Therin Showalter was 1st Runner Up to Derick Parker of Lincoln Academy in Kansas City. Nora Faris of Concordia and Kendra Hoaggeler of Maysville were the other contestants. All contestants gave very informed dissertations. Mr. Parker of Kansas City came out of Dept. Oratorical as 1st Runner Up with the win going to a student from Columbia MO.

We had a good showing at the **February Post Meeting** and discussed the upcoming Memorial Day Weekend Events (Andrew Lester volunteered his carpentry skills), Boys State interviews and selections where we decided to sponsor 4 students, upcoming social events and the next Newsletter.

Missouri Boys State interviews were held at Oak Park High School on March 4th and at Staley on the 13th. Seven students applied from Oak Park and four from Staley for four slots that the Post agreed to sponsor. A local Student Council came forward to sponsor another from Oak Park and then four more of our generous members agreed to sponsor three more! So a total of eight of our local young men will be attending this year. **Bravo 626, Bravo!**

A lot of ground was covered at the **Mar Post Meeting**. Our agreement with the KC Parks dept. reference the County Veterans Memorial is almost ready to sign. We are on track with membership with 226 members out of a target of 251. If you haven't renewed yet the Adj wants to hear from you! A few more details for the 24th of May were mentioned as well as the Heartland Flight which is below. 2 non-officer members were present and it is always good to see the Membership involved. And the Historian (that's me) called for more members to search your basements for things of interest to the Post. Because we don't have a home those items are spread out among past officers and members. Bring it in so we can document our history.

WHAT'S HAPPENING (NEW BUSINESS)

Apr 4-6 National Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis IN.

Apr 8 State Youth Government Day in Jefferson City.

Apr 13 District Meeting at Post 58, Smithville. 1200 lunch with meeting following.

Apr 24 Post Meeting. **Final prep for the Memorial Day weekend activities**. If you have input, want first hand details or just want to show your support for these Post activities, **COME TO THIS MEETING**. Do you want to be a Post Officer? Yep, elections are coming. Step forward and be recognized.

May 4-8 National Spring Meeting in Indianapolis IN.

May 6 Heartland Honor Flight. **5-10 Volunteers are needed** to help the Veterans and their escorts to security at 0500, and then as many as we can get to welcome them home that same night at 1900. We only have 2-3 volunteers for the morning so far and would surely like to get the 5-10. Contact Nelson Duncan (Membership) to add your name to that list please!!

May 7-8 Truman Pilgrimage in Independence. Post 21 hosts this event and will start off with an Open House at 1800 on May 7th. Refreshments and entertainment provided by the Auxiliary. On the 8th a procession will lead from the Truman Library to the grave site where wreaths will be placed. A luncheon follows. Reservations are required for the Luncheon or to place a wreath. More details can be found on our Facebook page on the bulletin board.

May 14 100% membership Target Date.

May 17 Armed Forces Day and the Poppy Sale at Walmart. 0900 – 1600 in uniform if you have one. If you don't, a white shirt and black pants would do nicely.

May 22 Post Meeting. Final instructions issued for the weekend's events. **COME TO THIS MEETING** to ensure you have the latest and greatest information. Post Officer Elections.

May 24 Gladstone Military Appreciation Day to include Flag Pole Dedication.

May 26 Memorial Day Ceremony at Big Shoal Cemetery.

Jun 1-6 44th Annual Cadet Patrol Academy in Jefferson City.

Jun 8 District Meeting at Post 95, Liberty. 1200 lunch with meeting following.

Jun 14-21 75th Session of MO Boys State in Warrensburg.

Jun 19 Post Meeting. One week early!

CONGRATULATIONS

This year's Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter/EMT Award went to PO Dana Keever and CPT Brent Friday respectively. They were awarded Certificates of Commendation from our Post for "Outstanding Public Service Benefiting our Community, State and Nation". Commander Beer presented the awards on February 24th at the Gladstone City Council meeting.

EDITORIAL

Lately there have been many articles in the Legion Magazine (and others) referencing the budget deals that have been made in Congress, many of which our National Commander or designated representative have spoken out against, especially on the reduction to the retired military members COLA until they turn 62. Our Post Finance Officer, who manages our money quite well by the way, had this to say about that (Late Dec'13):

"As young men and women many of us in our teens, we took an oath to protect our Country against our enemies both foreign and domestic. We did a pretty good job on foreign enemies but could do little about our modern day domestic enemies. The everyone's we swore to protect seem to have forgotten that the positions they now enjoy was due to the under paid overworked American Armed Forces member. The members of congress have decided that the easy way to produce a budget is to reduce the benefits that were promised our nations Veterans. Did they truly read and then realize what they were doing and what ramifications would result from their actions? I don't think they acted upon reason but on party leaders' direction."

"I am not an authority but I think the textbook definition of a budget is to balance income against spending to produce an efficient product for the growth of the organization. This is not what the federal budget is doing. It advocates spending as the guiding principle to be followed and the offset to this spending is to borrow thus we have deficit financing and in an effort to reduce the shortage the active duty and Veterans must bear the burden by reduction in manpower, capping annual pay raises, raising out-of-pocket costs for TRICARE, barring working age retirees from using TRICARE, eliminate concurrent receipt of VA disability compensation and military retired pay and finally to replace military personnel with civilians."

"To my way of thinking how will this effect recruiting and retention programs? What is gained by the constant denial of promised benefits but the weakening of the readiness status by doing the damage that foreign powers could not achieve but is being accomplished by congress?"

CPT R.C. Box
USMC (Ret)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/post626mo) is a great way to stay connected to the Post for last minute scheduling changes and to be kept abreast of what's going on across the Legion and Military Branches. There are helpful links, Post History, Post Roster, current and past Newsletters, a Bulletin Board and many other items of interest at your fingertips. You do not have to be a Facebook member to read the page, just to interact with it.

We have gone from 3 to 16 myLegion users, which is great news. If you have not been there before go to www.mylegion.org. You will need to create a new (FREE) account if you do not already have one. The myLegion page is undergoing some changes and beginning in April the myLegion member page will have a new look! With the enhanced member page the Post site will no longer contain the Publish Calendar and Publish Message options. Basically, no more long range calendar for the members. However we will still be publishing the Newsletter and distributing it by email, posting to Facebook as well as on myLegion.org and it has a calendar for the next quarter. There are also some tool changes for Post Officers, so if you haven't done so Officers, check it out soon.

As of this quarter we are also on The American Legion's Centennial website at centennial.legion.org/missouri/post626. A write up of our history as well as photo albums and upcoming events are all here. I like the one that is posted on FB better myself, it has pictures for the Marines out there.

A Post website is still to come.

[If you would like help doing any of this internet stuff contact me and we can meet to get it done.](#)

MEMBERSHIP

There are a bunch of us retirees that need to know that the walk-in TRICARE Centers are closing as of April 1st. Read this article (<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2014/01/14/stateside-tricare-service-centers-closing-april-1.html>) and then you should ask your congressman and senator why this convenience item is being taken away?

If you know someone that is interested in joining The American Legion and become part of the voice that speaks up for Veterans, put them in contact with me, the Post Membership Chairman (SR Vice Commander) Nelson Duncan at 816-392-0972, yolegend2@aol.com or www.facebook.com/Post626MO or they can go online at www.think-legion.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

...that HealtheVet, VA's award winning website has been around for 10 years? This site offers Veterans secure access to portions of their health related data anywhere and anytime. The Veteran can save, print and share healthcare information as well as order refills for their prescriptions.

A free upgrade to the Veterans account allows for secure messaging with their healthcare teams, view appointments and get reminders.

All Veterans and Service members are encouraged to enroll or upgrade at www.myhealth.va.gov today.

Paul Mimms, Post Service Officer

TAPS

It is our unfortunate duty as we close to inform you that the following Legionnaires have been transferred to Post Everlasting: Henry Schneider, an Army Veteran from the WWII era who had 22 continuous years of service with The American Legion; Ben Krull, an Army Veteran from the WWII era with 12 Continuous years; Russell Lyon, a Navy Veteran from the Vietnam era had 5 continuous years, and Eric Jorgensen an Army Veteran of the Vietnam Era with 6 consecutive years with the Legion.

Remember to visit www.facebook.com/post626mo and www.myLegion.org *often* for updates.

Please submit any announcements or items for the newsletter to Douglas Millison, Editor, at dwmillison7@gmail.com or 816-509-5247. Requests must be received before or at the Executive Committee meeting prior to the release date to be in the current Newsletter.