



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

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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

While we were at our last Poppy Sale a man approached and said he was about to retire from the Army and was thinking about joining the Legion. Then he asked the simplest of questions, "What's in it for me?" Well, being a logically minded person I went about answering the question as I understood it and began talking about the discounts and that type of thing. Fortunately the Commander was there and when I was finished he answered the real question. You get out of it what you want to get out of it. Sure, there are some discounts but if you like dealing with children then you will get pride and satisfaction out of the Missouri Boys State program, school awards and that type of thing. Like dealing with Veterans? They are all over the place needing help, information or legislation passed in their favor.

What do you get out of The American Legion? What do you want to get out of it??

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Post 626 extends a warm welcome to our newest members: R.D. Mallams is an Army Veteran from the Vietnam era who transferred over from Post 1000. If the name is familiar it's because he was just elected to the Gladstone City Council. Chris Love also transferred in from 1000 and he is a Marine Veteran from the Persian Gulf era and dove right into the deep end taking up the position of Sergeant at arms. A new member and Air Force Veteran from the Vietnam era is Robert Owens.

Welcome All!

WHAT HAPPENED

On Apr 13 we attended the **District 3 Meeting** at Post 58 in Smithville. Only 5 other Posts were present! Commander Goodin attended to talk about the importance of recruiting new members and that no District was over 95% at this late date. He did note that our District is currently in 3rd place and is asking every member to contact one friend and tell them about the American Legion. He also discussed the importance of getting the State to fully fund the Veterans Homes. I attended the MAVO Rally at the Capitol on Apr 9th and an article was posted in the Gladstone Dispatch on Apr 17th. Those of you who I have an email address for should have gotten a letter from us on the subject.

Also present was George Scarborough from Post 21. He is a past Zone Commander and is running for Dept. 1st Vice Commander. He will bring (if elected) what he calls a concept of Operations to the position. I am curious to see what that might entail.

The **Post Membership Meeting** on Apr 24th had a large turnout. Members not usually present who attended were Chris Love, Bud Mosby, RD Mallams, Larry Larson and Dale Caskey. This was final prep for the Memorial Day weekend

activities. Chris Love volunteered to investigate forming a committee on School Awards, something we haven't done in a while. He also expressed an interest in taking on the position of Sergeant at Arms. Thank you Chris!

We had 2 Volunteers for the May 6 **Heartland Honor Flight**. Myself and Nelson Duncan had a long day! We arrived shortly after 0400 to help the Veterans thru the gate and came back out at 2030 to welcome them home and help get some to their cars. It was a rewarding experience and a pleasure to see so many Veterans who had a truly good time. The oldest traveler was 98 years old.

Armed Forces Day and the **Poppy Sale** at Walmart on the 14th was kinda chilly, but the citizens of Gladstone continued to show their support with donations over \$700.

At the May 22 **Post Membership Meeting** we received no other nominations from the membership so we decided to continue another year with the same Officers for the Post with the exception of adding Chris Love to the SGT at Arms position. This will be the final year for Wayne as Commander so "change is a comin". If you haven't thought of becoming involved before, why not now? We also voted to donate a full \$100 to the Veterans Home in Cameron instead of the 10% that was previously agreed upon.

May 24 was a big day. It started early with the **Flagpole Dedication** and moved directly into **Gladstone's Veterans Salute** at Linden Square. And yes it rained. It wasn't all that bad but did keep a few participants as well as spectators away. If you braved the weather and came on out we really appreciate it. If you didn't I hope you will consider it next year. You can see the whole shebang on our Facebook page. And remember, you don't have to have a Facebook account to look at it.

On May 26 The **Memorial Day Ceremony** at Big Shoal Cemetery worked out real well. Some people thought we were still out at White Chapel but we have the Big Shoal Historical Site Cemetery to take care of now. Again, check out the pictures on Facebook.

Post 58 in Smithville had a **fundraiser** for a Vet that needed a wheel chair ramp equipped car. I didn't hear what the total dollars raised was. Two of us and my wife made it out there and had a good time even though we couldn't pick a winning mouse.

The Jun 8 **District Meeting** at Post 95 in Liberty went as planned. Not a lot of info for the general membership except that 101 the Fox radio channel does a Military Monday where they give away a car to a deserving Vet. If you know someone hook them up with the Fox.

We also had a **guest speaker** at the District Meeting. **Col. Neil Sleevei (USA RET.)** spent many years in Afghanistan and shared a few facts about the country and answered a few questions. His most recent stint "in country" was from 2011 to 2014 in Kabul as an ISAF Staff Officer (<http://www.isaf.nato.int/>).

Some of the facts shared are;

- Afghanistan is roughly the size of Texas, mostly arid and mountainous.
- Less than 10% of the country can be farmed with less than 5% of that total area being irrigated. (Less than 1% of all land is irrigated.)
- Life expectancy of the population is 47 with malaria and polio still prevalent.
- Half of the population is under 18 and 7 children per family is common. (*Average household size of 7.3 persons.*)
- Since the Afghan government has assumed the security mission, our advisors and trainers are operating more in provincial capitals and the national capital and are no longer conducting stability and development , which some call "Hearts and Minds" missions are now being done more by international organizations such as USAID and development.
- The NATO mission is now focused on training the police forces and military of Afghanistan which can be challenging because the literacy rate is so low. Adult literacy rate is 25%.
- Afghanistan is tied with Somalia and North Korea for having the most corrupt government. (*Source: Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2013*)

He also shared with us a little about the Two Sparrows Foundation which was formed by service members. The goal of Two Sparrows Foundation is to enable child street beggars, orphan children, young Afghan adults, and street business children to escape poverty by obtaining an accelerated education. Two Sparrows Foundation, Inc. intends to provide grants to accountable charitable organizations registered in Afghanistan to provide vocational classes and education for Kabul Street Youths. <http://www.2sparrowsfoundation.org/>

We thank you Col. Sleeve for your service and information.

The local Elks Lodge hosted their **first Flag Day Ceremony** at Linden Square on June 14th. It was a small but informative ceremony and nicely done for the first one. We look forward to more!

The 75th Session of **Missouri Boys State** was held in Warrensburg June 14-21. We had sponsored 7 with the Oak Park Student Council sponsoring 1 so we had 8 out of our two schools. Of our seven three were sponsored by individual Legionnaires and not the Post. Thank you CDR Wayne Beer, 1st Vice Nelson Duncan, Finance Officer Robert Box and Legionnaire Andrew Lester for your generosity.

At the June 19th **Post Membership Meeting**, Legionnaire Patty Ivey, gave a presentation about her Uncle Patrick Ford. Petty Officer Ford was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic actions to save the lives of two of his crew of the PBR-750 as part of a two boat patrol operating in the upper MY Tho River near the town of Cai Be. Her family is looking into getting his Navy Cross upgraded to a Medal of Honor and to also clear up some details about what happened to P.O. Ford between the time of the engagement and when his body was recovered four days later. She was assured; that we will do all that we can to support her mission from writing letters of support to enlisting Department and National help.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Jul 4. Poppy Sales at Walmart. 0900 – 1600 Hrs. Uniform for Honor Guard, white shirt black pants for others.

Jul 10 – 13. Department Convention in Jefferson City. We are sending three representatives.

Jul 19. Executive Committee Meeting 1000 Hrs. Gladstone HyVee.

Jul 24. Post Membership Meeting 1900 Gladstone Community Center.

Aug 23. Executive Committee Meeting 1000 Hrs. Gladstone HyVee.

Aug 28. Post Membership Meeting 1900 Gladstone Community Center.

District Meetings TBD.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to all of the graduates of Missouri Boys State! From Oak Park; Alex Marx, Charles Clapham, Raul Gonzales, Shannon Jordan and Andrew Cole. From Staley; Kahluna Bouchard, Andrew Cangelos and Austin Bresman. Further recognition goes to those students who were elected to public office; Mr. Marx to City Council, Mr. Clapham, to County Clerk and Mr. Gonzales to the House of Representatives.

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 locally, across the Legion and the 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.

www.mylegion.org will keep you connected to the Legion and allow you to update your information remotely and immediately. You can also see our current newsletter there in case you delete or lose this one. Our Post history is also posted on The American Legion's Centennial website at centennial.legion.org/missouri/post626.

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

MEMBERSHIP

The beginning of July starts a new fiscal year for the American Legion. That means you will soon be seeing reminders to renew your membership for 2015. What we try and achieve is 100% of renewals are done by the end of the year. Many people wait until the end of the year or even into the spring of next year. If you renew in July your membership doesn't end in July of 2015, it still ends December of 2015. If you have the money please get it done as soon as possible so we can concentrate on getting new members. If you compare the Welcome section above to the Taps below, you will see we are heading backwards. The less members we have, active or inactive, the less we can do for the Veterans or our community.

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 June 28th was the 100th Anniversary of the assassination of Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, and it placed the world on the brink and prompted a series of events resulting in the outbreak of World War I? This war would have happened regardless, but this was the event that created the excuse to mobilize. War was on and no matter how hard we tried to stay out of it that was impossible. We were going because even then the world was linked by trade, treaties and moral obligations. And for our part, unlimited submarine warfare and the Zimmerman Telegram was just too much to put up with.

This was the proving ground of many a young man. And from this proving ground, from Flanders Fields, came the American Legion. Men who knew what war was, what it meant and what it tasted like. These men didn't even return home before they started working to organize the Legion at Paris in March of 1919. They knew it was that important. And we have been at it for almost 100 years. How's that quote go? We are here now, because we have been there before?

Our Centennial is fast approaching. Where do you want our Legion to be at 100? What do you want to contribute as the Legion turns 100?

The National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial is following WWI's 100th anniversary and is an outstanding local resource. Yes, I'm not just the editor, I'm the Historian. And while we are on that subject, your Historian would find it a great pleasure to look at your photos of Legion events and functions. It has come to my attention that Post 626 hosted the National Commanders breakfast when he passed through our area in 1991. Got pics??

TAPS

It is our unfortunate duty as we close to inform you that the following Legionnaires have been transferred to Post Everlasting: Thomas Chick, an Army Veteran of the Korean War Era with 14 continuous years in the Legion. L. Clifford Burris was a Navy Veteran of WWII, had 17 continuous years with the Legion. He was a Post CDR 2001 and 2002 and had also served as Sergeant at Arms and on the Honor Guard. Ralph Holman and Harry Marshall were Korean War era Veterans with 22 continuous years. William Sherwood was an Army Veteran of the Korean War era and had 11 continuous years' service. John G. Smith was a WWII veteran with 28 continuous years and was a Post 626 Charter Member.

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.