



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

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

INTRO

Happy New Year and welcome back all!

We hope you had an enjoyable fall and beginning of winter, especially Thanksgiving, Hanukah, Christmas and New Year; the traditional busy ending to a busy year. We have begun the **Boys State** process with briefings and interviews. And this year we are also sponsoring two students to Girls State thanks to **Wee Care Preschool**, a female Veteran owned business, and **Antioch Bible Baptist Church**. We do not have a shortage of students for Boys State, so if you would like to donate toward the sponsorship of a student, or sponsor a student yourself please call the Post phone number before the middle of January and I will contact you. It is tax deductible!

A big **thank you** to the Gladstone Police Officers Association for sponsoring a student to the **Missouri Cadet Patrol Academy** this upcoming summer. If you know of a student who is between 16-18 years old (by 1 Apr 2015), with C average or higher grades, of good moral character with a neat well-groomed appearance and who would come highly recommended, there is a spot for him or her. Have that students' parents call our Post number and I will get back to them.

And as you read every page of this Newsletter, as I know you will, and you come across information (like your name and years of service) that is not correct please let me know! It may not just be my typing, it could be wrong at National.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Post 626 extends a warm welcome to our newest members: Kyle Hanavan, an Army Veteran of the Persian Gulf era and Don Pind, an Air Force Veteran from the Vietnam era. Don is owner/operator of Professional Firearms Consultants, so if you are looking for training for concealed carry, safety classes or some such look him up at www.pfc-guns.com .

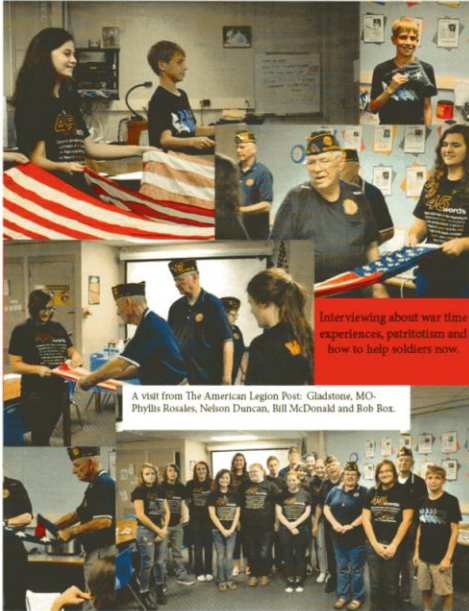
During a recent joint revitalization effort in Districts 3 and 7, our SR. Vice CDR Nelson Duncan was able to transfer 16 members from Post 1000. All are also on their first year in the Legion unless noted otherwise. **Army** Veterans are John Beets (Vietnam), Beverly Hagen (Panama), Robert Hernandez (Vietnam), Ruben Jimenez (Panama), Harry Snyder (Lebanon/Grenada), Gerald Townsend (Korea) on his second year and Kenneth Williams (Vietnam) on his 5th year. **Air Force** Veterans are Charles Comstock (Vietnam), August Descheppe (WWII), Aaron Morehead (Panama), and Richard Randall (Korea) with 4 years in the Legion. The **Coast Guard** has contributed Hiram Gensler (WWII). Paul Lopez (Vietnam) is a **Marine Corps** Veteran on his second year. From the **Navy** is David Oien (Vietnam) and William Trester (WWII) who is on his second year. (Still waiting on National to process one more.)

Welcome All!

WHAT HAPPENED

The **Gladfest Parade** on 4 Oct went well. A very large turnout along the route, which was greatly underestimated by me, and we ran out of candy to hand out in the first couple of blocks. Maybe the sun being out helped this year! It was a fun time and we even gave a VFW member a ride! (RIGHT)

Several members of the Post answered a last minute call by Winnetonka High School to give a **Flag Etiquette** demonstration on October 20th. Thanks to Phyllis, Nelson, Bob and Bill for jumping in and handling that task. (BELOW)



The **Department Fall Conference** was held 24-26 Oct in Jeff City. Your PR Committee came back with the Toot-Your-Horn award, and the Newsletter received a "Participation" certificate (only first place gets an award). Oh well, there's always next year. These conferences are where the meat of the Department is displayed, with committees of hard working individuals, reports out of those committees with all the work to be done and an opportunity for some training. I was able to attend some Service Officer Training as well as get some insights into the History Book competition, which I foolishly told the Department Historian that I would enter next year. More work for me!

There was a lot going on for **Veterans Day**, beginning on 8 November with Poppy Sales at Walmart. It would be nice to have more people at these events so that we can stay longer. After 4 hours standing in the cold, everyone is ready to call it a day. A big Thank You to Walmart for hosting us again and to Gerry, Nelson, Bob, Bill and I for standing the watch and raising money for the Veterans.

On the 11th of November members of the Post were involved in several places. Bob and Bill went to Park Hill High School for their **Veterans Day** program while Phyllis, Gerry and R.D. went to HyVee to sell more poppies and greet the Veterans during HyVee's sponsored breakfast. Gary Swearingen, the store manager, meets the Veterans at the door and his crew puts out a good spread on Veterans Day. Later that day Nelson and I were at Harrah's during their Veterans Job Fair and free for Veterans buffet. Let's just say I ate my share that day. Outstanding work is being done by Harrah's HR department in the hiring of Veterans! Bob took my place and I reported to the WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial for one of my volunteer gigs where I stood watch in Memory Hall for one of my shifts. Why mention that? See the Did You Know section.

We are also members of the **Gladstone Chamber of Commerce** since November. Hopefully it will raise our profile in the community and possibly help with fundraising.

November 25th was the **Mayors Christmas Tree Lighting** which we attend every year. A check was presented by the Post to help 4 charities in the area.

Boys State interviews were held at Staley High School and 5 outstanding young men were interviewed. Oak Park High School will be in early January.

On **7 December** members of the Post were on hand to place the flag at Big Shoal Cemetery to half-mast.

Wreaths Across America happened on 13 December at White Chapel Cemetery for the second year. My wife and I usually did the National Cemetery's but now that White Chapel has started one we will stay there. We donated 12 wreaths and were able to place 4, one wreath each on Bennett and Dennis Herricks' graves and also their parents, who were members and officers of this Post (RIGHT). After the WAA event people went to the Clay County Veterans Memorial and placed wreaths for each service branch there. Participants included The American Legion, VFW, Patriot Guard, Legion Riders and citizens of the area.



Bob and Nelson visited the **Veterans Home** in Cameron Missouri on the 15th of December and presented them with a small check (\$100) to be used as they deem necessary. On the 22nd I delivered \$350 worth of comfort items to the Voluntary Services office at the KC VA Medical Center. \$50 of that was donated by Walmart, and the rest is the Poppy Sales funds at work for the Veterans.



A lot of business was covered at our **monthly membership** meeting on the 18th, to include the second reading of our new By-Laws. Bob Box donated more material from our re-chartering event in 1988 for the Historian to add to the record. RD Mallams expressed a desire to coordinate some of our activities with the Gladstone Elks Lodge when dealing with Veteran issues, which everyone wholeheartedly supported. Jerry Braton was unanimously selected as our Distinguished Legionnaire award nominee this year for all of the hard work he and the committee performed on the Clay County Veterans Memorial transition. He pointed out that it was a collaborative effort with co-chair Phyllis Rosales and the rest of the committee, but only one name can be put forward. But to the whole committee, a job well done!!

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Executive Committee Meetings, 1000 Hrs, HyVee, 1/17, 2/21, 3/21.

Membership Meetings, 1900 Hrs, Community Center, 1/22, 2/26, 3/ 26.

At the 1/22 meeting we will be deciding how much money to spend out of the Posts funds for this year's Boys State.

District Meeting, 1200 Hrs, Post 61, 1/11.

Department Spring Conference, Jefferson City, 2/20-2/22

Boys State Interviews, 0800 Hrs, Oak Park High School, 1/8.

Lincoln Pilgrimage, Springfield IL., 2/11-2/12.

CONGRATULATIONS

This section I have to give a shout out to all of the Legionnaires who are actively participating in our events. We have been so active that if we have one more paid member on the rolls this year than we did last year we will be eligible for the Post Excellence Award. Outstanding work folks!

Also the following Legionnaires, being paid up in their membership dues before the last week of December when I write this column, are recognized for reaching an important benchmark in their membership; Hitting **5 years** are George Allevan, Ricky Bledsoe, George Donegan, Steven Gilbert, Bufford Haney, Andrew Lester, Bruce Roe, Richard Taylor, Thomas Orville, Thomas Weaver, Kenneth Williams and Edward Williamson. At **10 Years** are Myron Bell, John Davis, Harold Early, William Farrar, Dale Glaspie, Gerald Kaufman, Danny Kellogg, Donald Lewis, John Martino, Paul McGarvey, William Moritz, Joe Pajer, Chris Praschak, Thomas Roberts, Warren Robertson, Melvin Smith and William Waits. For **15 years** we have William Beggerstaff, Michael Hillegas, William Langley, Joseph Liles, Antonia Luna, Robert McCurrie, Thomas Parr, JM Patterson, Charles Rusher, Will Willhouse and Allen Wright. With **20 years** are Thomas Bradbury, Clyde Clubine and Douglas Millison. At **25 years** are Mark Long, Billy Lowe, and Farrell Morrow. **30**

years gives us Terry Heart, John Mendenhall and Charter Member Joseph Tognascioli. Jinx Beasley has **45 years** and Charter Member George Nicholson has a whopping **60!**

VETERAN AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

The **Veterans Crisis Line** is a toll-free, confidential resource that connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring VA responders.

Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**, chat online at **www.VeteransCrisisLine.net**, or send a **text message to 838255** to receive free, confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, even if they are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care. VA also provides support for Service members through the Military Crisis Line. Service members and their families and friends can call and text the Veterans Crisis Line numbers and can chat online at www.MilitaryCrisisLine.net/Chat.

The professionals at the Veterans Crisis Line are specially trained and experienced in helping Veterans of all ages and circumstances—from Veterans coping with mental health issues that were never addressed to recent Veterans struggling with relationships or the transition back to civilian life.

The American Legion sponsors what is known as **Temporary Financial Assistance**, or TFA. This program will grant honorably discharged veterans with minor children money to temporarily assist some financial crisis. However the application process takes some time and must be preceded by exhausting all other means of support. Requesting assistance is harder when you have already reached the cut-off of services stage. We all hate to ask until we absolutely have to, but that can also make it harder.

On our Facebook page I have posted some resources to be used to contact people who can help with employment, utilities, day care, even the rent. When you first feel that you may be approaching difficulties check your options, your budget and needs versus wants. The sooner you act the better the outcome. And keep a list of who you talk to and what the results were. That will greatly speed up any request for TFA.

The most important thing, if you need help, ASK. We are here to assist veterans to the best of our ability.

And let's not forget another of our resources, Ron McBee, the Asst. Dept. Service Officer at KC VAMC. If you need a claim worked, or just want to figure out what your benefits at the VA are, Ron is your man. (816) 922-2883 and ronnie.mcbee@va.gov.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We have a **website!** The site holds our basic information, as well as contact information and how to become a member. We have also added and will continue to update the site for our projects like Boys State and Cadet Patrol. If you know of someone who is thinking of joining or just wants to check out what we do, please steer them toward www.al626mo.com. We have also added links to other sites like National, Department and District pages as well as our Facebook page.

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. Please spend some time looking in all of the nooks and crannies to become familiar with where the information is. If you have a Facebook account, please "Like" our page, it's a numbers game sometimes. You do not have to be a Facebook member to read the page, just to interact with it. In fact, while visiting our web site you can access Facebook to get the latest updates.

If you have ANY suggestions for the above web portals contact the Internet Administrator (Yeh, that's me also). I am always looking to improve things.

And don't forget 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 and we occasionally post stories on www.LegiontownUSA.net .

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

MEMBERSHIP

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 the Post Membership Chairman (SR Vice Commander) Nelson Duncan at 816-392-0972, yolegend2@aol.com or our website www.al626mo.com, or they can go online at www.think-legion.org.

[Its January folks. If you don't have your 2015 card yet please pay your dues!](#)



DID YOU KNOW?

In December of 2014 The Liberty Memorial was designated as a National WWI Memorial, giving it equal status to the National WWI Museum that is housed at the Memorial.

When originally opened in 1926 the exterior building to the east of the tower, now known as Memory Hall, was named Legion Hall. We were there at its dedication in 1921 (holding our 3rd National Convention in KC) and at the opening in 1926. The American Legion logo and preamble are cast in bronze above the door. The architect saw that space as a meeting place for service and civic organizations.

I am proud to be able to do at least one shift of volunteer duty wearing my Legion cap inside that building on Veterans Day, thinking about the Legionnaires who came before me, who sacrificed during "the war to end all wars" and then came home to sacrifice again. To volunteer at the National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial go to www.theworldwar.org and look under SUPPORT or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (816) 888.8115 or email at volunteer@theworldwar.org.

TAPS

Legionnaire Robert Ohmes, an Army Veteran from the Vietnam era and 10 year American Legion member has transferred to Post Everlasting.

PARTING SHOTS

I'm already one page over my self-imposed limit so I will have to keep this short. **MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP, MEMBERSHIP.** That is the word from National, Department and District. Learn it – Live it. From welcoming and mentoring new members to retaining the current, *it is on us to get it done.*

Content changes, so hold on to old Newsletters for a reference!

Remember to visit www.al626mo.com and click on Facebook *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.