



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

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(Quarterly)

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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

As always for the last quarter all that can be said is WOW. Very busy. Your Post works hard for the Veteran, the Community and our Youth. You should be very proud of what your membership allows the Post to do, and for those that are actively participating, you should feel very satisfied that you make a difference. If we don't say it enough, know that we know it and appreciate it.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Craig Lantz transferred in from PA; he is an Army Veteran from the Lebanon/Grenada era with 17 years in the Legion. New Legionnaires are Greg King, an Army Veteran from the Vietnam Era and Michael Bland, a Navy Veteran from the Vietnam Era. Greg is also a Volunteer at the KC VAMC.

Welcome All!

WHAT HAPPENED

Several of us attended the **District Meeting** on 12 April at Post 236 in Excelsior Springs. Information shared is the Districts Non-Profit status has been reinstated thanks to the hard work of our Finance Officer. When Department meets its membership goals set by National, the Department gets a little extra money from National that can be used to update and maintain office equipment.

The **Public Relations Chair** attended the Chamber of Commerce's ribbon cutting at the Funky Monkey on the 9th of April and the coffee held at the Atkins-Johnson Farm on the 14th of April. He won a door prize again! Door prizes won at the chamber are re-gifted as door prizes at the monthly membership meetings.

The **April Membership Meeting** was held on the 23rd. Committee reports were heard as well as some preliminary information on Gladstone's Veterans celebration on May 23rd and our Memorial Day Ceremony on May 25th. The 50/50 stands at \$36. In case you don't know, our Post does a Mega 50/50. Tickets are purchased prior to every Membership Meeting, but the drawing will not occur until the December meeting. The Law/Order and FF/EMT awards will be made at the Gladstone Ceremony on May 23rd. The Clay County Veterans Memorial Committee can now accept credit cards to purchase commemorative bricks. The Outreach Table will be at the Antioch Library for the entire month of May.



On the 7th of May, SR Vice, Nelson Duncan and Public Relations Chair, Douglas Millison, set at the Outreach Table at the Antioch Library for the Library's "Young at Heart" expo. The idea was to let retiring or retired people know what kind of activities are available for them to keep themselves occupied.



We were at **the Gladstone City Council Meeting** on the 11th of May. We presented a Certificate of Appreciation to CPL Bill Brier of the Gladstone Police Department for the sponsorship of a student to the Cadet Patrol Program. CPL Brier is the president of the Police Officers Association which provided \$425 to send the student.

15 May was **Peace Officers Memorial Day**. Members of the Post as well as many Gladstone Police Officers were on hand at the Big Shoal Cemetery to bring the flag there to half-staff.

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank the following members for participating in this year's Armed Forces Day **Poppy Sale** at Walmart, benefitting Veterans, active duty service personnel and their families. Wayne Beer, Bob Box, Robert Owens, Bill McDonald, and Douglas Millison on the AM shift and Nelson Duncan, Jerry Braton, Phyllis Rosales, and Michael McDonald for the PM shift. We received over \$1,200 from the great citizens of Gladstone! Great job by all!

On the 19th of May I attended the **Ground Breaking Ceremony for the Northland Innovation Campus (NIC)** that is being constructed on the corner of 69th St. and N. Oak Traffic way. It will be a \$20 million, 90,000 SF research and educational complex that is a public/private partnership between the City of Gladstone, North Kansas City Schools and Northwest Missouri State University.

NKC Schools will lease 60,000 SF for its Students in the Academically Gifted Education (SAGE) program. Northwest will create additional collaborations for K-12 programming and much more, including numerous completion programs and client-based services as the university continues to develop a seamless pipeline in pursuit of a Northwest degree. The NIC will be able to serve a variety of individuals seeking undergraduate and/or graduate work to complete degrees, and to serve employers needing client-based services.

The project is slated for completion in the spring of 2016 for this phase with an expansion of an additional 50,000 SF in the future, bringing it to 140,000 SF.

On the 20th of May Commander Beer, Nelson Duncan, Bob Box and Jerry Braton presented **School Awards** to 2 outstanding eighth grade students at Antioch Middle School. Zach Ropka and Samantha Thomas each received a certificate and a medal.

Gladstone held its annual **Armed Forces and Veterans Day Celebration** on the 23rd of May. Thanks to Jerry Braton and Bob Box for serving on that committee and all of their hard work with the assistance of Nelson Duncan. We started the day with a flag raising ceremony at Big Shoal Cemetery. The 3rd Missouri Infantry participated this year with a rifle volley and close order drill. The invocation was made by our Post Chaplain Robert Courtney and speeches were made by Mayor Bill Garnos and Army Historian John Dillingham. Museum manager Erica White ran the show. At the end volunteers from the museum historical society and the 3rd MO placed wreathes at the graves of Veterans buried in the cemetery. The rain held off for us.

The follow-on show, the main event if you will, was at Linden Square starting at 1100. Even without the rain that we had last year, there were far fewer Veterans to march in the Walk-On portion, and probably attending during any part of the day. That was disappointing, but we did have more participating entities and things to see. I thought the historical military vehicles were especially neat, and the American Legion Band of Greater Kansas City put on a good show. The star of the show was when Post 626 past member COL (RET) "Doc Ballard, a Medal of Honor recipient, swore in eight upstanding citizens into the United States Army. HOOAH! That is something that very few in the Army can say and I am sure that they will remember it forever. Doc also charged us with not letting down our youngest group of Veterans who are still committing suicide in great numbers. We



must make ourselves available to them, reach out and let them know that they are cared about. If any of you want to get involved in this endeavor, if you have ideas to share, please contact our VA&R Committee and let's get to work!

We also awarded Certificates to our Law Enforcement and Fire Fighter / EMT of the year nominee's Officer LeAnn Smith and Fire Fighter / Paramedic Shawn Rulon. Both of these outstanding public servants were being recognized for performing their duties above and beyond that which is normally expected.



The Travelling Wall, an 80% scale replica of the Vietnam War Memorial was at The National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial over the Memorial Day Weekend. Several Post members stepped up to volunteer their time to help the event run smoothly allowing Veterans and citizens to see the Wall, and maybe to heal just a little bit. Many displays of raw emotions and tears were witnessed over the weekend. Liz Kelly, one of the Gold Diggers who accompanied Bob Hope on his 1970 tour to Vietnam stayed for the whole weekend lending her support to the Veterans. A big THANK YOU to Legionnaires Bill Morris, Don Pind, Roy Stewart, Nelson Duncan, Samuel James and Mike McDonald for making themselves available. And of course to Liz, for her heart.

Post members put on a **Memorial Day Ceremony** on the 25th of May out at Big Shoal Cemetery. Commander Wayne Beer presided over the ceremony, Paula Fulkerson sang the National Anthem for us, Post Chaplain Robert Courtney gave the invocation, Bill McDonald led us in the pledge of allegiance and City Councilman and Legionnaire COL (RET) R.D. Mallams was the guest speaker. We placed the flag to half-staff and a wreath on the mock grave. Adjutant Phyllis Rosales led the POW/MIA Ceremony. Honor Guard members Bob Box, Nelson Duncan, Andy Lester and Bill McDonald finished everything off with a rifle salute and Olivia Ferguson, a Cadet Patrol graduate, played Taps on her Trumpet.

The **May Membership Meeting** was held on the 28th and committee reports were heard. The Fundraising Committee did confirm that we are a go for manning a beverage tent at this years' Kansas City Airshow on Aug 22-23 featuring the Blue Angels. It will be non-alcoholic beverages and our share is 10% of the gross. We should get around \$500 for the Post. We have around 10 volunteers on each day, with many working both days. If you would like to join us and get into the airshow free please email the Fundraising Chair at our Post email address. The more the merrier and more breaks.

We also held our **elections** for the upcoming 2015-2016 term. You new(ish) staff is Commander Nelson Duncan, Adjutant Phyllis Rosales (No Change), SR Vice Bob Box, JR Vice Jerry Braton (NC), Finance Officer RD Mallams, SGT at Arms Robert Owens, Judge Advocate Andy Lester (New Position), Chaplain Robert Courtney (NC) and Historian Douglas Millison (NC). Millison was also elected to be the District 3 JR Vice. Congratulations all, and thank you for serving your Post.

I was able to get over to Jeff City on the 4th of June and I observed some of the training that is conducted at the Missouri State Patrol Training Academy for the **Missouri Cadet Patrol Program**. Legionnaire Bob Harper is the Director for the program and he said that in his eight years this has been the best class. They don't get a lot of visitors so Past Dept. Commander Marvin Harper and I were able to observe closely the kind of professionalism that is personified by the Missouri Highway Patrol getting instilled into these cadets. This is a great program and a big "Thank You" goes out to all supporters.

This was the 46th Missouri Cadet Patrol and there were 39 in the class. There are currently around 200 Troopers on the force who have graduated from the program, including LTC Sandy Karsten. The assistant superintendent oversees the Patrol's Professional Standards and Public Information and Education divisions as well as the Patrol's legal counsel. SGT Day, the Cadets instructor, also a graduated from the Cadet Patrol before joining the Highway Patrol in 1994.

Our District Cadets were Brian Hobbs from Trimble sponsored by Post 626's Bob Box, Gage Aubrey from Polo sponsored by Post 58 and Austin Barker, also sponsored by Post 626 with the funds coming from the Gladstone Police Officers Association. They all had a good time and promised to get back to their Posts with a big Thank You.



On June 5th Commander Beer received a call from the Gladstone Chamber of Commerce requesting our help in presenting the colors for the opening of **Blues Fest** that evening. We accomplished the task. Commander Beer, Bill McDonald and Douglas Millison rallied to the cause and got the job done.

The **Public Relations Chair** attended the Chamber of Commerce's coffee on the 9th of June at Mosaic Life Care out on 152 and the Chamber "after hours" at Winnwood Skate Center on the 17th. Yes, there will be another door prize drawing at the June Membership Meeting!

I had the opportunity to visit **Missouri Boys State** on the 16th of June. If you haven't been, I highly recommend it. Whether you have anything to do with the program or are just interested in what the Legion does for our youth like I am, it is well worth the effort. Past Department Commander Marvin Harper is just waiting for the opportunity to shuttle you around in his golf cart to see as many of the programs that you wish to see.



In my short time there I was able to witness a session of the House and the House Committee on the Budget; the Federalist Party caucus where students put themselves on the line for positions in the state government from Auditor to Governor, and I also witnessed the Campaign and Political Operations and Television News School of Instructions. Throughout it all I saw outstanding and motivated students and high caliber instructors and staff. The Missouri Boys State House of Representatives was being guided by Representative Mike Colona from the 80th District of the Missouri House of Representatives, and the Dean for the TV News School of Instruction was Matt Flener from Kansas City's KMBC Channel 9 News.

It's a great program worthy of our support and Participation. Next year, get out there and check it out. I'm going back on a different day to see something new. The only other visitors they had when I was there from a Post level were two Legionnaires who drove three and a half hours one way, and were going home that afternoon. The students and staff deserve that kind of recognition and respect from us!

The **June Membership Meeting** was held a week early on the 18th due to Corporate Challenge. This is a standard change. Again, many committee reports from our hardworking membership were heard. Our need to further organize our Honor Guard, establish committee's for the coming year and set up an installation ceremony was also discussed. Bob Owens won the door prize, a storytellers CD. There will be another door prize at the July meeting! The 50/50 is at \$200!

On the 28th of June Commander Elect Nelson Duncan and I volunteered to help set up and tear down for the **Honor Flight** pre-flight meeting and then I went out to KCI on the 30th at 2100 hrs to welcome those 26 Veterans back. It is always a good time, and the smiles on those very tired Veterans are well worth it. Legion Riders from Post 21 and the Patriot Guard were there in force with their flags of course.

Honor Flights to Washington DC are free to Veterans and happen at least a couple times a year. It is a one day trip that brings you and an escort from KCI to most of the Veterans monuments (if not all) in DC. There are two more flights on the schedule for this year, Sep 9 and Nov 11. If you would like to help out with us let me know and I can put you on the call list!



If you are a WWII or Korean War era Veteran and have not yet been on an Honor Flight, now is your time. At the last meeting for the Honor Flight Network of Kansas City they let it be known that with the flight on 30 June, there are no

more waiting lists! The known Veterans have all gone. If you have not gone and are interested, call Commander Elect Nelson Duncan at 816-392-0972 and he will get an application to you.

Vietnam Veterans who have medical reasons to go now are being considered on a case by case basis. I am assuming that once all of the WWII and Korean War Vets have gone it will be opened to our Vietnam Veterans. That will be great, as we will be able to welcome them home in style like they never received before!

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Installation and Initiation Ceremony, Dare to Dabble, 1329 Swift Ave, North Kansas City 64116, 25 July at 1830 hrs.

Executive Committee Meetings, HyVee, 1000 hrs, 18 Jul, 15 Aug, 19 Sep

Membership Meetings, Community Center, 1900 hrs, 23 Jul, 27 Aug, 24 Sep

District 3 Meeting, Post 236, Excelsior Springs, 13 Sep, 1200 hrs

Button Sales, Walmart, 0900-1300 hrs, 4 July (Fundraising)

Department Convention, Springfield, 9-12 July

KC Airshow, Downtown KC Airport, 0800 – 1700, 22 & 23 Aug (Fundraising)

9/11 Flag Raising Ceremony, Big Shoal Cemetery, 0900

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations certainly go out to Gladstone Firefighter/Paramedic Shawn Rulon for receiving The American Legion EMT/Firefighter Award for the year 2015 from the Department of Missouri. Shawn is a 7 year Veteran of the Gladstone Fire/EMS service. In the last year he has continued to show his dedication by becoming a certified Paramedic for the City. He has also been awarded the Local 3228 Presidents Award of Merit in 2014 for his heroic acts while responding to two different calls, helping to save lives at each.

VETERAN AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

Obtained from an email sent out by Tracy Vawter, our Dept. Service Officer.

Please distribute widely:

Public Institutions of Higher Learning that charge GI Bill students more than the resident rate for terms beginning after July 1, 2015 are breaking the law.

GI Bill claims where the school charges the student more than the resident rate will be disapproved. A waiver has been granted, but only until Dec 31st.

Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

I would like to provide you a brief update with respect to Section 702 of the Choice Act. Today the Secretary of the Department of Veteran Affairs announced a blanket waiver to all non-compliant states until December 31, 2015 (granted a waiver).

In November, I wrote about the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (“the Choice Act”) which included a provision affecting students using the Post-9/11 GI Bill® and Montgomery GI Bill. The law requires us to disapprove programs under the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty at a public institutions of higher learning if the school charges certain individuals tuition and fees in excess of the resident rate for terms beginning after July 1, 2015.

We’ve been working with every state and territory since December on complying - no state or territory has indicated its schools do not intend to comply with the law. In fact, as of today 21 states comply with the resident rate-requirements of the Choice Act (www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/702.asp).

We are working hard to ensure all GI Bill beneficiaries have up to date information. As well, we are updating the GI Bill website with the latest information as schools and states comply with these requirements. We will also post breaking information on the GI Bill Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/gibillEducation>.

Folks may read our new FAQs by visiting <https://gibill.custhelp.com/app/answers/list> and searching “702.” They can also call our hot line at 1-888-GIBILL-1 to speak with a Customer Service Representative who is ready to answer their questions.

Please help us raise awareness about this important law and the Secretary's waiver by sending this missive to your colleagues.

Curtis L. Coy
Deputy under Secretary for Economic Opportunity
VBA, Dept. of Veterans Affairs.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Did you know that you do not need to create a Facebook account or give them any information to keep in touch with your Posts activities and plans? Just go to our web page at www.al626mo.com and click on the Facebook button. On the page you will see not only our history and future activities but other posts that I think may concern Veterans, including up to date info that comes out of the VA. But if you do have an account, "Like" our page so that you get timely information and updates.

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, our website www.al626mo.com, or they can go online at www.think-legion.org. It is also a good idea to keep an application in your wallet and know the eligibility requirements.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that every year the Post turns in what is called the Consolidated Post Report, or CPR. This report tells Department what their Posts are doing from 1 June to 31 May. This in turn gets used by National to tell Congress what we do in the community and why we deserve to have our Charter! We turned in our report at the beginning of June and here are our numbers;

VA&R

480 volunteer hours at VA Hosp, \$350 given to VA Volunteer Services (VAVS), 1 VAVS Coordinator, 3 VAVS volunteers.

PR

Has a PR Chair, maintains a website, participates in 9/11 ceremony, produces a publication, seen in 7 newspaper articles, 1 TV segment, participated in 6 community events.

Economic

One employer award nominee.

Americanism

6 students to Boys State @ \$2400, participates in school awards, 2 students awarded, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, totalled 1,742 Community Service Hours.

Children and Youth

Participates in Halloween safety, \$93.94 in TFA

Internal Affairs

Has a Facebook page, spent \$1375 for other projects. (Cadet Patrol, Girls State, Donations)

Look at the Volunteer hours. Post members spent 2,222 REPORTED hours helping others (VA & Community Service). And these numbers are light because I know not everyone reported their hours to the historian who files the CPR. If you can, keep a rough guess on how much time you give to Community Service and ask the VA to tell you how many hours you gave when May ends and I send out an email requesting the info. But the Legionnaire who trounced all others in giving their time was Paul Mimms with 250 hours for the VA and 1,000 for the Blinded Veterans of America. Way to go Paul! But to all of our Volunteers who give back so selflessly, THANK YOU.

TAPS

It is my sad duty to report that we have lost 3 long serving Charter Members (1988) of the Post. Roger Kohrs served in the Legion for 57 years and was an Army Veteran of WWII. Roger was Adjutant during the 1988 renaming charter and then served as Commander from 1981 to 1989, and then back as Adjutant from 1993 to 2003. Charter Members Grover Hewlett was a 29 year Legion member and WWII Veteran and Charles Bennett, a Vietnam era Veteran was with the Legion for 27 years.

PARTING SHOTS

Obtained from an email sent out by Congressman Sam Graves, 6th District.

Dear Friend,

As summer begins for students across Missouri, many of those in high school will use this time to begin thinking about their futures. Some may be considering serving our nation in one of the branches of the U.S. military. One of the greatest honors of my job is having the privilege to recommend a select and impressive group of young men and women for admission to a United States Service Academy each year. Specifically, I am able to recommend students for the:

- U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY;
- U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD;
- U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, NY; and
- U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO.

This year, the deadline for applications is Friday, October 16. I would encourage all high school students from north Missouri who are interested in serving their country in the military to take advantage of the opportunity to attend one of these prestigious academies.

To be eligible for appointment, applicants must be an American citizen and a legal resident of the Missouri's 6th Congressional District. All applicants must be between the ages of 17 and 23 as well.

If you know of someone who might be interested in attending one of these academies, please have them contact my Kansas City office at (816) 792-3976 to learn more about the selection process. Please also visit my website, graves.house.gov, to read more about the individual academies. I am always humbled and proud to suggest local students for these prestigious appointments, and I look forward to recommending a stellar group of candidates again this year.

Sincerely,

Sam Graves

Content changes, so hold on to old Newsletters for 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.