



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 most months in the Gladstone Community Center at 7:00 p.m.
All members are invited to attend.*

INTRO

Here we are again, with summer behind us and some new leadership in place ready to face the new year. Charlie Schmidt of Burns, OR, was elected national commander in Cincinnati during the 98th National Convention. There is a great article about him in this month's American Legion Magazine. Our new Department Commander is Betty Gonzales, a member of the Saint Louis Service Women's Post 404. R.E. Holtz of Excelsior Springs remains District Commander. Nelson Duncan continues as Post Commander and we welcome Douglas Millison, the new Sr. Vice Commander, Craig Lantz, Chaplain, and Gaila Sullivan, Sgt. at Arms. Good luck to all.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We have one new Legion member, Joshua Langton an Army Veteran of the PG/GWOT era. Transferring in to our Post is Bob Elliott and Steve Smith, both are Army Veterans of the Vietnam era, Earl Donalson an Airforce Veteran also of the Vietnam era and Richard Quick and George Dykes, who I don't have information on yet.

Welcome All!

WHAT HAPPENED

We had a successful **Button Sales Fundraiser** and Membership Table at Walmart on the 4th of July. Originally scheduled for Saturday the 2nd, we had to reschedule it for the 4th due to rain. Thank you to Box, Duncan, Bland, Lester, Farris, Owens and Millison for making it happen. And let's not forget that we make those buttons! So a big thank you to Rosales, Millison, Owens, McDonald, and Duncan for putting together 700 buttons.

We appreciate the customers of Walmart who dig a penny out of their pocket or a twenty out of the wallet, without them we would NOT be able to do as much as we do.

The **Department Convention** was held in Kansas City this year and the Post took advantage of that sending 6 delegates and 3 alternates. We hope they all learned a little about the process. We had the Post Store open at the event and also raffled a patriotic garden rock that was donated by Phyllis. A lot of people wanted that rock resulting in 274 tickets being issued and a profit for the Post of \$226!

Neither the Governor nor the Mayor attended the opening even though



they were invited. To be fair that was the same morning that the Officers in Dallas were gunned down, so they could have been seeing to business. The Kansas City Police Chief, Darryl Forte was awarded the Department Law and Order Award and he was not able to attend either for that reason.

Probably the best day was on Saturday when we got to hear from and about the students who attended Boy and Girls States, won the Oratorical Competition, or were chosen as Eagle Scout of the Year. We also got a glimpse of the other things that go on in the Department throughout the year.

The **Post Installation and Initiation Ceremony** went well with 37 in attendance. The Under-Sherriff of Jackson County LTC (RET) Hugh Mills gave an informative and entertaining talk about his time in Vietnam and returning to where one of his battles took place to scout for a movie being made of his second book. He recommends that other Veterans of the war return and visit the country as it is now. Phyllis presented him with the Vietnam War 50-year anniversary pin and certificate and then accosted him with one of her hugs.



Tristyn Bowling talked to us about his time in Boys State last year. He was the Posts first pick to attend and had a transformative experience to which he thanked us profusely. When we interviewed him for Boys State he was interested in history and thought that his future was in teaching history to others. After the “week to last a lifetime” he has started on a path to law school. It was great to hear from one of “our” students about their experience. When he was being introduced Hugh Mills told us that he was a graduate of Arkansas Boy State and that it too had a profound effect on him. In fact, he lost the slot to attend Boys Nation to one Bill Clinton.

We initiated two new members and installed this year’s officers and then presented a thank you to Post 61 and the Legionnaire of the Year Award to our Adjutant Phyllis Rosales. Boy was she was surprised! Unfortunately, none of our 5-year anniversary members attended this year. Please attend a meeting soon to claim your certificate.

At the 23 July **Membership Meeting** “Doc” Ballard talked about all he does for Veterans and their families in his mortuary business. He not only does what he can to help out when a veteran passes, but he is willing to spend his time educating people on what their options are ahead of time so they are not taken advantage of. A little extra planning can go a long way to leave a family member more secure. You can contact Doc through our website under “Member Owned Businesses.”

On 5 and 6 August Gaila, Tara, Nelson (and wife Linda), Jim and Doug Volunteered to help the NKC School District in their “**Stuff the Bus**” school supply drive at Walmart. Over 140 boxes of school supplies were donated to the district and boxed on the spot for delivery to classrooms where the supplies were needed. Thank you all for your great work!

On **September 10th** Douglas Millison and RD Mallams were volunteers at the **Atkins Johnson Farm Country Fair**. Dan Lester was the Honor Guard representative from our Post, posting the colors during the opening ceremony for **Hero Fest**, the city’s first annual celebration honoring our first responders. Gaila Sullivan, Doug Millison and RD Mallams were the only members of the Post to attend that we know of.



Patriot Day started with raising the colors at Big Shoal Cemetery to half-staff by Bill McDonald, RD Mallams, Gaila Sullivan and Doug Millison. Fom 1000 to 1400 six volunteers did button sales at Walmart. Phyllis Rosales put that one together and says “Thank you to Carole Driver, Jerry Braton, and Nelson Duncan for helping me make the buttons. We broke in our new button machine with 744 buttons. I also want to thank my hard working veterans who stood at Walmart getting donations, Bob Box, Jerry Braton, Doug Millison, Jim Armstrong, Bill McDonald, Joe Farris and Carole Driver. If you have an idea for a Forth of July or 9/11 button please let me know!”



One of the things we spend money raised from our button sales are charitable donations. Shortly after 9/11 Joe Farris, who has two sons in Law Enforcement delivered our annual donation to the Surviving Spouses And Family Endowment Fund (SSAFE). This fund gives a cash donation of \$25,000 to the eligible family members of first responders who lost their lives in the line of duty. Sadly, that number for the last 11 months totaled 5. If you would like to donate you can give the Post the money next August and we can bundle them into one donation or give it directly to SSAFE by contacting Sonny Wilson at 816-960-6800 ext. 236, swilson@kc-crime.org or through their website at survivingspouseandfamily.org.

Membership Meetings held at the Community Center at 1900 hrs on 23 Jul, 27 Aug, and 24 Sep showed an increase in attendance and that we are continually at work helping Veterans and our community.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Membership Meetings, Community Center, 1900 hrs, 22 Oct, 19 Nov, and 17 Dec. (Nov and Dec are the 3rd Thursday!)

District Meeting, 9 Oct 1400 hrs. Post 237 in Richmond with a potluck meal immediately following.

Gladfest Parade. We will have a float in the parade today. We welcome all members to ride on the float, in the truck or to walk along. Obviously it's too late for this year, so mark your 2017 calendars for the first Saturday in October. Thank you Nelson for pulling the trailer and Jerry for the use of your trailer.

Department Fall Conference, Jefferson City, 21-23 Oct. Get the schedule and housing information from the Departments website at <http://www.missourilegion.org/>.

Fright Night, Oak Grove Park, 21 Oct 1800 hrs. Commander Duncan and Phyllis Rosales will be passing out pencils instead of candy.

National Commanders Walk for Veterans, 29 Oct 0800 – 1200, Civic Center Park, Francis Street, St. Joseph MO. The registration fee is \$20. Please complete a registration form and return to Department Headquarters by October 14th. The form can be found at http://www.missourilegion.org/awarness_walk.pdf.

Post 95 Chili Supper, 29 Oct 1630-1900 hrs. Our Lady of Mercy Country Home, Liberty MO.

Honor Flight Network of KC is holding another flight to DC on the 3rd of November as well as a flightless event at Union Station on Veterans Day for WWII and Korean War Veterans, and Vietnam Era Veterans on an as needed or space available basis. Commander Duncan has been sending out applications to Post 626 WWII and Korean War Veterans and will be sending them out to Vietnam Veterans starting in October, so be looking for them. For more information contact Commander Duncan at 816-841-2530.

Kathy Irvine, the volunteer coordinator for the Network says *“We may need some guardian volunteers for the flightless and welcome who want to come and help with homecoming. We'll have more of an idea in the next couple of weeks.*

Our next Meet and Greet is Saturday, October 29th. It will be at Avondale United Methodist Church at 3101 NE Winn Road. I do need 3 or 4 volunteers who can come help us set up and tear down. We will be there at 12:00 noon and should be done no later than 4:00 or 4:30. The lunch is being sponsored by the DAR and I think it is coming from Hy-Vee.



We are having a board meeting tomorrow and I will check on pre-flight volunteer needs but we always welcome everyone to come out to Homecoming upon return. That flight will be Thursday 11/3. The flight usually arrives around 9:15 or 9:30 (PM). I know the veterans would appreciate it very much!

Thanks for all you and your members do!'

If you would like to help out, contact Doug and he will coordinate with Kathy.

Veterans Day Poppy Sales will be on Sunday 6 Nov 0800-1600 hrs. at Walmart. This is a change. It was originally scheduled for Saturday but there was a scheduling conflict with Walmart. We are sorry for the inconvenience and hopefully one of the shifts will work around any church conflicts. At least 8 Volunteers are needed so that we can run two 4 hour shifts. 12 would be better, allowing for more breaks. All proceeds from Poppy Sales are used for the benefit of Veterans. Please contact Doug to volunteer for this event. This is one of two events that fund our VA&R programs and we need your help to make it a success, and besides, it's fun!

Veterans Day at Antioch Middle School. Any and all members of the Post that will be able to make it out and are willing to speak in a classroom setting (20 students), we would invite those members to arrive around 0820 on the morning of November 11. I will release the veterans to the classroom at 0840. The main event, with the keynote speaker, the gymnasium portion, will begin around 0940. The veterans will be in the classroom for approximately 50 minutes, and I will pull them out in time to move them from one location to another without fighting the crowds. Families and veterans not interested in speaking in a classroom setting are invited to come out for the large group setting, arriving at the school around 930. Thank you for supporting our event. Please, feel free to follow up with any other questions.

Peace, Jeff Benes
(Please let Doug know if you intend to do all or part of this event)

Cameron Veterans Home. We will be sponsoring a Bingo and Pizza Party at the home on 22 November starting at 1400 hrs. Contact Doug if you would like to attend. This is a great opportunity to show these guys and gals that they are still appreciated and remembered. Thanks to our new Sergeant at Arms, Gaila Sullivan, for being our rep up there and putting this together!

CONGRATULATIONS

Our Adjutant, Phyllis Rosales, was awarded the Posts Legionnaire of the Year Honors at the Annual I&I Ceremony and Dinner in July for her hard work as Co-Chair of the Clay County Veterans Memorial Committee and her daily work as our Adjutant. The local chapter of the DAR came to our July membership meeting and awarded Bob Box their Veteran of the Month award for his service. Past Commander's Bob Box and Wayne Beer as well as Past Adjutant Bill McDonald were honored for their hard work at the September membership meeting.



VETERAN AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

The House of Representatives passed the VA Accountability First and Appeals Modernization Act of 2016 Wednesday Sep 14, a bipartisan legislation that would reform the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs appeals process and reduce wait time for veterans' claims.

Prior to the House vote, The American Legion co-hosted a press conference with Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., where he announced that he will introduce separate legislation in the Senate to reform the appeals process.

At the press conference, the Legion, other veterans service organizations, and 10 senators and representatives from both sides of the aisle called on Congress to pass legislation to fix the VA's broken appeals process.

“We strongly encourage Congress to pass the legislation so that our Nation’s heroes can get the care and support they deserve in a timely manner,” said, Verna Jones, executive director of The American Legion.

You can sign up for “Action Alerts” by creating an account at mylegion.org and sign up to take action. You will receive an email that describes the issue and give you the option to automatically send a pre-written letter supporting the Legions position to all of your representatives at once. Just put in your address and the program does it for you. Easy peasy.

On another front, new National Commander, Charles Schmidt, has announced that his charitable goal as commander is to raise \$1,000,000 each for the Temporary Financial Assistance Fund (TFA) and to train service officers to help you receive your benefits.

Those willing to make an in kind contribution to the Commander's Charity Fund [may do so at this link](http://www.legion.org/donate). (<http://www.legion.org/donate>) Checks or money orders may be mailed to Commander's Charity Fund, American Legion Charities, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46216.

If you are a Veteran or Service member who has had thoughts of suicide, or a family member or friend of a Veteran who is struggling, VA can help. We have the most comprehensive and extensive suicide prevention program in the nation. With the support of VA resources you can:

- **Get immediate help if you or a Veteran you care about is in crisis** by calling the Veterans Crisis Line at [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255) and pressing 1.
- **Connect to [#BeThereforVeterans](https://www.instagram.com/BeThereforVeterans)** to find support and other resources available to Veterans and Servicemembers. If you're a family member or friend, watch this [video](#) and learn the importance of how small actions can make a huge difference to those in crisis.
- **Talk to a Suicide Prevention Coordinator** located at any VA Medical Center. Find your facility's coordinator and other suicide prevention resources near you by using the [Resource Locator Tool](#).
- **Access a [VA Vet Center](#)** or mobile clinic for readjustment counseling and referral services.

Access to resources listed above do not require enrollment in VA health care. To learn more about VA benefits useful to Veterans in need, [visit Explore VA today](#).

MEMBERSHIP

We encourage you to think of membership in three layers Recruitment, Retention and Revitalization. Ask a veteran to join and help us get more active in the community by spreading the word about our organization.

Just so you know, we really do appreciate **your continued membership!!** Renewals are going well for 2017 and the Post is ahead of goal. But don't get comfortable with that, we would like to see every member renew before the new membership year begins on January 1st. Post calling tree volunteers will be calling to remind those who have not renewed to do so. To avoid the call and save us some work go ahead and renew now. Go ahead..... I'll wait....

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 SR Vice Commander Doug Millison at 816-509-5247, dwmillison7@gmail.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?

In early 2003 area Veterans wanted to have a memorial that would honor Clay County Veterans from all wars beginning with the Civil War. As a result, Anita Gorman and John Dillengerham became co-chairman working with Mark McHenry of the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department to secure funds and receive approval to build the memorial. The Clay County Veterans Memorial was dedicated on October 30, 2005.



Memories have been made through the generous support of many, to include Clay County American Legion Posts and their Auxiliaries, as well as local VFW Posts. A huge bronze eagle welcomes you as you approach the memorial. The black granite walls are engraved with the names of local fallen soldiers who died during combat. The eagle sits upon a rock base surrounded by a brick star. These bricks are available to the public to memorialize a loved one for a fee of \$100.00.

If you have never been to the memorial, it's a loss that you can redeem. The memorial is located in the Anita B. Gorman park at Vivion Rd and North Oak. This memorial is worth a visit and bring your children and grandchildren for a history lesson.

Come visit us, buy a brick so you too can live on at the memorial.



Bricks can be purchased through the CCVM Committee Co-Chairs; Jerry Braton at 816-835-1862, wgbrats@sbcglobal.net or Phyllis Rosales at 816-453-5842, peacres@aol.com. You can also purchase bricks on our website at www.al626mo.com.

Jerry Braton
CCVM Committee Co-Chair

HONOR GUARD

Since becoming certified by the MO Adjutant General's Office to perform Military Funeral Honors for deceased veterans, our Post Honor Guard has presented Honors at six funerals.

Being a member of the Honor Guard, in my opinion and I know shared by all members of the Guard, is the highest honor any member of the American Legion can be given. Well, the honor really isn't "given" it is earned by each member after hours of drill. The members of the Honor Guard gladly make sacrifices of time and money to make sure that the families of deceased veterans receive proper military honors at the grave site or chapel, whichever the case may be.



For anyone desiring to join the Honor Guard we have a program to help with financial aid in acquiring your uniform and we will do this in such a way that the request for financial assistance will be kept confidential to the extent that only members who need to know will be aware of the request. So please, don't let the "cash flow" issue be a roadblock to your desire to join. Call me and let's discuss how we can help you. Again, no one will even know you called. My number is 816-536-2713.

Another duty that we do is presenting the colors at events like Bluesfest and the Gladfest 5K. If you don't feel comfortable being on the team for funeral honors, what about as a color guard? That would give some of our Honor Guard a break and I would only call you for those details and rehearsals.

And now, a fun tad-bit you may not be aware of. "Why does an Honor Guard fire three volleys from rifles?" Answer: This tradition comes from traditional battle ceasefires where each side would clear the dead. The firing of three volleys indicated the dead were cleared and properly cared for.

Joe Farris, Honor Guard Captain

COMMANDERS NOTE

It was decided by a vote of the membership to tighten up on our attendance at the meetings. We will no longer allow visitors who are not Legionnaires to sit in on our meetings unless they are eligible to become members and wish to see what we are about. We may still have some visitors who are making presentations to us BEFORE any Legion business is discussed.

TAPS

It is our sad duty to report that we have lost:

Stewart Grant, a Marine Corps Veteran of the Vietnam era with 14 continuous Years in the Legion. George Nelson, a Korean war era Veteran of the Marine Corps with 44 years of continuous service and a Charter Member of the Post. James Stark, an Army Veteran from the WWII era with 7 years' membership.



Bill McDonald and Dan Lester performing a flag folding ceremony for the family of a WWII veteran.



RD Mallams, Gaila Sullivan and Bill McDonald rendering honors at the Big Shoal Cemetery on 9/11.



Commander Duncan and JR Vice Braton helping out Honor Flight Network of KC at the St. Jo Airshow.



SR Vice Doug Millison and Finance Officer RD Mallams helping out at the Atkins Johnson Country Fair.



Bob Box being recognized as the DAR's Veteran of the month.

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.