



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



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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

1 April 2018

Web Site Address
www.al626mo.com

Facebook Address
facebook.com/Post626MO

This newsletter is available to
view on our website

Upcoming Meetings

Meetings are held every 3rd
Thursday in the Gladstone
Community Center, 6901 N
Holmes St., at 1900 Hrs. (7 PM)

19 April 2018
17 May 2018
21 June 2018

Submit articles and pictures
for the Newsletter by email to
the Post (Subject: Newsletter)
two weeks prior to Quarterly
publishing. All submissions
subject to editing.

Commander Says:

Thank you everyone for the outstanding activities over the last quarter!

Boys and Girls States are in the bag with 4 boys and 3 girls from Oak Park, Staley and St. Pius X High schools being sponsored by the Post. I would like to thank the Boys State selection committee members for the work they did to put a process in place which will make it more efficient for follow-on years, and to the Girls State team for coordinating with Auxiliary Unit's 58 and 61.

We had the opportunity for a couple social get-togethers where members attended a fundraiser for the Ladies of Unit 61 and the "Stacks for Students" fundraiser that the Rotary puts on every year. I'm glad to see Legionnaires stepping out and getting involved in Legion and community events. These types of things raise our profile and stature in the community and is greatly appreciated by the same!

More things are coming down the road and I hope you consider jumping in on one or all activities to get to know your fellow Legionnaire and have a good time. Let's face it, the meetings are not the best entertainment. Come join us in the field!

It is a requirement that we announce candidates for office and Executive Committee positions at the April membership meeting. If you have your eyes on a position, please contact me before that to get the scoop.

Adjutants Notes

Phyllis Rosales

Send me your 2018 renewals. 2019 renewals will start July 1, 2018.

New Members

Welcome to:

New Legionnaire David Napoli USAF (RET) of the Korean war era and Major Jonathan Batt, currently in the Army at FT. Leavenworth.

Transfers from Post 1000, all Vietnam era Veterans; Army Veterans George Gibson, Roger Bleich, and William Carter; Air Force Veterans Michael Cochrain and Robert Walker; and Navy Veteran Gary Hatterman.

Congratulations

2LT Jessica Farris, USAF, was named Company Grade Officer of the year (Wing Level) at Wright Patterson AFB. Jessica is a member of this Post and Grand Daughter to Joe Farris, our Honor Guard Captain.

Maj Jonathan Batt, USA, enjoyed the birth of a daughter, Lillian Field Batt.

Membership

Douglas Robker

This is it folks, if you haven't renewed yet, DO SO NOW. You're going over 3 months late and making more work for others. Send \$35 to Phyllis Rosales, 810 NE 46th Ter., KCMO 64116 or renew online at Legion.org/renew.

(Commanders Note - Please retain a copy of your payment for your records! If your renewal does not get processed by National prior to the cutoff for printing renewal reminders, you will get a reminder even though you have renewed. We have received many over payments by people paying 2 or even 3 times! This month's cutoff is April 11th. If we can't get it to National by the 11th, a reminder WILL be mailed out on the 27th. You can avoid this if you still need to renew by doing it online at www.legion.org/renew.)

Historian
Douglas Millison

March 15th marked our 99th Birthday, for it was on that day in 1919 members of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) convened a meeting in Paris France to discuss “what’s next?”, and The American Legion was born. To celebrate the upcoming Centennial of the American Legion the Department has a few activities planned for 2019. On May 11th (Tentatively), there will be a ceremony in St. Louis commemorating the Legion’s first Caucus held there in 1919. The formal Centennial Celebration will be held during the Department Convention in July, also in St. Louis. And tentatively scheduled for September is our Memorial Brick drive commemoration at The National WWI Museum and Memorial (formerly The Liberty Memorial), here in Kansas City.

To help raise money for these activities I have hat pins (\$5), challenge coins (\$8) and the Department Centennial Shirt order forms (Starting at \$25). I have these at every meeting so come on down and get yours today. But wait, there’s MORE! I also have the order forms for the Commemorative bricks being placed in KC. All of the money from this program goes to The National WWI Memorial and Museum as our public service program associated with the Centennial. The ceremony isn’t until September 2019 but we need to place our first order immediately after convention to lock in the prices before they go up, so order yours today! (I have attached an order form for the brick as well as the centennial shirt for your convenience)

Honor Guard
C. Joe Farris, Captain

“Trying Our Best, 100% of the Time”

Some Honor Guard Statistics You May Find Interesting

Since becoming certified by the National Guard to perform Full Military Honors at Veteran funerals, the Honor Guard of Post 626 has to-date provided Full Military Honors at ninety (90) funerals including the funerals we have assisted at the National Cemetery in Leavenworth, KS.

Following is a breakdown of the funerals by BRANCH:

USA – 51 or 57%
USN – 16 or 16%
USAF – 15 or 17%
USMC – 6 or 6%
USAAF – 2 or 2%
USCG – 0 or 0%

So far most of our funerals have been at Terrace Park Cemetery (28) followed by White Chapel (20). Other cemeteries combined (34) and services held at churches, funeral homes and one Legion Post (8).

In 2016, for the half year we were certified, 18 funerals;

In 2017, 57 funerals – but as we requested, we were staying north of the river in the first quarter of the year;

In 2018, to-date we have done (15)

Our Post Honor Guard consists of veterans of the Army (3), Navy (3), Air Force (3) Marines (1).

VA&R

Douglas Millison

VA launches welcome kit to guide Veterans to the benefits and services they've earned

This is where Veterans should start.

VA's onboarding process can be overwhelming at times. Veterans who have visited a VA outreach booth, VA eligibility office, or have gone through a Transition Assistance Program know that VA has no shortage of technical handouts, benefits books and materials. But, even with all of these resources, Veterans are telling us "Where do I start?" Try here:

<https://www.vets.gov/welcome-to-va/>

Veterans who lost their VA benefits may be able to reclaim them.

The Colmery Act (also known as the Forever GI Bill) includes significant education benefit changes that may affect you.

Did you lose your VA education benefits due to a school closure or disapproval? You may be able to restore your benefits. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

In addition to assistance with school closings, new legislation:

- Eliminates the 15-year time limit for those who left active duty on or after January 1, 2013.
- Provides up to nine months of additional Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to eligible individuals who are enrolled in a program of education in a STEM field.
- Allows Veterans who had eligibility under the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) and lost it due to the sunset of the program to have that service credited toward the Post-9/11 GI Bill Program.

Find out more about benefits you may qualify for by visiting [Explore.VA.gov](#)

OMB Visits KC Area and KCVAMC

On the 21st of March Commander Millison and Legionnaire's Bill Morris and Alvin Trusty attended a short Q&A session with Margaret Weichert, Deputy Director of Management and Suzette Kent, Federal Chief Information Officer, both of the U.S. Office of Management and

Budget (OMB), and Kansas City VA Director Kathleen Fogarty at the KCVAMC. The OMB officials were touring the Metro area as part of the Presidents Management Agenda; Modernizing Government for the 21st Century. They are getting feedback from key areas of the Federal Government both from the administrator's viewpoint and the end users. In this case VA users. The end goal is to develop a long-term vision for modernizing the Federal Government in key area's and effectively steward tax payer's dollars.

The KC Metro was chosen as an area to start in because we have over 50,000 Federal employees in the area, and an active Federal Executive Board who work well together in difficult terrain. One of the key points of discussion was creating the ability to have a form filled out at the VA accepted by another Federal agency and vice-versa, without having redundant information being filled out by the end user or bureaucrat over and over and having that information available to be pulled up on a computer system that works the same no matter what department one may be doing business with.

Veterans in attendance were able to talk about what they thought was being done right by the VA and what they thought needed improvement as well as ask questions about what was happening within the VA, both in the Medical and the Benefit areas. The Commander was able to express his concerns to the C.I.O. during the tour of the new Liberty Building about over developing the online portal, making it too complex by having too much information to sort through and the need to customize a portal that would just display what a particular user wanted access to. And at the same time, don't leave behind the personal access available by phone and good customer service for those that cannot, or choose not to use the internet.

It was a productive session but a bit short due to scheduling issue's. The Commander got a good view of the new Liberty building which will house the substance abuse and recovery program starting in April. The facility has 28 beds and will give occupants a 21 day in-house but out-patient program.

Clay County Veterans Memorial

Phyllis Rosales & Jerry Braton

Looking for something to give that special person? A brick is a perfect gift. You don't have to find a place to put it or dust around it! Contact one of us and we will be happy to set you up!

Conference/Convention Notes

Commander

“Spring” Conference was held in Jeff City 16 to 18 February. Here's some of what transpired;

Membership

Department made it's February membership goal of 85% with 87.86%, 90% target in March.

Only 12% of the population that is eligible for membership actually are members. National advertising (billboards to TV spots) is lower than VFW or DAV because we sponsor more programs which cost \$.

100th Anniversary Committee

2019 is the last year for the calendar, \$100 for a picture featured for a month.

Still have pins and coins to sell. Order forms for shirts and bricks attached to Newsletter email.

120 shirts sold so far, next order March 2018.

11 May 2019, Commemoration of first State Caucus in St. Louis.

11 - 14 July 2018, Department Convention in St. Louis, Formal Dinner, Theodore Roosevelt IV as guest speaker.

Sep (Tent.) Brick dedication ceremony, National WWI Museum and Memorial, Kansas City

Missouri Veterans Commission

The State is responsible for 7 homes, 6 of which are doing very well and one that is struggling. The problems in the St. Louis home stem from a shortage of staff. To address this problem a request is at the State House to allow the commission to raise the salaries of employees, thereby increasing retention of skilled workers. A nurse working for the State can get around \$3 an hour more working in the private sector. They have the funding to do this, they just need permission from the state to do it and seem confident that it will happen.

Surveys of the homes have been the responsibility of the VA. Also, being short of staff they only surveyed 25% of the homes programs in a year. The VA recommended an outside review and the commission has asked the State DHSS (who has that responsibility for every other retirement facility in the State) to do this task. They have agreed, and along with that comes the ability to investigate complaints.

A question was raised about creating more homes. Nothing will happen on that front until it can be shown that they do not have further capacity where they are at, but not all beds are full because of a shortage of staff.

A new director is being hunted. The interim Veterans Service Director is an Air Guard Col. on temporary assignment. From the briefing she gave I would say she is doing a darn good job of it!

Legionnaire's Insurance Trust (LIT)

LIT has returned \$2 Million to the Department since 1990. 12% of Legionnaires are signed up for the free Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance which would give out \$1,000 for a standard claim and \$5,000 if the injured party is on Legion business at the time. They offer a full range of services beyond the free benefit.

State Dept. of Mental Health, Veteran Services

9.3% of Missouri's population are Veterans or Military.

Over 21,000 Veterans received services from the Division of Workforce Development.

In 2016 over 15,000 Veterans received education benefits.
51% of incarcerated Veterans have been identified with mental health needs.
The Department's goals are to: Identify needs, gaps and barriers; Increase access to high quality care; raise awareness of needs & services available.

Notes

Room cut-off for Department Convention in Springfield is June 9th.
Missouri National Veterans Memorial is being built in Perryville MO and will be a reproduction of "The Wall". It will have a welcome center, chapel and gift shop.

District Meeting Notes

Commander

A district meeting was held at Post 61 on 11 March with 4 out of 29 Posts attending. (Ouch)
CDR Millison represented 626.

Committee reports revealed that 2 students were submitted for Cadet Patrol, and 47 for Boys State. That's almost a 50% reduction for Boys State. Baseball is winding up and there are three Posts with teams, including 626. Membership is at roughly 88% for the year.

On April 28th Post 61 is hosting a target shoot at "Show Me Shooters" followed by Taco's at the Post. Watch their Facebook page for details. On August 25th Post 61 has their Car Show followed by Post 236 on September 28th.

Member Contribution

Tips for safer travel, Russ Dubuc, RD Travel Ltd., 816-454-3800

Hackers are imitating hotel and resort Wi-Fi name (SSID) in order to hack your device. Here are some precautions:

- Always ask the front desk for the correct Wi-Fi name and where there is coverage. You might want to write this information down. Any other address that looks like it might be correct will be fake and you will be hacked.
- When you log into a public network, shut off the Auto Join Function. Then, every so often, hit the Forget This Network, wait a couple of minutes and log in again.
- To avoid more problems when first logging in, enter your name and then a false room number. If the system lets you in, there is a problem. Let the hotel management know. Then log in with the correct room number.

- This is also an everyday life concern! Be careful where and to whom you let your devices auto connect to!

Hackers are also working in crowds with credit card sensing equipment. You can avoid problems by cutting a piece of aluminum foil the size of a dollar bill and sliding it in your wallet. You might want to have it laminated.

Taps

It is our sad duty to report that the following Legionnaires have been transferred to Post Everlasting:

Paul Lopez, Marine Corps Veteran, and James Schroeder, Air Force Veteran, both of the Vietnam era; Ed Williamson, an Air Force Veteran of the Panama era.

Upcoming Events

April is Children and Youth Month

Apr 8th, Run So They Can Ride 5K, 0830 start time at Zona Rosa, KCMO. The Post joined the other 4 Posts in Clay County to sponsor this race at the Silver level (prominent placement of emblem and people). Post 626 Color Guard / Honor Guard will open the event by presenting the colors for the National Anthem. We will be joined by the colors of the other 4 Posts. Come on out and support the runners and say hi.

<https://runsignup.com/Race/MO/KansasCity/RunSoTheyCanRide5K>

April 19th Membership Meeting.

Post officer and Executive Committee candidates announced.

May 5th, Elks Scholarship Breakfast, 0800, 7010 N Cherry St. Come out and help us support this great organization support the youth of the area. We filled up a few tables over the last couple of years, lets do it again! Great food, all you can eat for \$5, bring the family!! Scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, Italian sausage, ham, biscuits & gravy, hash browns, pancakes, milk, juice, coffee, fresh fruit and raffle prizes! If you can't go at that time they are open 7 - 12 Sat and Sun. Scholarships benefits Oak Park, Staley, St. Pius, North Kansas City, Winnetonka, Liberty, Liberty North, Park Hill, Park Hill South, and Platte County RIII high schools.

May 10th, Poppy Fluffing with the great folks at Heritage Village of Gladstone, 3000 NE 64th ST., 1400 to 1500 Hrs. They help us get the Poppies ready for National Poppy Day and we get to sit and chat for a little while. It's a good time all around.

May 17th, Membership Meeting.

Voting on candidates.

May 19th, Armed Forces Day, Ceremony at Big Shoal Cemetery, details forthcoming. Watch the Facebook page.

May 25th, National Poppy Day. We can still use volunteers to help pass out Poppies (for a donation) at Walmart. Two shifts, 09-1200 & 12-1500. For those not volunteering, stop by and get your Poppy! The back-up for rain is Sunday the 27th.

May 28th, Memorial Day Ceremony, Clay County Veterans Memorial, 1000 Hrs. Remember the roots of this holiday and come out for the ceremony! Flyer attached. Please spread the word by sending the flyer to others, maybe print it and place it in a public area for us?

Jun 10th, District Meeting, Post 236, 208 Veterans Memorial Drive, Excelsior Springs at 1400, potluck meal follows.

Jun 10th to 15th, Missouri Cadet Patrol Academy, Jefferson City MO. No 626 participants.

Jun 16th to 23rd, Missouri Boys State, Warrensburg MO. 2 Staley, 1 Oak Park, 1 St. Pius X.

Jun 21st, Membership Meeting.

Jun 24th to 30th, Missouri Girls State, Warrensburg MO. 2 Oak Park, 1 Staley

EVERYONE is more than welcome at any of these events! Please contact the Commander for any additional details.

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

The Past Quarters Photo's

clockwise from upper left - Unit 61 Fundraiser, Boys State selections, Boy Scouts Eagle project, Baseball team Snake Saturday Fundraiser, Rotary Stacks for Students fundraiser.

