

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

The legion is actively undergoing significant improvements thanks to the dedicated efforts of our bar manager, Dena Foster coordinating contractors to include plumbing and electrical work. The SONS have taken over our outdoor maintenance and lawncare, we are very appreciative for their motivation to step up to take care of our property. Our focus still is on enhancing the parking lot for all members, and we seem to be inching closer to that goal.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who participated in the recent celebration of Sue Van Noy's life, which saw an impressive turnout.

April has been a busy month, showcasing a variety of successful events such as amazing home-cooked meals provided by Texana, engaging poker nights, lively line dancing sessions, and a festive crawfish boil.

As we look forward, please mark your calendars for the nominations for the executive board on **May 18th at 2PM** and the election of new officers on **June 14th at 2PM**.

As we enter May, a month dedicated to remembrance, let us honor the sacrifices made for our freedoms and reaffirm our commitment to the community and the American Legion Post 317.

Joe Sprague, Commander- Army 1987-1999 Desert Storm

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Another Easter has come and gone and I hope you had a Blessed Sunday. On Easter I shared with Faith Summit the Story of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ who said in **John 2:19**, Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it again in three days. Jesus was referring to his own death and resurrection which showed the world the power of God.

Today as many of us have lost family members and friends, if they know the Lord, they know we shall see their loved ones again.

Paul writes in **1 Corinthians 15:26** that the last enemy to be defeated will be death! Death was never a part of the plan of God but has been passed down because of the sin factor.

If you have pain from someone you have lost, let that pain cause you to draw closer to God. I know from experience, He will help you.

Anthony Van Noy, Chaplin- Army 1974-1977, Ft. Sill Oklahoma

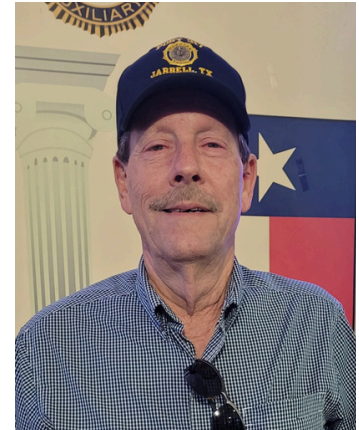
"I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong." - Abraham Lincoln



EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICER HIGHLIGHT-

Member at Large- Mike Hamilton

Mike was drafted to the Army in 1969 serving in Baumholder, Germany to 1971. When he returned to the states he trained with the National Guard at Fort Hood. (now Fort Cavazos). He has been a member of the American Legion since 2017 and says his favorite thing about Post 317 is the good friends and being able to serve the community. Mike has 2 children and 4 grandkids and is a Central Texas Native.



Thank you Mike for all you do for Post 317!

A "member at large" on a board for the American Legion, represents a general membership perspective and provides feedback to the board.



EXECUTIVE BOARD

Next Meeting May 18th at 2PM

Commander- Joe Sprague

First Vice- Don Christy

Second Vice- Jim Wilson

Adjutant- Larry Raper

Judge Advocate- Bill Hassiepen

Finance Officer- Ken McLain

Chaplain- Anthony Van Noy

Service Officer (s)-

Larry Raper & Jim Wilson

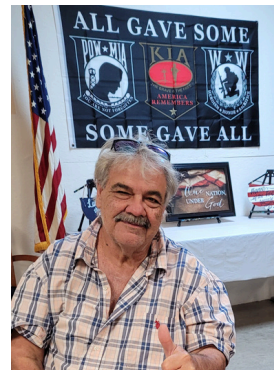
SGT at Arms- Bobby Lewis

Historian- William Boyd

Members at Large- Mike Hamilton

Post 317 Vietnam Veterans Day

On March 29th Don Christy and the American Legion family hosted Vietnam Era Veterans with an afternoon of good people, food and music. The turnout was amazing and we want to thank everyone who helped make this a day of honor and gratitude.



PATRIOT PAWS' VETERAN & SERVICE DOG TEAM GRADUATION

In April the Legion was invited by Cody Rogers, President of Semper Fido Services (our Sweepstakes provider) to attend the Spring 2025 Graduation of 4 Patriot PAWS service dogs. Remember every time you play the games at our post you are donating to this amazing cause. Our Commander walked Gizmo (named by Post 317) to his "Forever Veteran" Dani Russell.



Shawna & Joe Sprague, Ken & Juanita McLain representing the American Legion and the Auxiliary at Gizmo's graduation in Rockwall, TX.



Cody & Nikki Rogers, Ken, Juanita, Shawna, Joe, Dani Russell (our honored Veteran) & Gizmo himself after graduation.

A Service For Those Who Served

Our Veterans have dedicated their lives to serving our country. Our mission is to provide the highest quality Service Dogs, free of cost, to Veterans with mobile disabilities, post-traumatic stress (PTS), and traumatic brain injuries (TBI).
<https://patriotpaws.org/>

Thank you Cody for the sponsorship and donations you make to the American Legions!

I AM A SERVICE DOG

Reflections of a Patriot PAWS Service Dog.

By Teresa Bass

As far back as I can remember, there were lots of people in my life. Some of them were at the Training Center, I lived with some of them in their homes, and I even lived with some of them who are in prison. All of them loved me and took care of me and taught me everything that I was supposed to learn, but I never knew why I had to learn all those things...until now, that is...because now, I have you.

You see, I am a Service Dog, and you are my person. All of those other people before you were mine only for a little while, but you, you are my forever person. You are why I have spent my whole life learning to do all those things, far more than any regular dog ever learns, but I was not meant to be a regular dog. I was meant to be a Service Dog.

And now, I am your Service Dog. I promise to help you in every way that I can and never leave your side. As long as there is breath in my body, I will serve you. I promise to take care of you and love you, and all that I ask is that you take care of me and love me in return.

I know that your life has been difficult, but now you have me, and I will do everything that I can do to make your life better. Some things may still be difficult, but we will face them together, and whatever happens, we'll see it through, you and I. You are my purpose in life, and you are my destiny, and I couldn't be happier.

I am your Service Dog, and you are my person, and I can't wait to start our new life together.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Founded in 1932, Sons of The American Legion exists to honor the service and sacrifice of Legionnaires. S.A.L. members include males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership.

Next Meeting TBD

Squad Commander- Jeff Melend
Vice Commander- Loren Dixon
Adjutant- Ken McLain
Finance Officer- Jeff Kneisler
Chaplain- Kyle Sneary
SGT at Arms- Cary Doss



NEW MEMBERS

February: **Cody Bishop, Dyrus Bell, John Allen Blake Frescacher and Devon Heller**

March: **James Jeffords, Jeremy Whitman**

April: **Chad Melendez, Danny Colburn and Michael Falcon**

Congratulations!

The SONS Chaplain, Kyle Sneary and his wife Ashley, welcomed a new healthy baby girl to their family on April 9th, Madeline Rose.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Next Meeting May 8th at 7 PM

President- Shawn Smith
Vice President- Mary Christy
Secretary- Shawna Sprague
Treasurer- Juanita McLain
Historian-
Jan Boepple-Wilson
Chaplain- Elvira Salizar
SGT at Arms- Kiffani Smith



Elvira Salizar, Diane Reid, Dena Foster, Lea Ann Mohs, Jamie Mattison, Mary Christy, Belinda Robertson, Jan Wilson, Shawna Sprague, Mary Elizabeth Oliver, Juanita McClain & Kiffani Smith



Election Time!
Thursday May 8th at 7PM



The Auxiliary Deadline for all Submissions to the June 2025 Newsletter is the 4th Tuesday of the month (5/27). Auxiliary will meet every 4th Thursday of the month to prep for mailing at 6PM (5/29). You can contact Shawna at 909.367.9493 if you want to participate or have any questions!

Things You May Not Know About Memorial Day



1. Memorial Day and its traditions may have ancient roots.

While the first commemorative Memorial Day events weren't held in the United States until the late 19th century, the practice of honoring those who have fallen in battle dates back thousands of years. The ancient Greeks and Romans held annual days of remembrance for loved ones (including soldiers) each year, festooning their graves with flowers and holding public festivals and feasts in their honor. In Athens, public funerals for fallen soldiers were held after each battle, with the remains of the dead on display for public mourning before a funeral procession took them to their internment in the Kerameikos, one of the city's most prestigious cemeteries. One of the first known public tributes to war dead was in 431 B.C., when the Athenian general and statesman Pericles delivered a funeral oration praising the sacrifice and valor of those killed in the Peloponnesian War—a speech that some have compared in tone to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

2. One of the earliest commemorations was organized by recently freed African Americans.

As the Civil War neared its end, thousands of Union soldiers, held as prisoners of war, were herded into a series of hastily assembled camps in Charleston, South Carolina. Conditions at one camp, a former racetrack near the city's Citadel, were so bad that more than 250 prisoners died from disease or exposure, and were buried in a mass grave behind the track's grandstand. Three weeks after the Confederate surrender, an unusual procession entered the former camp: On May 1, 1865, more than 1,000 people recently freed from enslavement, accompanied by regiments of the U.S. Colored Troops (including the Massachusetts 54th Infantry) and a handful of white Charlestonians, gathered in the camp to consecrate a new, proper burial site for the Union dead. The group sang hymns, gave readings and distributed flowers around the cemetery, which they dedicated to the "Martyrs of the Race Course."

3. The holiday's 'founder' had a long and distinguished career.

In May 1868, General John A. Logan, the commander-in-chief of the Union veterans' group known as the Grand Army of the Republic, issued a decree that May 30 should become a nationwide day of commemoration for the more than 620,000 soldiers killed in the recently ended Civil War. On Decoration Day, as Logan dubbed it, Americans should lay flowers and decorate the graves of the war dead "whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land." According to legend, Logan chose May 30 because it was a rare day that didn't fall on the anniversary of a Civil War battle, though some historians believe the date was selected to ensure that flowers across the country would be in full bloom. After the war Logan, who had served as a U.S. congressman before resigning to rejoin the army, returned to his political career, eventually serving in both the House and Senate and was the unsuccessful Republican candidate for vice president in 1884. When he died two years later, Logan's body laid in state in the rotunda of the United States Capitol, making him one of just 33 people to have received the honor. Today, Washington, D.C.'s Logan Circle and several townships across the country are named in honor of this champion of veterans and those killed in battle.

4. Logan probably adapted the idea from earlier events in the South.

Even before the war ended, women's groups across much of the South were gathering informally to decorate the graves of Confederate dead. In April 1886, the Ladies Memorial Association of Columbus, Georgia resolved to commemorate the fallen once a year—a decision that seems to have influenced John Logan to follow suit, according to his own wife. However, southern commemorations were rarely held on one standard day, with observations differing by state and spread out across much of the spring and early summer. It's a tradition that continues today: Nine southern states officially recognize a Confederate Memorial Day, with events held on Confederate President Jefferson Davis' birthday, the day on which General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson was killed, or to commemorate other symbolic events.



John A. Logan (born February 9, 1826, Jackson county, Illinois, U.S.—died December 26, 1886, Washington, D.C.) was a U.S. politician, Union general during the American Civil War (1861–65), and author who played a pivotal role in the creation of Memorial Day.

5. It didn't become a federal holiday until 1971.

Americans embraced the notion of "Decoration Day" immediately. That first year, more than 27 states held some sort of ceremony, with more than 5,000 people in attendance at a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. By 1890, every former state of the Union had adopted it as an official holiday. But for more than 50 years, the holiday was used to commemorate those killed just in the Civil War, not in any other American conflict. It wasn't until America's entry into World War I that the tradition was expanded to include those killed in all wars, and Memorial Day was not officially recognized nationwide until the 1970s, with America deeply embroiled in the Vietnam War.

6. It was a long road from Decoration Day to an official Memorial Day.

Although the term Memorial Day was used beginning in the 1880s, the holiday was officially known as Decoration Day for more than a century, when it was changed by federal law. Four years later, the Uniform Monday Holiday Act of 1968 finally went into effect, moving Memorial Day from its traditional observance on May 30 (regardless of the day of the week), to a set day—the last Monday in May. The move has not been without controversy, though. Veterans groups, concerned that more Americans associate the holiday with first long weekend of the summer and not its intended purpose to honor the nation's war dead, continue to lobby for a return to the May 30 observances. For more than 20 years, their cause was championed by Hawaiian Senator—and decorated World War II veteran—Daniel Inouye, who until his 2012 death reintroduced legislation in support of the change at the start of every Congressional term.

7. Wearing a red poppy on Memorial Day began with a World War I poem.

In the spring of 1915, bright red flowers began poking through the battle-ravaged land across northern France and Flanders (northern Belgium). Canadian Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, who served as a brigade surgeon for an Allied artillery unit, spotted a cluster of the poppies shortly after serving as a brigade surgeon during the bloody Second Battle of Ypres. The sight of the bright red flowers against the dreary backdrop of war inspired McCrae to pen the poem, "In Flanders Field," in which he gives voice to the soldiers who had been killed in battle and lay buried beneath the poppy-covered grounds. Later that year, a Georgia teacher and volunteer war worker named Moina Michael read the poem in Ladies' Home Journal and wrote her own poem, "We Shall Keep the Faith" to begin a campaign to make the poppy a symbol of tribute to all who died in war. The poppy remains a symbol of remembrance to this day.

8. Memorial Day traditions have evolved over the years.

Despite the increasing celebration of the holiday as a summer rite of passage, there are some formal rituals still on the books: The American flag should be hung at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day, then raised to the top of the staff. And since 2000, when the U.S. Congress passed legislation, all Americans are encouraged to pause for a National Moment of Remembrance at 3 p.m. local time. The federal government has also used the holiday to honor non-veterans—the Lincoln Memorial was dedicated on Memorial Day 1922.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

by John McCrae



**IN FLANDERS FIELD THE POPPIES BLOW
BETWEEN THE CROSSES ROW ON ROW,
THAT MARK OUR PLACE; AND IN THE SKY
THE LARKS, STILL BRAVELY SINGING, FLY
SCARCE HEARD AMID THE GUNS BELOW.**

**WE ARE THE DEAD. SHORT DAYS AGO
WE LIVED, FELT DAWN, SAW SUNSET GLOW,
LOVED AND WERE LOVED AND NOW WE LIE
IN FLANDERS FIELDS.**

**TAKE UP OUR QUARREL WITH THE FOE:
TO YOU, FROM FAILING HANDS WE THROW
THE TORCH; BE YOURS TO HOLD IT HIGH.
IF YE BREAK FAITH WITH US WHO DIE
WE SHALL NOT SLEEP, THOUGH POPPIES
GROW,
IN FLANDERS FIELDS.**

MAKING MEMORIES

THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 317



MARY, DON CHRISTY, RENEE TUCKER, & JEFF LAZENBY-VISITING FROM NORTH CAROLINA & WEST VIRGINA (DON'S SISTER & NEPHEW)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR POKER CHAMPIONS! ROBBIE "THE GREAT" RAGSDALE & MICHELLE "NO BLUFFIN" TIPELT



CHARLES SCHWEGMANN - POKER NIGHT



BRANDON NEWSOM & JOE SPRAGUE- CRAB BOIL



ELVIRA SALIZAR, BELINDA ROBERTSON, TIFFANY ZAPATA, MARY ELIZABETH OLIVER & LEA ANN MOHS - POPPY PAINT PARTY



DENA FOSTER & SOTO- CRAB BOIL



JUANITTA MCLAIN- CRAB BOIL



BOBBY LEWIS & ANTHONY VAN NOY- EASTER SUNDAY



MARY SIMEK & SHAWNA SPRAGUE- VIETNAM VETERANS DAY



The American Legion is open Monday-Friday 12 PM- 12 AM
 Saturday 10 AM- 1 AM & Sunday 10 AM- 12 AM
 American Legion WI-FI: American Post 317 Password: jarrell317

MAY 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|---|
| MAY WE NEVER FORGET, THAT FREEDOM ISN'T FREE! | | | | 1 | 2 Free Jukebox 7PM | 3 Kentucky Derby Party 2PM Girls Night Out \$2 drinks 7PM |
| 4 Texas Holdem 6:30 PM | 5 Cinco De Mayo Party at 7PM Line Dancing 7 PM | 6 Texas Holdem 7 PM | 7 Karaoke 8:30 PM Spaghetti, Green Beans & Toast | 8 ALA Meeting 7PM Election Night | 9 Free Jukebox 7PM | 10 Mother's Day Girls Night Out \$2 drinks 7PM |
| 11 Texas Holdem 6:30 PM | 12 Line Dancing 7 PM | 13 Texas Holdem 7 PM | 14 Karaoke 8:30 PM Fried Chicken, Mash Potatoes & Carrots | 15 | 16 Free Jukebox 7PM | 17 Girls Night Out \$2 drinks 7PM |
| 18 Nomination of Executive Board Officers General 2PM SONS Meeting 4PM | 19 Line Dancing 7 PM | 20 Texas Holdem 7 PM | 21 Karaoke 8:30 PM Meat Loaf, Mash Potatoes & Corn Rolls | 22 | 23 Free Jukebox 7PM | 24 Girls Night Out \$2 drinks 7PM |
| 25 Texas Holdem 6:30 PM | 26 Memorial Day | 27 Texas Holdem 7 PM | 28 Karaoke 8:30 PM Pork Chops, Home Fries & Beans | 29 | 30 | 31 Girls Night Out \$2 drinks 7PM |

DATES TO OBSERVE IN MAY

MAY 1, 2025 – SILVER STAR BANNER DAY
 MAY 9, 2025 – MILITARY SPOUSE APPRECIATION DAY
 MAY 13, 2025 – CHILDREN OF FALLEN PATRIOTS DAY
 MAY 17, 2025 – ARMED FORCES DAY OBSERVED ON THE
 THIRD SATURDAY EVERY MAY.