



American Legion Post 639



Brothers and Sisters,

This will be the final newsletter of 2020, and it couldn't come fast enough. To be a member of this group, you had to have done some strange and difficult things when you were younger. I'm not saying that the Covid has been anything like going to war, but it has been weird in a way that I think most of us never thought we would see.

This experience has been full of lessons for all of us, but learning is growing, and we have all been forced to grow in ways we didn't expect. It has also provided many opportunities for us to recognize what matters and who is important.

As 2020 comes to a close, I am thankful for the friends and volunteers we have here at Post 639. We have made great strides this year. The hardship of the pandemic has forced us to re-think and re-evaluate almost everything we have been doing all these years. I am committed to continuing the activities that help us be our best while at the same time maintaining, and in some cases reestablishing, the valuable traditions of our Post.

We brought the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall to our post in 2020. We raised nearly \$30,000 in donations to refurbish and rebuild our kitchen, thanks to a few very generous and anonymous donors. We fed at least 80 people at local shelters on Thanksgiving. We've quietly helped dozens of veterans with their VA issues, job placement, legal issues, and sometimes utility bills. We did all this while being forced to close our doors for several weeks and running at a reduced capacity when we could be open.

All in all, I'm extremely proud of what we accomplished this year. As I think about it, I'm not surprised. We have all 'risen to the occasion' before. In

fact, that may be what makes our members unique when compared to other groups.

I cannot imagine what 2021 has in store for us, but I'm sure we, as people, as veterans, and as a post will rise to meet whatever challenges it brings.

Personally, I'm very thankful for all of you who help. You know who you are. Everyone that comes in knows who you are. From the members of the Auxiliary and Riders who show up in full force any time there is work to do, to the volunteers who pick up the trash in the yard, clean the bathrooms, fix whatever breaks, and cook our meals, we have a huge team of cheerful, productive, fun people willing to work for the greater good. There is no way I could possibly thank you enough.

We are optimistic about the coming year, It's going to be great, because we are going to choose to make it great. The memorial for the post 9/11 veterans is coming in June, and we are very close to having raised all the money we need in order to bring it. We will have substantially new kitchen equipment before it arrives. It's going to be great, and I am looking forward to spending it with you all.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and thank you for your continued service.

Semper Fi,

Darin Hargis



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

This is a month to be thankful for what we have. Instead, let us be thankful for what we don't have. Let me explain. Be thankful you don't have COVID-19. If you do have to be in contact with it, I hope you don't get real sick. And if you are sick, I pray you get over COVID-19 real fast. I pray you have a safe Thanksgiving, and may your holiday be enjoyable.

All for now, and as always, the Post and its members are in my prayers.

Chaplain Rex Krasche

ALR

November has been a busy month. We had a great turnout for the Veterans Day parade breakfast and lunch. Thank you to all volunteers - Noel, Susan, Hallie, Bob, Mary, and all of our Auxiliary ladies. Great job! The City of Willard continues to do an outstanding job hosting the Veterans parade and honoring our Veterans. A great turnout for the event.

We will not be having our Christmas party this year, originally scheduled for 12/20 following our ALR meeting. I feel this is necessary to minimize the risk of Covid exposure/infection, especially this close to Christmas. We will still have our meeting at 6PM on 12/20. This pandemic is in full swing, so be mindful of your surroundings, and protect each other.

Marsha Crom, Director

AUXILIARY

Your Auxiliary turned out a beautiful float display for the Western Greene County Veterans Day Parade held in Willard on November 7th representing Post 639. Our float committee - Bob and Hallie Scott, Susan and Noel Heppard, Terra Cooperider, Justin Adamson, Debrya Faria, Bob Pare, Kayla Ortega and her son Joey, and Mikayla Anderson worked tirelessly on this project for weeks prior to the parade. But we had a lot of fun in doing so too! It was a pleasure working with all of you. Thank you so much for working on this event!! Our Poppy Drive Chairman, Charlotte Kelly, also came with us and walked the entire parade route getting donations for our Poppy Fund. Charlotte, you rocked it!!

On November 11th, Veterans Day, we prepared and served free meals of ham and beans, fried potatoes, cornmeal muffins and desserts for lunch and during

the Queen of Hearts event. Special "thank you" to Steve, who volunteers in the kitchen on Wednesdays cooking lunch. Not only was he doing the regular lunch menu, he helped me with our Veterans Day meal. Couldn't have done it without you Steve! Shout out to Joyce Sanders and Kayla Ortega for your dessert donations. They were a big hit !!

I hope that everyone had a safe and blessed Thanksgiving. It was very different at the Post this year not being able to serve our annual Thanksgiving dinner to our members and their families, but the decision made by our Commander was a wise choice. Our mission is to serve our Veterans, our serving military men and women and their families, and serving also means watching over their welfare. Covid has changed all of our lives in ways that we could never have imagined. For the safety of those who we serve, Post members, employees and the Post VSO's, our Post Thanksgiving had to be cancelled. It was not an easy decision to make but I feel the Commander made the right decision. But we stepped outside of the box and found a way to serve in our community. We prepared, packaged and delivered Thanksgiving meals to Harmony House and Isabel's House! This was one of the most rewarding events I have ever participated in and a fantastic idea, Commander!

Saturday, December 5th, Santa, Mrs. Claus and their elves will be here from 1:00PM to 4:00PM. This event is open the public, so let your family, friends and neighbors know. We will be practicing social distancing, masks and glove protocol. If the weather permits, this event will be held on the Shockley Stage. Otherwise it will be held in the meeting room in the Post.

The All-Post Christmas Party will be held Saturday, December 19th. This event is for all Legion members, ALR, ALA, Post employees and their guests from 5:00PM to 11:00PM. Tickets are \$15 per person and are currently on sale at the bar. Tickets must be purchased prior to the event. Last day to purchase tickets is Thursday, December 17th. Here is the itinerary for the event:

5:00PM to 6:00PM - Cocktail Hour

5:30PM to 6:00PM - ALA Secret Sister Reveal

6:00PM - Let the games begin! This will determine

who gets dinner first!

6:30PM - Dinner - Savory smoked half-chicken, potato, vegetable, roll and desert.

7:30PM - 11:00PM - Elevated entertainment - Professional DJ service like you have NEVER experienced. We had them last year for the ALA Christmas Party and we had a BLAST!

8:30PM - Christmas gift exchange \$10.00 maximum. If you wish to participate, bring same gender gift.

Join us for a fun-filled night with friends, food, drinks, games, dancing, gifts and laughter. Hope to see you all there!

In the Spirit of Service not Self,
Diana Cooperider
President, ALA Post 639

Veterans Day at Morningside Nursing Home, Chesterfield Village



2020 Greene County Veterans Day Parade Willard, MO



Fundraiser to Benefit Our Kitchen

We are currently attempting to raise money to benefit our Post's kitchen. As we all know, our kitchen helps bring much-needed revenue to the Post. We have been fortunate enough to have an anonymous donor pledge \$16,000 towards this project. The donor has challenged us to raise another \$10,000. This is a goal we can certainly reach, with the help of our many members. Please take the time to donate to this worthwhile cause. We had several generous donations in November toward this goal that allowed us to replace one of our freezers. One step closer to modernization !!!!!!!

Our Response to the Springfield Mask Ordinance

As many of you know, Springfield issued a mask ordinance on July 16, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the Legion, we plan to follow this ordinance unless our members have some condition that excludes them from wearing masks. In these instances, we leave it up to you to determine whether or not a mask is needed. If you enter the Legion without a mask, we will assume that you have a qualifying condition that prevents you from wearing one.

Thanks for your cooperation. We look forward to seeing you soon. Stay well.

Kitchen Success!

We recently changed our lunch menu and added some items. With our new range of options, you can be sure we have something for every taste.

Come try our classic Reuben, our impossibly big chili dog, or our pork tenderloin. We also have fried chicken sandwiches, chicken fried shrimp, and your favorite hamburgers and cheeseburgers. All entrees are served with fries.

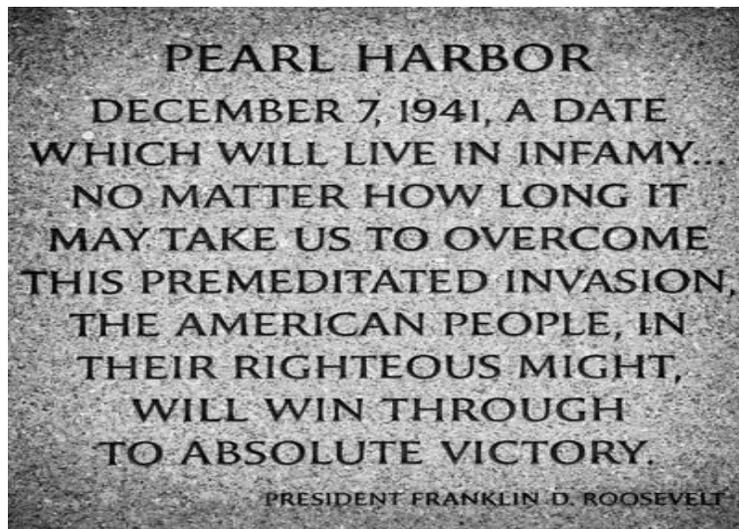
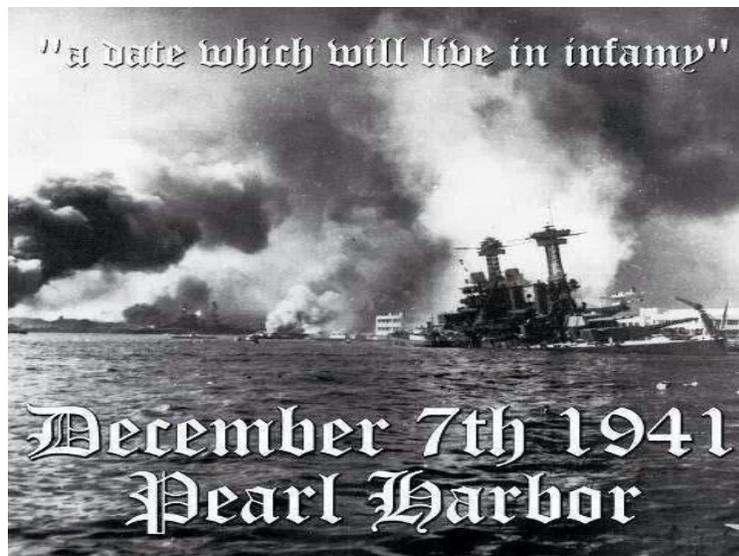
We also have terrific appetizers! Stop by and grab some onion rings or fried mushrooms while you sample our drink selections.

The American Legion is free and open to the public, and our kitchen is open every weekday till 5PM, so bring your friends and encourage others to stop by and visit us. As you know, our kitchen is one of our main sources of revenue, so the more people we can get in here, the better!

We appreciate your patronage!

VOLUNTEERS

Anytime you are looking for something to do, consider **VOLUNTEERING** here at the post. We always need help in the kitchen if you like to cook, clean, or assist. Maybe the kitchen is not your thing. If not, there are plenty of service opportunities available.



A Different Christmas Poem

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light, I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight. My wife was asleep, her head on my chest, my daughter beside me, angelic in rest.. Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white, transforming the yard to a winter delight.

The sparkling lights in the tree I believe, completed the magic that was Christmas Eve. My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep, secure and surrounded by love I would sleep. In perfect contentment, or so it would seem, so I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near, but I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear. Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know, then the sure sound of foot-steps outside in the snow. My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear, and I crept to the door just to see who was near.

Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night, a lone figure stood, his face weary and tight. A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old, perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold. Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled, standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.

"What are you doing?" I asked without fear, "Come in this moment, it's freezing out here! Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve, you should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!" For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift, away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts.

To the window that danced with a warm fire's light, then he sighed and he said "Its really all right. I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night. It's my duty to stand at the front of the line, that separates you from the darkest of times."

"No one had to ask or beg or implore me, I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me. My Gramps died at Pearl on a day in December". Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers. My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam', and now it is my turn and so, here I am.

I've not seen my own son in more than a while, but my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile. Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag, the red, white, and blue... an American flag. I can live through the cold and the being alone. away from my family, my house and my home.

I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet, I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat. I can carry the weight of killing another, or lay down my life with my sister and brother. Who stand at the front against any and all, to ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."

" So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright, your family is waiting and I'll be all right." But isn't there something I can do, at the least? Give you money" I asked, "or prepare you a feast? It seems all too little for all that you've done, For being away from your wife and your son."

Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret, "Just tell us you love us, and never forget. To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone, to stand your own watch, no matter how long. For when we come home, either standing or dead, to know you remember we fought and we bled, is payment enough, and with that we will trust, that we mattered to you as you mattered to us."





December 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		01 Dec General Meeting 7PM	02 Dec Queen of Hearts 6-8pm 	03 Dec	04 Dec	05 Dec
06 Dec	07 Dec	08 Dec	09 Dec Queen of Hearts 6-8pm 	10 Dec	11 Dec	12 Dec Sub Vet Meeting 1pm
13 Dec	14 Dec Auxilliary E-Board Meeting 6:30PM	15 Dec	16 Dec Queen of Hearts 6-8pm 	17 Dec Red Nights Meeting 6-8PM	18 Dec	19 Dec Post 639 Christmas Party 5PM - 11PM
20 Dec ALR Meeting 6pm	21 Dec	22 Dec E-Board Meeting 6:30PM	23 Dec Queen of Hearts 6-8pm 	24 Dec	25 Dec Christmas Day	26 Dec
27 Dec	28 Dec	29 Dec	30 Dec	31 Dec		

National Wreaths Across America Day
Dec 19th, 2020



Each December on National Wreaths Across America Day, our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach is carried out by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, as well as at more than 2,100 additional locations in all 50 U.S. states, at sea and abroad. Locally, wreaths will be placed at Springfield National Cemetery at 1702 E. Seminole St at 12PM, and the Missouri Veterans Cemetery at 5201 S. Southwood Rd. at 11AM. Please consider sponsoring a veterans' wreath at a cemetery near you, volunteering or donating to a local sponsorship group.



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LZ639 Pizza Company will make available to our members of Post 639 and families your choice of 12 different pizzas that we offer to area bars. There is a minimum order of 6 pizzas and they will only be made when we are making orders for our wholesale customers and will be **take out only**.

The price is **\$6.00** per pizza for 10" pizzas . This is for personal use and cannot be resold. See Connie or the bartender for additional information and to order.



Vietnam War Memorial
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Member at Large		Semper Fi	