



American Legion Post 639 (Vietnam War Memorial) Springfield, Missouri

JULY 2022



REMEMBER

From the Commander ...



Summer is here. Post 639 has been having some great outdoor events. SAL, ALA, ALR and Post employees, members and friends have done a great job representing. Thanks everyone.

Post elections are in the books and we will have some new faces sworn in next month. I am excited to see what the next year holds for us. We always need volunteers, so please plan on helping out where and when you can.

I was elected to represent our membership for another year. Looking forward to new challenges in the rest of the year and into 2023. As you all know prices of everything are on the rise, so a price increase on things at Post 639 is coming. Please do not blame our employees, if you have an issue bring it to me. Thank you.

As always, I am humbled to be surrounded by such a great group of veterans in our area. We have been working with other local VSO's to complete all of our missions. In my opinion other VSO's are not our competitors, if we work together we can accomplish so much more for our veterans and community.

Share with your friends and neighbors about our Post, invite them to stop by for lunch and/or a drink. Tell them about our Queen of Hearts every Wednesday, Bike Nights, our raffles and most of all what a great group of folks who hang out here.

Fly your Flag and be Proud, say a prayer for our Country and Post 639.

Mike Goforth

Commander

Legion Post 639

Post Adjutant



Elected Officers for the coming year are as follows:

Commander

Mike Goforth

1st Vice Commander

Mike Chandler

2nd Vice Commander

Adam Jamieson

Finance Officer

Frank Messley

Judge Advocate

Jim Cooper

Sergeant at Arms

Ron Jackson

Service Officer

Bob Scott

Quartermaster

Barry Greene

Chaplain

Rex Krasche

Historian

Bob Kalwat

Member at Large

Bob Dale

Member at Large

Darrin Dobbs

This makes up the content of the Executive Board for 2022-2023. Officers will be installed during the General Meeting on August 2nd.

Tom Newsom

Post 639 Adjutant

Chaplain



We had Flag Day, D-Day, Hot Days of Summer, and now some Cool Down Days. Even on Sundays, we have the Lord's Day.

We had events at the Post, and will have a new E-Board. I pray that the new year for the Post will be a GOOD year.

I pray that the members and E-Board can work together to make the Post improve on the past year.

All for now. As always, I keep the Post and its' members in my prayers.

Rex Krasche

Post 639 Chaplain

Auxiliary



July is ALA election month and maybe by the time you read this our 2022-2023 Officers will have been elected. The new Officers will begin their term in August, after our installation ceremony, at the general meeting.

We presented our BIGGEST Raffle Basket in June themed "Just For Men" and the value of the basket was over \$840.00! All items in our raffle baskets are donated items from our ALA members and businesses. Thank you to all of our donors!

District meeting was held at Post 639 in June with approximately 45 people in attendance. The luncheon was a big hit with our Taco Bar. Thank Joyce Sanders, Terra Cooperider, Linda Tenneson, Mikayla Criger, Susan Heppard, Tammi Grantham for helping with preparing, setting up, serving and cleaning up. Special thank you to Marsha Crom, Joyce Sanders, Susan Heppard, Tammi Grantham and Debrya Faria for the donated, yummy desserts! If I left anyone out, my apologies! Shout out to Justin Adamson for helping us with setting up and manning the cash box. We also received a very nice surprise from Post members Justin Adamson, Barry Greene and Chaplin Rex Krasche who put away the food and did dishes before ALA's meeting was over. THANK YOU SO MUCH! You guys are

awesome!

July is ALA's 50/50 month and all proceeds from 50/50 go into our Poppy Fund. Poppy donations are earmarked to organizations/groups who help veterans with such things as medical needs and rehabilitation. Because of your donations, last year we were able to present a check to the Kathy Davis, Ride to Live, organization which focuses on PTSD and Suicide Awareness. Thank you for your donations!

Shout out to Mr. Ron Sanders for donating office supplies to ALA this month. Thank you for thinking of us!

Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization and without them we would not accomplish much of anything. Without volunteers we would not be able to fundraise to help support our unit financially and without finances we would not be able to help our veterans and their families. We would not be a vital source to Post 639 when they ask us for our assistance. The next time you see an ALA member volunteering thank them for what they are doing. It makes all the difference in the world! We love our Post and we love to serve our Post but it is human nature to be recognized for a job well done. It doesn't cost anything to say thank you except a little bit of your time out of your day to do so. Thank you volunteers of ALA Unit 639!

In Spirit of Service, not Self

Diana Cooperider

President, Post 639 Auxiliary

Sons of the American Legion



The Sons of the American Legion are looking for New and Past Members!

The Sons are made up of male descendants of Veterans who served in the US Armed Forces. Show your appreciation for your family members Service, and keep the memory of those brave Service members alive.

Our motto is "Serving Those Who Served" this great country. We do this through our events and volunteering at the LZ 639.

Annual dues are only \$25... and you get soooo much more out of your service to these brave vets, who fought to provide the freedoms each of us enjoy every day.

We are always interested in talking with individuals who want to help our beloved LZ 639. We meet at 7PM on the last Tuesday of each month.

Come out and sit in on a meeting or talk with a few of our members

Curtis Meyers

Sons of the American Legion



Service Officer



We've been saved by a judge. A federal judge appointed by Trump has blocked the Biden administration from ending the Title 42 restriction at the border. This means our Veteran's health benefits are no longer at risk.

The Biden Administration (with the support of the Republican Party) had planned to end the use of the Title 42 restriction and open the border WIDE. This would have allowed an unlimited number of illegal aliens to enter the country starting on May 23rd.. The Veterans Administration would have been tasked to provide medical benefits for the illegal aliens at our expense.

This did not happen, because District Court Judge Robert Summerhays sided with 24 states to block the administration's plan. The injunction ruled that a federal notice and comment process had to be completed before Article 42 could be terminated. This process will take months and cannot be completed before the election this fall. If the election results in a new congress the Biden Administration will have no hope of resurrecting this plan. We can now relax; our benefits are secure.

Bob Scott

Post 639 Service Officer

Legion Riders Chapter 639



Wow, it's hot. But not hot enough to keep us off the road. We've done our best to keep busy while we swelter.

The Chapter 639 Election was held during our monthly meeting on Sunday, June 19th. Your elected officers for **2022 - 2023** are as follows:

Director	Marsha Crom
Assistant Director	Kathy Davis
Treasurer	David Turner
Secretary	Bob Kalwat
Road Captain/Sgt at Arms	Ron Jackson
Judge Advocate	Mike Brooks

Appointed positions are Will Ogden/Herman Burkett - Co-Chaplains, Bob Kalwat - Membership Coordinator, Nolan Moody - Post Liaison. Officer Installation will be held at the ALR Monthly Meeting on July 17th. Our officers, to a person, are ready, willing and able to assist any ALR members needing assistance, for whatever reason. **As a group, they bring a wealth of life experience to bear on any problem.** Don't hesitate to ask if they can help in any way. We can handle **ANY-THING** together. In the words of The Pointer Sisters - "We Are Family" !!!

ALR participated in a group that rode to the airport to welcome home Ed Fox, returning from Hawaii for the Midway 80th An-

niversary Commemoration. We need to get Ed into the Post to share his experiences first hand.

Due to the extreme heat, and for everybody's safety, we decided to alter our monthly ride plans and do a Dinner Ride instead. Had a great time at Bricktown Brewery.

We decided to make a night of it when we were invited over to VFW 3404 by Nolan Moody to help celebrate the retirement of USMC Lt. Col. Jared Duff (ret.) The son of our very own Chuck and Zella Duff, he retired in October 2021 after a distinguished 24-year career. **CONGRATULATIONS Jared !!** We were honored to attend and help you celebrate with your family !!



Dinner Ride - Bricktown VFW 3404 - Jared Duff

Just as we have “**Ride Go/No Go**” rules for cold weather, our cutoff temperature for summer rides is predicted high of 95 degrees.

Come on out on July 11th and enjoy a Dinner/Show with the Swagger Little Big Band on Shockley Stage. \$10 Dinner tickets are on sale at the LZ639 Bar. Menu is **smoked** meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans, roll and dessert. Dinner is 5:45PM - 6:45PM, Swagger will play from 7:00PM - 8:30PM

Ride safe out there

Marsha Crom, Director, Chapter 639

Historian/Newsletter Editor



On Tuesday, June 7th, we honored our own Sgt. Ed Fox, USMC, who traveled to Hawaii to participate in the 80th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of Midway at Punchbowl National Cemetery of the Pacific. He was one of two attendees who are surviving veterans of the battle, the other being a US Navy veteran who survived the sinking of the USS Yorktown. **Notice in the picture of them standing**, Ed assisting the other veteran to his feet. Nothing has changed since the battle - you take care of your brothers in arms on your left and right. We at the Post participated with him via live stream. At the end, we raised a glass in a toast to honor Ed and his love of country and service. **On Friday, June 10th**, we met Ed at Springfield International Airport to welcome him home. Our love for him was returned by his love for us. Ed stated in an interview that in Hawaii, he was representing all who served in the Battle, and made it possible for him to be there. Welcome home, Sgt. Fox. We are all honored to have you as one of us, and to call

you a friend and brother who shares our love of country, and the veterans who have, and are still serving her.

(Photos of both events on Page 5 of this newsletter)

Bob Kalwat

Post 639 Historian/Newsletter Editor

July VSO Activities/Info

Vietnam Vets Radio

Post 639 was honored to welcome Bennie and Delight Blount for a visit during the June Bug Jamboree. Our own **Scotty Kelly** is a frequent listener, and uses the “Daily Check In” tab on the website, referencing Post 639 in his check-ins. Scotty and Bennie began communicating, and the Blounts came up from Chelsea for the event. Our **Post Judge Advocate - Jim “Skippy” Cooper** has radio broadcast experience, and got to know Bennie as well, sharing their history. As the relationship develops, there may be opportunity for collaboration in the future. “Stay tuned”



VIETNAM VET RADIO

**8181 S 4230 RD
Chelsea, OK 74016**

**Contact: Bennie P. Blount
SFC, US Army, Retired
Chu Lai 1969, Long Binh 1970, Vung Tau 1971-72**

Give Vets Hope

Our GIVE VETS HOPE group continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, at 5:30PM, at VFW Post 3404, 1136 E. Atlantic. Our next meetings will be July 12th and July 26th. If you can, please let me know if you are coming so the Pizza order is close to being correct !!



Everything is free, and we offer this opportunity not just for veterans, but for anyone that offers them support. Spouses, sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, and support animals are wel-

come. We are inclusive, but don't offer child care. Sorry.

If you would like for information about the GIVE VETS HOPE group, please contact me at: dauidsuits25@gmail.com, or call and leave a message for me at 417-773-1837. Our Facebook page is [givevetshope/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/givevetshope/). From this page, you can access our website and learn more information.

Sincerely hope to see you there.

David Suits

VFW Post 3404

Flag Day, June 14th, The Ceremonial Detail from VFW Post 3404 Springfield performed a "Present Colors" ceremony, with a flag-folding demonstration explaining the folds, to the residents of The Bungalows Assisted Living community. Just one of the many ways The VFW promotes Americanism and demonstrates "Love of Country" to the citizens of this GREAT Nation we're blessed to call "home" ...



REMEMBER



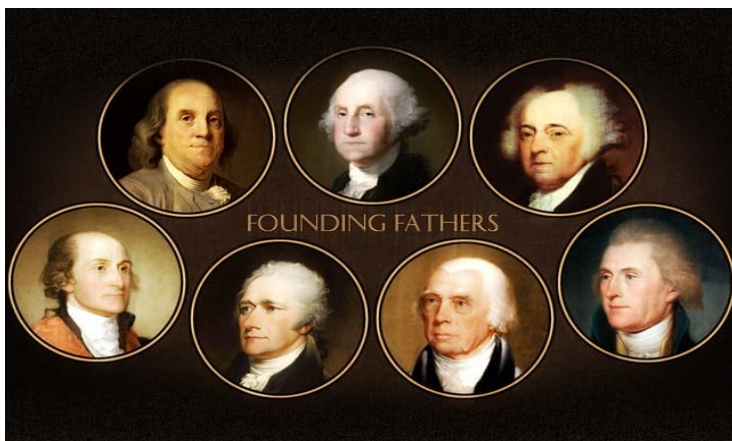
REMEMBER



Above, 80th Battle of Midway Ceremony, June 7th
Below, Welcome Home to Ed Fox from Hawaii, June 10th



Interesting Facts about the Founding Fathers / Declaration of Independence



George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Benjamin Franklin (Considered the 7 key founders).



John Hancock - his signature on the Declaration of Independence is said to have been intentionally the most prominent of any. His purpose, according to an anecdote of the time, was as follows:

*"It will be remembered that a reward of £500 was offered for the head of John Hancock. When he signed the Declaration of Independence, he did it with a bold hand, in a conspicuous manner, and rose from his seat, pointing to it, and exclaimed, **there, John Bull can read my name without spectacles, he may double his reward, and I put him at defiance.**"*

John Bull is an imaginary figure who is a personification of England, similar to the American 'Uncle Sam'. He is shown in cartoons and caricatures as a prosperous farmer of the 18th century, and was frequently depicted during the Revolutionary War.



Other anecdotes use King George III as Hancock's reference vs. John Bull.

Benjamin Franklin - one of a number of Founding Fathers who were skeptical that future generations could maintain what they started. When Benjamin Franklin was asked after signing the Constitution if they had created a monarchy or a republic, Franklin replied: *"A republic, if you can keep it."*

Franklin was also known for his famous quote *"We must all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately."*

George Washington, as well, was unsure whether it would have any lasting impact. Walking with a friend just before the convention came to a close in 1787, he said, *"I do not expect the Constitution to last for more than 20 years."*

Thomas Jefferson / John Adams - Thomas Jefferson at eighty-three years of age felt that he would not live through the summer of 1826, but he hoped to live through July 4th (the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence). Both he and John Adams died on July 4, 1826 after long and distinguished careers. They had earlier been friends, then political enemies, and by the end of their lives had maintained a steady correspondence. Adams' last words were "Thomas Jefferson still survives" not knowing that Jefferson had expired earlier that day in Virginia. Jefferson's last words were: *"Is it the Fourth? I resign my spirit to God, my daughter, and my country."*

John Adams - was the attorney that took the case to defend the British troops accused of murder during the Boston Massacre. As a result of the case he presented, they were acquitted. The United States Marine Band was established by an Act of Congress signed by President John Adams on July 11, 1798. The original "32 drummers and fifers" assisted in recruiting Marines and entertained residents. Adams was the first President to live in the White House when he came to Washington, D.C. in November of 1800. However, he was only there for four months after losing the election of 1800 to Thomas Jefferson.

George Washington - Once Gouverneur Morris was offered a bet of one dinner if he would approach George Washington, slap him on the back and give him a friendly greeting. He wanted to show people how "close" he was to the "chief." Morris carried out the bet, but later admitted that after seeing the cold stare from Washington, he wouldn't do it again for a thousand dinners!

Thomas Jefferson has been described as a(n): agriculturalist, anthropologist, architect, astronomer, bibliophile, botanist, classicist, diplomat, educator, ethnologist, farmer, geographer, gourmet, horseman, horticulturist, inventor, lawyer, lexicographer, linguist, mathematician, meteorologist, musician, naturalist, numismatist, paleontologist, philosopher, political philosopher, scientist, statesman, violinist, writer. He was also fluent in Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, and German!

James Madison - of Virginia, responsible for proposing the resolution to create the various Cabinet positions within the Executive Branch of our government and twelve amendments to the Constitution of which ten became the Bill of Rights. He also proposed that congressional pay would be determined by the average price of wheat during the previous six years of a congressional session.

James Madison, quote - *"The Constitution preserves the advantage of being armed which Americans possess over the people of almost every other nation where the governments are afraid to trust the people with arms."*

History in July

July 1, 1863 - Beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg during the American Civil War.

July 2, 1776 - The Continental Congress in Philadelphia adopted the following resolution, originally introduced on June 7, by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia: "Resolved, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved. That it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances. That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation."

July 2, 1788 - Congress announced the United States Constitution had been ratified by the required nine states and that a committee had been appointed to make preparations for the new American government.

July 3, 1775 - During the American Revolution, George Washington took command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

July 4, 1776 - The Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress.

July 5, 1775 - The Continental Congress adopted the Olive Branch Petition expressing hope for a reconciliation with Britain. However, King George III refused even to look at the petition and instead issued a proclamation declaring the colonists to be in a state of open rebellion.

July 5, 1801 - Civil War Admiral David Farragut was born near Knoxville, Tennessee. He is best remembered for his yelling "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" during an attack on his fleet by the Confederates.

July 6, 1747 - Revolutionary War Naval Officer John Paul Jones was born in Kirkbean, Scotland. He is best remembered for responding "I have not yet begun to fight!" to British opponents seeking his surrender during a naval battle.

July 8, 1776 - The first public reading of the Declaration of Independence occurred as Colonel John Nixon read it to an assembled crowd in Philadelphia

July 16, 1969 - The Apollo 11 Lunar landing mission began with a liftoff from Kennedy Space Center at 9:37 a.m.

July 26, 1945 - The U.S. Cruiser Indianapolis arrived at Tinian Island in the Marianas with an unassembled Atomic bomb, met by scientists ready to complete the assembly.

July 27, 1953 - The Korean War ended with the signing of an armistice by U.S. and North Korean delegates at Panmunjom, Korea. The war had lasted just over three years.

Need a little "mid-month" boost? Need some extra "attitude"? How 'bout a Dinner & Show at Post 639. Get your "Swagger" on with a "Swagger Monday". Swagger Little Big Band on the Shockley Stage, Monday July 11th.

\$10 Dinner Tickets available at the LZ639 Bar starting Monday, 6/27/22

5:30PM - 6:45PM - Dinner provided by

Post 639 Legion Riders and Auxiliary

Menu - Smoked Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Rolls, Dessert

7PM - 8:30PM - Swagger on Stage

Swagger

Little Big Band

From the Bar/Galley ...

Meet Jessica Douty !!

Our new Chef !!

Jessica Douty. She started cooking for us the first part of June, and has made quite an impression already.



WELCOME JESSICA !!

Happy Hour at LZ639 :

12PM-2PM, Monday thru Saturday (.50 off)

6PM-8PM, 7 days a week (.50 off)

Saturday Breakfast is BACK !!!!

Reminder: In June we started up Saturday Breakfast again. All you can eat for only \$8.

Breakfast is the first calendar Saturday of each month. Breakfast 8AM-10AM.

Remember there are people who give up their Saturdays to provide this benefit to you so please support them by joining them and eat up their efforts, while benefiting Post 639 at the same time. Eat what you take ... don't waste.

Your 6AM Support Team

Food Trucks on-site at Post 639 for July ...

Doggy Style Food Truck, on site Friday, July 15th. Doggie Style never goes out of fashion. Come try a wiener like you've never had before. Jeremy and crew can fix one up any way you like it. From mild to wild..





Independence Day - July 4th



National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day

July 27th



Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary

July 29th

BIKE NITE @LZ639
APRIL 20. MAY 4 &
18. JUNE 1, 15 & 29.
JULY 13 & 27.
AUGUST 10 & 24.
SEPT 7 & 21.

For the Good of the Legion ..

American Legion Indy Car

In an alliance with Chip Ganassi Racing and the Indy Car Series, Jimmie Johnson raced the 48 Car on a road trip course, including oval and other obstacles, from St Petersburg FL to Portland OR in a timeframe from May to September.



The Indy Car opened up a great opportunity for the American Legion to address its' major concern, that being, a high rate of veterans returning from deployment and committing suicide.

Team owner Chip Ganassi is said to have made history, saying quote "They are going to say the racing idea started at the Indianapolis Race and Speedway on Memorial Day weekend, and we can use the racing idea to win for the American people and use it to have an avenue that will lead us into a system that will help with the rising number of veterans committing suicide".

If that comes true, then the time, effort, money and labor involved in the 48 Indy Car will have been worth it. The owners, drivers, suppliers, and engineers working together to achieve the victory that they enjoy, was done in a 6-month timeframe that included the months of April to September. They appeared in several locations and too part in several kinds of events.

American Legion Past National Commander David K. Rehbein said "If we can really make that connection with the suicide prevention program in this country, we can do a lot of great things ... therefore I think this investment is a great program to be involved in, AND the American Legion will be racing over the country for Veterans".

Charlie Weaver (Budroe)

Post 639 Schedule of Events

July 2022

- July 2 Saturday - Breakfast 8AM - 10AM
- July 4 Monday - Independence Day
- July 5 Tuesday - Post 639/Aux Gen Meeting, 7PM
- July 6 Wednesday - Queen of Hearts / 50-50, 6-8PM
CIGAR NIGHT
- July 9 Saturday - Sub Vets Meeting 11AM
- July 11 Monday - Dinner/Show, Swagger on Shockley
Stage Dinner 5:30PM-6:45PM, Music
7:00PM-8:30PM
- July 12 Tuesday - Korean War Vets Meeting, 1PM
- Give Vets Hope, VFW 3404 5:30PM
- July 13 Wednesday - Queen of Hearts / 50-50, 6-7:30PM
BIKE NIGHT
- July 14 Thursday - Marine Corps League Mtg, VFW 3404
6PM Food/Fellowship,
7PM Meeting VFW 3404
- July 15 Friday - VFW 3404 Fish Fry 5:30—7PM
- July 17 Sunday - Legion Riders Meeting, 6:00PM
- July 19 Tuesday - Auxiliary E-Board Meeting. 7PM
- July 20 Wednesday - Queen of Hearts/50-50, 6-7:30PM
- July 25 Monday - E-Board Meeting 6:30PM
- July 26 Tuesday - Give Vets Hope, VFW 3404 5:30PM
- SAL Meeting,, 7PM
- July 27 Wednesday - Queen of Hearts / 50-50, 6-10PM
BIKE NIGHT
- Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
- July 28 Thursday - Fleet Reserve Assoc. Meeting, 6PM
- Newsletter Content Due
- July 29 Friday - Army Chaplains Corps Birthday



Cigar Night @LZ639

Apr 13

May 11

June 8

July 6

Aug 17

Sep 14



“Just for Him” will be onsite for you to purchase and try a nice cigar. Live music scheduled, food/drink available.

★ BIKE NIGHT ★



@LZ639
EVERY OTHER
WEDNESDAY
6:30 - 10



QUEEN OF HEARTS
CARD DRAW
EVERY WEDNESDAY

FOOD
MUSIC
50/50 & COOL PRIZE RAFFLES



APRIL 20,
MAY 4 & 18,
JUNE 1, 15 & 28,
JULY 13 & 27,
AUGUST 10 & 24
SEPTEMBER 7 & 21

**2660 S SCENIC,
SPRINGFIELD, MO**



Celebration for Joseph Doyle



Joseph Doyle, WWII veteran, age 100, passed away on June 25th. A number of Post 639 veterans attended Joe's 100th birthday party to honor him at Elfindale just several weeks earlier on June 4th.

Joe was born in 1922 in Champaign County, IL. He served in the Army from February 1943 until April 1946 as a Combat Infantryman. He was part of three European Campaigns, in-

cluding the Battle of the Bulge.

Thank you for your service, Joe, We at Post 639 are honored to have known you !!!!!!!!

Volunteer Opportunities at the Legion

As always, we have several volunteer opportunities for members and non-members. Currently, we are in need of someone with excellent administrative skills and the ability to see a task through to completion. This could mostly be done at home, but it will take some familiarization with how the business here operates.

As our buildings age, maintenance has become a growing concern. If you have any skills in any of the trades, or if you are a "Jack of ALL Trades", we could use your help. There are several projects pending.

At this time, we're always looking for those with cooking skills. Special events, cooking lunch on those days when we need a sub to fill in, etc. If you want to show off your culinary skills to the membership, please contact the Post and we'll get you set up.

If you're interested, please call 882-8639, or drop by. We'll contact you and match you up with an opportunity. **Volunteers are what allow Post 639 to function. YOU ARE NEEDED. Come work and fellowship with us !!!**



OZARKS TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Joshua Boley

*Outreach Coordinator
Veterans Upward Bound*

1001 East Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, Missouri 65802
www.otc.edu/vub

Office 417-447-7840
Fax 417-447-6925
boleyj@otc.edu

Post 639 Lunch Menu 11AM-2PM, M-F

Burgers. Served with fries. Substitute Mushrooms or Onion Rings for \$1. Add bacon for \$1. Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Pickle on request.

- **Hamburger \$6**
- **Cheeseburger \$7**
- **BBQ Burger \$8.50**
- **Classic Cheeseburger with BBQ seasoning, and onion ring, and drizzled with BBQ sauce.**
- **Blue Burger \$8.50 - Classic hamburger with our special seasoning, topped with Bleu Cheese crumbles.**
- **Brunch Burger \$8.50 - Classic cheeseburger topped with a fried egg and bacon.**
- **The LZ639 \$8.50 - Classic cheeseburger with a garlic parmesan aioli and topped grilled onions.**

"Smashed Sandwiches" Served with fries. Substitute mushrooms or onion rings for \$1. Substitute chili or soup of the day for \$1.50.

- **Grilled Cheese \$6**
- **Hot Ham and Cheese \$6**
- **Reuben \$7**
- **BLT \$6**
- **Pepperoni Pizza \$7 - Toasted sandwich stuffed with Marinara, fresh-sliced Mozzarella and Pepperoni.**

Upgraded Classics. Served with fries. Substitute mushrooms or onion rings for \$1. Substitute chili or soup of the day for \$1.50

- **Pork Tenderloin Sandwich \$6**
- **Grilled Chicken Sandwich \$6 - Topped with Swiss cheese and bacon.**
- **Garlic Parmesan Chicken Sandwich \$6 - Topped with Garlic Parmesan Aioli and bacon.**

Soup \$3.50

- ***Only one soup offered per day. Ask the Bartender for the soup of the day***

Chili \$3.50

- **Homemade by the Commander himself !!**

Soft Drinks \$2

Sprite/Diet Sprite Coke/Diet Coke Dr Pepper/Diet Dr Pepper
Unsweetened Tea Coffee

Money raised by the sale of Legion, ALR and Auxiliary merchandise is then used in their Veteran support activities. You are contributing directly when you purchase an item. Pay right at the bar !!

American Legion	Price
American Legion Hats	\$15.00
American Legion License Plate (Plain)	\$10.00
American Legion License Plate	\$15.00
Vietnam Memorial Wall Coin	\$10.00
Vietnam Memorial Wall T-Shirt	\$15.00
Ride For Life T-Shirt	\$20.00
Christmas Par Tee	\$15.00
RV Space Rental (Non-Veteran)	\$20.00
RV Space Rental (Veteran)	\$10.00
Legion Hall Rental	Variable
Legion Grounds Rental	Variable

American Legion Riders	Price
ALR Auto License Plate	\$9.00
ALR Auto Plate	\$11.00
ALR Belt Buckle	\$30.00
ALR Chapter Tapes	\$2.00
ALR Decal 3"	\$3.50
ALR Decal 6"	\$7.00
ALR Decal 12"	\$8.00
ALR Do-rag (Cotton)	\$13.00
ALR Do-rag Logo (Poly/Cotton)	\$13.00
ALR Do-rag (Navy or POW, Poly/Cotton)	\$13.00
ALR Hats	\$20.00
ALR Key Tag	\$3.00
ALR Motorcycle License Plate Frame	\$8.00
ALR Patch (Back - Large)	\$47.00
ALR Patch - Medium	\$10.00
ALR Patch - Mini	\$4.00
ALR Pin	\$4.00
ALR Support Our Troops Patch	\$3.00
ALR Sweat Shirt	\$29.00
ALR Hoodie	\$28.00
ALR T-Shirt (Long Sleeve)	\$20.00
ALR T-Shirt (Short Sleeve)	\$19.00
ALR Windshield Decal	\$16.00
ALR Zippo Lighter	\$23.00

Auxiliary	Price
Auxiliary Cook Books	\$1.00
Auxiliary Hats	\$20.00
Auxiliary Koozies	\$1.00
Auxiliary Patches (Large)	\$8.00
Auxiliary Patches (Small)	\$5.00
Auxiliary Pins	\$6.00
Auxiliary Necklaces	\$10.00
Auxiliary Bracelets	\$5.00



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Lindsey (Wommack) Laird

(417) 869-8336 • 1 (800) 346-9875

Email: springfield@wommackmonuments.com

1524 W. Walnut @ Kansas Expwy • Springfield, MO 65809



JULY 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 LUNCH 11-2	2 BREAKFAST 8 - 10AM
3	4 LUNCH 11-2 JULY 4 TH INDEPENDENCE DAY	5 LUNCH 11-2 POST 639/AUX GEN MEETING 7PM	6 LUNCH 11-2 CIGAR NIGHT QUEEN OF HEARTS 6 - 8 PM	7 LUNCH 11-2	8 LUNCH 11-2	9 SUB VETS 11 AM
10	11 LUNCH 11-2 DINNER 5:30 - 6:45 SWAGGER 7 - 8:30	12 LUNCH 11-2 KOREAN WAR VETS MEETING 1PM GIVE VETS HOPE MEETING VFW 3404 5:30PM	13 LUNCH 11-2 BIKE NIGHT QUEEN OF HEARTS 6 - 10 PM	14 LUNCH 11-2 MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MTG VFW 3404 7PM	15 LUNCH 11-2 VFW 3404 FISH FRY 5:30 - 7 PM	16
17 ALR MTG 6PM	18 LUNCH 11-2	19 LUNCH 11-2 AUX E-BOARD MTG 7PM SAL MTG 7PM	20 LUNCH 11-2 QUEEN OF HEARTS 6 - 8 PM	21 LUNCH 11-2	22 LUNCH 11-2	23
24	25 LUNCH 11-2 E-BOARD MTG 6:30PM	26 LUNCH 11-2 SAL MTG 7PM GIVE VETS HOPE MEETING VFW 3404 5:30PM	27 LUNCH 11-2 BIKE NIGHT QUEEN OF HEARTS 6 - 10 PM	28 LUNCH 11-2 FLEET RESERVE ASSOC. 6PM NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE	29 LUNCH 11-2 Army Chaplain Corps 1775	30
31						

Ongoing Suicide Prevention

EVERY month is Suicide Prevention month. Always be vigilant for your brothers/sisters that might need help.

Some signs of concerning behavior include:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there is no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family and friends

If you notice any signs of concerning behavior here are some things you can do:

- **Start a conversation:** Mention the signs that prompted you to talk to them. Stay calm and let the person know you want to help them. Don't leave the person alone.
- **Listen, express concern and reassure the individual:** Let the person know you care and that you take the situation seriously. Letting the person know you care will go a long way in establishing a support system.
- **Create a safety plan:** Ask the person if they have access to anything that could harm them and call for help if you feel the situation is dangerous.
- **Get the individual help:** Provide resources for the individual. **Call the Veteran's crisis line at 1(800)-273-8255.** Or if you feel the situation is severe, take the individual to the closest emergency room or call for help.



Average Weather in July for Springfield

Daily high temperatures *increase* by 2°F, from 86°F to 89°F, rarely falling below 80°F or exceeding 97°F. The highest daily average high temperature is 89°F on July 27.

Daily low temperatures are around 68°F, rarely falling below 61°F or exceeding 75°F. The highest daily average low temperature is 69°F on July 22.

Over the course of July in Springfield, the length of the day is *decreasing*. From the start to the end of the month, the length of the day decreases by 36 minutes, implying an average daily decrease of 1 minute, 13 seconds, and weekly decrease of 8 minutes, 31 seconds.

The shortest day of the month is July 31, with 14 hours, 4 minutes of daylight and the longest day is July 1, with 14 hours, 41 minutes of daylight.



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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 Mia or one of the bartenders for additional information and to order.

The History of Vietnam War Memorial American Legion Post 639



What follows is the next in a series of articles that tell the story of American Legion Post 639, Vietnam War Memorial, told through the experiences of the original founders. Their experiences as Vietnam veterans form the basis of who we are today. Gary Harlan, Ron Snyder, Gary Turner, Art Stout, and Mike Chandler share their stories in the coming months. **First up - Gary Harlan, Charter Member, Commander 1983 - 1985.** Gary's essay that follows was written in 1993

Last month (June issue) -

III. IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS CHAOS

IV. THE PIG ROAST CONTROVERSY

V. THE VET'S HOTLINE: A MEMORIAL TO LINDEN

VI. THE OZARKS VETS CENTER

Allow me to press the fast forward button for a moment, taking a look at the post's participation in Springfield's annual Veterans' Day parade. It has been the same routine for years: prior to the parade, we provide coffee and doughnuts for our guests, veterans brought down from the Veterans Home at Mt. Vernon. Then it comes time to board the trolley on wheels that we rent for the occasion, with some of the members walking in front of the trolley during the parade, and some inside, with our guests from Mt. Vernon. After the parade, we serve our guests lunch, then ourselves, and then it comes time to say good—bye until next year.

It wasn't quite like that during our first appearance in the parade, back in November 1981. Bill Montgomery, a charter member of the Post, whose family owned Montgomery GMC, loaned us the use of a small truck. I drove, and Gary Turner sat in the passenger seat. Sitting in the back were Jimmy Wood, my Doberman, Sadie, and a new member, John Baca.

John had come to Springfield in order to attend one of our bible

colleges. When he read about our fundraiser and membership drive in early November, inspired by Linden Stearns, he decided to cancel his previous plan of attending the annual gathering of Medal of Honor recipients, which was taking place in Honolulu the same weekend as our function.

Someone can tell you that he has the Silver Star, and you have no way of knowing whether or not he's telling the truth. But not so with the Congressional Medal of Honor. When John Baca came to our table at the Northtown Mall, introducing himself as a Medal of Honor recipient, it only took one of us a drive to the public library to get the Medal of Honor directory, from the Civil War through Vietnam, look up his name, to confirm the truth of his claim. That afternoon, John spoke to the assembled crowd on our behalf.

He earned the Medal of Honor in 1970, serving on a recoilless rifle team. According to the official citation, Specialist Fourth Class Baca was on a night ambush mission when his team came under intense enemy fire. The citation contains the following account:

"Baca led his team through the hail of enemy fire to a firing position within the patrol's defensive perimeter. As they prepared to engage the enemy, a fragmentation grenade was thrown in the midst of the patrol. Fully aware of the danger to his comrades, SPc4 Baca unhesitatingly, and with complete disregard for his own safety, covered the grenade with his steel helmet and fell on it as the grenade exploded, thereby absorbing the lethal fragments and concussion with his body. His gallant action and total disregard for his personal well-being directly saved 8 men from certain injury or death."

When Baca took the microphone that day, we did not hear a John Wayne speech. We heard the gentle words of a real hero. He shared with us the memory of the moment the grenade exploded.

"Everything got real still, and very peaceful, he said, and he added that an image of his mother and sister flashed through his mind. "After that," he continued, I felt this spiritual presence around me. I got the impression that he had spent his life reflecting on the meaning of that moment.

Having worked as a VA counselor in his native California, John appreciated our efforts to establish a Vets Center, and he was among the original Hotline volunteers. He also represented the post in Washington at the dedication of the Wall.

Our goal was met on March 15, 1982, when the doors of the Ozarks Vets Center were opened. The late C. Arch Bay donated the 1,500 square feet of office space in what was an ideal location for our storefront operation.

The demand for the combat vets' group was so great that two groups were needed. In addition, groups were set up for couples, one for spouses and girlfriends, and a kids' group. John Hagler expanded the Hotline services to include a crisis inter-

vention team, that worked with law enforcement officers on several occasions. One such incident involved a Vietnam vet who, while holing himself up in a church in Springfield, fired a couple of rounds with a handgun through the ceiling. Two of the six members of the intervention team arrived and persuaded the man to surrender the weapon.

Shortly after the opening of the Center, we were successful in securing a grant from the state with which to operate a job assistance program for Vietnam vets. We held job fairs, where employers were matched with potential employees. We maintained the focus on small business assistance through establishing a working relationship with the Small Business Development Center at Southwest Missouri State University.

Having mentioned earlier the negative stereotype of the Vietnam veteran perpetuated by the media, it is only fair to point out that during the years we operated the Vets Center, we received excellent coverage from all of the local media. For instance, in the fall of 1982, KY3's Joyce Reed produced a five-part report on what we were doing. It was a good report.

The individual who stuck out most prominently in the local media in terms of his support for our efforts as early as 1980 was Mr. Frank Farmer, who is now retired from the Springfield Leader. Frank was in charge of the editorial page, and though he did not personally serve in the military, he always went out of his way to provide support for our effort. The week that we received our American Legion charter in May of 1981, Frank wrote an editorial with the heading, "Self—Help is the best kind." The first paragraph read:

"Vietnam War veterans of the Springfield area have grown tired of waiting for someone to fight the battle and have formed their own post of the American Legion."

Ten months after that editorial, we had a full-service outreach center, the only one of its kind in the United States. No, we were not among the over one hundred cities to have a government-funded outreach center. That's probably what made our effort unique. It made it more creative, because we never had any delusions about being experts. We knew that our self-help program was an open-ended experiment.

Working at the DAV Outreach Center in Denver, Dr. Jim Goodwyn, a psychiatrist, and himself a combat Marine in Vietnam, observed that the veterans who participated in the groups were "individuals who are very cautious and conceal themselves, their thoughts, and their emotions from others, even significant others." It's not surprising, given this profile, that the combat vets groups were going strong everywhere. What made our program special was that we also offered a Mixed Group, open to men and women.

Though we did not have a certified therapist in charge, no one would have denied the therapeutic effects of that group.

Wives frequently commented that after one session, they knew more about the war, and its effects on their husbands, than they

knew during the whole time they had been married. That isn't at all surprising, considering that at the time it was estimated that 80% of returning Vietnam veterans had never discussed their combat experience with anyone.

We did not have to be psychologists to know that veterans who lived with a sense of alienation, bitterness, and emotional isolation were not unlikely to live out these symptoms, and we knew that those receiving the brunt of it were those closest to them, their families. Even if we had not known that to be the case, the calls for help that we received on the Vets Hot line would be enough to educate us.

That was the motivation for our setting up a counseling program for the whole family. In addition to the mixed group, we had two kids' groups operating - for teens, and the other for pre-teens. John Hagler facilitated those groups.

"Being an adolescent, Hagler said at the time, "produces a lot of turmoil in itself, due to the changes they are going through. This makes them especially vulnerable to the delayed stress reaction experienced by their fathers. And so, the turmoil that is there already becomes intensified."

One teenager I remember, named Larry, knew nothing about his father's combat experience, despite the fact that the man was a highly decorated two-tour combat vet. He told me that he came to the group to get a better idea of where his father was coming from, so that they could get closer. After a few sessions, however, the focus was less on the war, and more on the problems faced by the participants. Larry told me that he learned a lot about himself and others through the group.

The teen group promoted individual responsibility. It was an environment in which they could openly discuss issues relevant in their lives, such as substance abuse and sex role confusion. It also encouraged them to be supportive of one another. At one time, a member of the teen group had been caught shoplifting. In the midst of much personal anxiety over the incident, facing an explosive-type father at home, this individual had a place to go where the incident was discussed in a rational and responsible manner.

Our Vets Center experiment lasted over three years. It did not end suddenly nor completely. Every service that was offered was assimilated into existing agencies. The groups were taken over by Ozarks Psychological Associates, and they continue to the present day. The job program is still going as well, now run by Job Council of the Ozarks.

The last staff of the Vets Center was Gary Harlan, John Bross, and Linda Baker. John was a substance abuse counselor, by my job was taking drunk vets to Sigma House, a treatment house. When the police picked up a vet, he called me to take them to Sigma House, that is, if they were just drunk and didn't commit a crime. I kept a barf bucket in my truck.

VII. BINGO !

Psychologist Arthur Egendorf, whose study "Legacies of Vietnam" was the most extensive research done on the subject, wrote that ten to fifteen percent of the veterans who saw extreme combat in Vietnam fell into the chronic category - psychotics, drug addicts, incurable alcoholics. Another fifteen to twenty percent were in serious trouble but could be salvaged.

That was the category Bob Allen fell into when he joined the effort in 1981 - he was salvaging his life. Though he was a combat engineer, his own experience illustrates the overall frustrations of the fighting man in Vietnam.

Close to Bob's base camp, in the nearby village, there was an orphanage. Soldiers at the base camp made sure that the orphanage received surplus food - and they saw to it that there was surplus food. The practice stopped, following a heavy fire-fight one night, when the base camp was nearly over-run. The enemy was not successful, but he paid a visit to the orphanage on his way out. When the Americans looked in on the orphanage the following morning, they found all the children shot to death and the nuns who ran it, hung.

"They didn't like them accepting food from us", Bob recalled.

Bob was among the most committed members of the post during our self-era. He participated in the groups, was a Hotline volunteer, and then put together a plan to finance the program. Actually, it came about as a result of his wife's insistence. Marcia Allen, who was also a Hotline volunteer, was a bingo player, and she didn't stop reminding us that we needed to operate a bingo game until her husband took the necessary steps to do just that.

The Goad-Ballinger Post 69, the American Legion Post One veterans, rented their hall to us bingo game. Our weekly bingo game commenced in March 1983.

After a year, the Vets Center got its own bingo license. Tony Grogan, a two-tour combat Marine, was in charge of the operation. Under the leadership of Bob Allen, who was elected Commander in 1984, the post made the transition to our next era, the goal of having our own home. We established a building fund.

We did not, however, get serious about the building fund right away. It was not that we were spending the bingo proceeds on ourselves, either. Far from it. We threw a total of one party the first three years of our existence. But we were very generous with our donations. We knew what it meant to have no money, so we tended to be receptive to any worthy cause or person who turned to us for help. The Humane Society, the Glendale High Band, the Hillcrest High baseball team, the Parkview High Track and Field squad, and a good many other organizations and individual veterans in need were recipients of our donations. We also established two scholarship funds the first year of our bingo operation.

Until just recently, Burl McCullough, who served with the Marine Air Wing in Vietnam, was responsible for handling all the

donations. From the initial point in the process, which was receiving the request for a donation, to presenting it to the executive committee, and finally to the membership at a general meeting, Burl was consistently conscientious in carrying out his job as Donations chairman. For years he was responsible for putting together and distributing twenty-five Christmas packages to the families of veterans in need.

We have done more than just sit back and approve motions for donations. Our bingo workers have volunteered for a number of extra bingo games benefiting different causes. During the holidays in 1983 we made our first visit to the Mt. Vernon Veterans Home. We brought a portable bingo machine with cards for everyone. We gave out cash prizes, and made sure that each veteran won a game. We also carried in cases of Budweiser, which raised a few eyebrows amongst the staff, but was well received by the residents. It was a couple of years later that we started our annual practice of renting the trolley, taking them with us on the parade route, then having lunch afterwards.

The nucleus of the bingo committee has been the same for ten years. In addition to Bob Allen, Bud Darby has been there from the start. Danny Melton, who served in the Army in Vietnam, and is presently serving as our commander, has called bingo numbers for a decade. John Bross, an Army combatant in Vietnam, has always been there, as well as Tom Gammon, who served in the Marines. Jerry Orr, who served in the Army in Vietnam has worked Bingo for eight years, as has Mike Chandler, who served in the Army at the close of the war. Phil Richardson, a retired Marine who served in Vietnam, rarely excuses himself from Bingo. Rodney Miller, a soldier in Vietnam, has been a regular, as has Scott Ousely, who manned a .50 caliber machine gun on board a river boat in Vietnam. Larry Lazrus has joined the bingo committee the past year.

For the past eight years, we have rented the bingo hall from Planned Parenthood. However, that is about to change, since our plans for the property include building a bingo hall of our own.

VIII. Jean and Walter

In addition to our annual get-together with the Mt. Vernon veterans, Jean and Walter Swope, at their own expense, made monthly visits to the Veterans Home. They operated a bingo game, but mostly just helped out, visited with the veterans, and kept the post informed of what they needed.

Jean was perfectly suited for the assignment. She had been a nurse during World War Two. She was serving as post adjutant at the Goad-Ballinger post when we met Jean. It wasn't long before she decided that she would rather join in our effort than remain with her old post. That meant that her husband Walter would have to transfer his membership as well. Once he got to know us, Walter felt the same way about it as Jean. They have worked steadily at our weekly bingo game from the time they came on board.

None of us was really acquainted with Walter before Jean de-

cided to join us. It didn't take long to discover what an honor it was to have a man like Walter Swope on our team. As I mentioned earlier, the Post was formed on the basis of a will to survive. Walt could write a book on that subject. He did, in fact, keep a diary. A copy is on hand at the Post, and I highly recommend you read it. Staff Sergeant Walter Swope wrote his first entry in the diary on November 28, 1941, just over a week prior to the Pearl Harbor attack:

"About 8:45 PM Captain Steige led First Sergeant Wagner and myself into his office. We seem to be almost in a state of war with Japan. We are to move to our gun position early tomorrow morning. "

Though Walt's outfit was informed of the bombing at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 8, he was aware of the possibility shortly after his arrival on the Philippine Islands in 1940. Just as Walter arrived, the Major General who commanded the unit was leaving. Upon his departure he informed the men that the Japanese were building up their army and navy, and he predicted that they would be at war with them within two years. He even told them that they didn't have a chance against the invading Japanese.

Walt was stationed at Corregidor. In the weeks that followed Pearl Harbor, his diary records numerous air raids close to his location. But it was not until the 29th of December that the bombs hit Corregidor.

Monday—December 29, 1941.

"Air raid 11:50 AM. Today Corregidor got its first bombing, it lasted till about 3 PM. About 160 planes bombed us. I never heard such a horrible noise, it scared me silly. Our battery got several hits. One on my gun. Not much damage though. Two bombs hit just outside the bomb proof on the road. The first blew in the steel doors and windows, the second threw shrapnel and fire into the room where I was. Boy! I thought my moment had come. The explosive in the bombs sure smell acrid and it is mixed with burned green timber. Our communications and water were cut. Battery Cheney got credit for 2 dive bombers with our two 30 cal. machine guns. "

The entry for April 9, 1942 reads: "Bataan fell. We will be next now. " He was right - bombing and shelling of Corregidor commenced the next day, April 10th, and lasted continually through May 6th, the day that Corregidor fell. It was the beginning of Walt's three-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war.

After months of being marched on foot, transported by train and then by transport ship, Walter ended up in a concentration camp in northern Japan, where the winters got very cold. Throughout the ordeal, Walt suffered from malaria, beri-beri, dysentery, yellow jaundice, and influenza.

"Death is around us all the time. It has been a long time. No one seems to care about anyone else. The struggle to live is every man's own responsibility. A man can die next to you and lay there all night, cold and stiff, and you think nothing about it.

You have to become callous to keep sane. I doubt if we are sane after this anyway."

The entry for November 10, 1943 reads: "I am on quarters with beri-beri yet. I (the swelling) went down but am coming up again. I won't get rid of it till I get back on American food again. I hope God it's not too far off. My system is so starved I can hardly sleep thinking of good food. Almost every day there is 1 or 2 deaths, mostly from beri-beri and malnutrition. "

When you read the diary, it is abundantly clear that the thought of good old American chow kept Walter going.

December 15, 1943: "It is getting close to Xmas. God how I wish I could get out of this mess and get home to eat some of mom's cooking. I am hungry all the time, and can't hardly sleep thinking of chow. "

Christmas didn't bring any good cheer:

Saturday - December 25, 1943: "Today is Christmas. We moved to a new camp yesterday. It is very cold and disagreeable. The camp is not finished at all, most of the buildings have no windows or doors in them. No stoves of course. We will have a very bad day I am sure. "

No sooner had the New Year rolled around when a new tragedy occurred:

Sunday - January 2, 1944: "A new year is here and it sure started off with a bang at this camp. Building No. 1 fell in and killed 8 men, 4 more died last night and this morning."

The Christmas of 1944 offered a momentary improvement in conditions:

Monday, December 25, 1944: "Today is the 3rd Christmas in prison and I believe the best. We have good quarters with three stoves. Christmas Eve we received 1 Red Cross box each. I received a black jacket too. Everyone seems to be in excellent spirits. Home the next one I am at home.

His wish would come true. Beginning in early July, 1945, Walt's diary contains numerous entries involving our planes bombing the area surrounding the camp. To illustrate how hot it was, here is the entry for August 12th: "About 50 dive bombers raided this town day before yesterday. Four of them were shot down but they bombed 4 ships and an oil refinery. "

The entry for August 19, 1945 contains the joyful news: "This afternoon Commander Callahan announced that the war was officially over and the administration of the camp was in our hands."

The entry two days later demonstrates that Walter had not lost his sense of humor: "Last night a pig we had in camp was murdered by party or parties unknown. We will probably eat it tonight. The Japs didn't want it killed, but they have lost control.

Shortly after writing his last entry in the diary, which was October 2, 1945, Walter boarded a transport ship, and was home on Christmas day.

There is a diary entry that marks the difference between the experience of combat and that of the prisoner of war:

"It is hard to see someone you have known for a long time blown up by gun fire or maybe crippled for life, but it is a lot worse to see them waste away day by day and not be able to do a thing to help them. You can see a look of death come into their face and then you know it is all over except them dying. But a person gets used to death and after a while it seems to be the easier way out of the whole mess. I have too much money coming. I might die, but not till I spend all my back pay."

Despite that horrible experience, followed by combat duty in the Korean War, Walt Swope did maintain his sanity - and then some. He is a thoroughly caring individual who has never stopped serving his country.

"Corregidor"

Constantly pounded day and night,

On this fortress men did fight.

Rather than destroy them all,

Ruined Corregidor must fall.

Every man in his own way,

Gave his best fight that day.

In memory of those who died,

Defending this country's pride.

On war torn beaches bloody red,

Rugged soldiers still lay dead.

—Unknown

Gary Harlan's Interview - January 10, 2022

Resistance from the community (mentioned in John Bross's article) – attitude toward Vietnam veterans in general, political climate at the time (reference the later Pig Roast event). People were terrified of us. We had nothing to do with the organizing of the event, that was the guys from St. Louis that were going to have it in Springfield, at the Animal Reserve (or whatever it's called). First guy that volunteered the place for the event, Tad Jones, people persuaded Tad that it was a bad idea. And he withdrew at the last minute. St Louis group contacted us because we were local, said Hey, we need help finding a new location. Gary was the only one of the group willing to speak to the media. Put on a suit to look presentable, interviewed with KY3 who was responsible for getting the word out. Guy from Oldfield in Douglas County said "You can use my place". Immediately, land owners around the site got a lawyer to challenge it. We lost, so back to the drawing board. We went back on TV and

started making a new plea. Another guy from Green County, a veteran, said "You can have it at my place". People got a lawyer for that too. Had a day long hearing at the courthouse. Got approved, but the principle (St Louis rep) Gary Harlan and Gary Turner (First Commander) had to sign an agreement that they would be responsible and that they were liable if anything happened. People were freaked out, thought it would turn into a wild drunken brawl.

First Legion meetings were contentious, putting it mildly. We had no order. Substance abuse played a part in how people acted and communicated, in addition to everyone having their own opinions.

After we left Post 69, met at VFW 3404. Community resistance softened somewhat when 639 got our own building.

Ron Snyder had read 2 articles within a months' time in 1979 (Harlan's article in Springfield Magazine and a column in Penthouse Magazine (Col. Bill Corsten had a Vietnam Veterans Advisor column) that month about Vietnam veterans in business based in Washington, DC. Ron paid a visit to him and wanted to get a chapter going local. Gary Harlan wasn't aware of this until Ron contacted him in March of 1980 about an event Ron had put together here the previous month (February), and about all the Vietnam veterans that showed up. Most were not even businessmen, there was just a real hunger to be around other Vietnam veterans. In Spring of 1980, Gary and Ron attended a Soldier of Fortune convention in Columbia. And it was the same thing. Ton of Vietnam veterans. They weren't mercenaries or anything, they just wanted to be around other Vietnam veterans. Gary agreed to help Ron get the word out about his efforts. Didn't last long before Ron realized a more general organization was needed to address suicide, jobs, and of course PTSD. That's how the Veterans Center concept came about. Originally thought the American Legion would be a good platform. In hindsight, it wasn't. It would afford us the opportunity to do Bingo, but we could had done that with Vietnam Veterans of America. Gary met Bobby Moeller, he wanted us to be there. He didn't understand why we would go with the American Legion. Gary thought that himself. But, if it had just been VVA, we would never have had Walt Swope. (Japanese POW). Kept a diary.

Only time the baseball field was used that Gary remembers was that they supported a Little League team.

Many bonfires where the Pavilion is now.

KY3 and the Springfield papers gave us a lot of coverage and support during the early days.

Next month (August) 2022 - Ron Snyder's Interview, part 1

June 2022 FUNDRAISER

Legion Post 639

Next Raffle Prize:

Sig Sauer P365XL



April 2022 Winner - AR-9 9mm
Ron Jackson



Sig Sauer P365XL

200 tickets available at \$10 each

Drawing to be held after all tickets are sold

Firearm: Sig Sauer P365XL with night sights and 2 12-round magazines.

Optic: Holosun 507K



Winner must be at least 21 years old with a valid US government issued ID and complete a 4473 background check.

Donations of \$10 for each ticket. Only 200 tickets will be sold. The more tickets you purchase, the better your odds of winning. Raffle Winner will be notified by phone and Post 639 Newsletter.

Proceeds will be used to make upgrades to our property and make us more visible by installing a new digital sign to replace our outdated sign that is visible from South Scenic Ave.

Make check payable to American Legion Post 639, Springfield, Mo.

Or pay by Credit Card () Visa () Master Card

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: ____/____ V-Code: _____

You need not tear the page out of the News Letter magazine. You may copy the page and send tickets with your payment to: Vietnam War Memorial, American Legion Post 639, 2660 South Scenic Ave., Springfield, MO. 65807. Phone: (417) 882-8639.

You may also purchase tickets in person by contacting one of our friendly bartenders at Post 639.

Return with ticket and donation of \$10
Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Return with ticket and donation of \$10
Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____



Vietnam War Memorial
 American Legion Post 639
 2660 South Scenic Ave
 .Springfield, MO 65807
www.americanlegionpost639.org

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