

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

**JUNE 2023**





## Post 639 Commander



Wow, May was amazingly busy at Post 639 and June is looking to be even busier. Check the calendar and plan on enjoying our outdoor facilities. Also plan on being at General Meeting to vote for Post Officers on **June 6th at 1900**.

We have set a date later this fall for the new flooring installation. We will be closed for 2 weeks starting **October 14th thru the 28th..** We will need help on the 14 and 15th to move everything out of the Post. Get with Ron Jackson and let him know you'll help..

Thank you everyone who has allowed me to represent you as your Commander. I am on the ballot again for the upcoming year. Kim and I hope everyone has plans with family and friends for the Memorial Day weekend and please remember....

**Armed Forces Day (June 24th)**, is to honor those who currently put on the uniform...

**Veterans Day (November 11th)**, is to honor those who used to put on the uniform...

**Memorial Day (May 29th)**, is to honor those who were never able to take it off.

Let's all be sure to take the time and explain this to our kids and grandkids.

**Mike Goforth**

**Commander, Legion Post 639**



## 639 Chaplain



This time of the year we think and remember the loved ones that we have lost in death, and the family and friends that have touched our hearts and live though out the years. I myself have lost my wife of 34 years this past April and several friends this year so far.

I have noticed that the younger generation has drifted away from going the cemeteries these days unless their parents make them go and help decorate.

So, as life goes on for most, please remember the fallen and the ones that have gone before us.

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

**Rex Krasche**

**Post 639 Chaplain**



## Post 639 Adjutant



2023-2024 Post 639 Officer nominations commenced in April, with the following names placed during the General Meeting on May 2nd. In addition, Belinda Brown is now in nomination for Finance Officer. A final solicitation of nominations will be made before the election at the **General Meeting on June 6th**.

Officer	Nominee
Commander	Mike Goforth
1st Vice Commander	Mike Chandler
2nd Vice Commander	Adam Jamieson
Adjutant	Tom Newsom
Finance Officer	Frank Messley
Judge Advocate	Jim Cooper
Sergeant at Arms	Ron Jackson
Service Officer	Belinda Brown
Quartermaster	Barry Greene
Chaplain	Frank Grantham
Historian	Bob Kalwat
Member at Large	Bob Dale
Member at Large	Darrin Dobbs

**Remember, you will be required to present your 2023 Legion Membership card to participate in the Post election.**

**Tom Newsom**

**Post 639 Adjutant**



## Post 639 Quartermaster



Post 639 is selling our Netgear Orbi AC3000 RBR50v2 Wi-Fi Router w/satellite. 1 year old, works flawlessly. We have since upgraded to better serve the Post's needs. Specs are at:

<https://www.netgear.com/support/product/rbr50v2>

The post is asking \$50.00 for the router w/satellite. Any reasonable offer will be considered. Coverage is approx. 5,000 sq feet.

If interested, please contact Barry Greene at email address **QuarterMasterLZ639@gmail.com** or by phone at (703) **582-6499**.



## 639 Auxiliary President



Another month has come and gone and its easy to see why they escape us so swiftly. QOH's, Bike Nights, Dirty Dozen Bike

Show, ALA Unit 38 Fish Fry assist, Jell-O Shots, food service, ceremonies, meetings, Awareness rides and the energizer bunnies just keep going and going. If you can say there is nothing happening at Post 639, call me. I will help you get involved!

In May, we celebrated the life and memory of our beloved sister and past ALA Chaplain, Mary Krasche, with the draping of our charter during the general meeting. ALA members participated in the ceremony to honor our friend, our sister and our mentor. **(See pictures on Page 6)** We are grateful for her many years of service to our Unit, to our Post, its members and to our Veterans. Those hugs are missed by many!

Our LZ Charlie Mike event which was scheduled for May 20th was unfortunately cancelled. They say timing is everything and that was the case as we scheduled the event during a month that celebrates graduations. We intend to regroup on this event and schedule it at a later time so stay tuned for the update.

Sunday, June 4th, we will gather at the Springfield National Cemetery to show our appreciation to Joseph Roth for his generous contribution to our Unit. We invite you to join us as we gather at the flag pole at 3:00 p.m., sharp, then commence to the burial site of Mr. Roth and his son Randy for a gratitude ceremony. I hope you can join us.

Sunday, June 11th, is the American Legion District 17 meeting, hosted by Post 639. Luncheon will be served at 1:00 and the meeting starts at 2:00 p.m. Special guest, Louise Welch, President, of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Missouri, will be in attendance. We will be needing assistance in readying YOUR POST for this event and we will be starting at 9:00 a.m. to set up. When Post 639 hosts this District meeting, we always have a large turnout. And this year, with our special guest, we are anticipating that number to be bigger. S.O.S. is needed on this project. More details on this event will be given at the June general meeting.

VSO, Treehouse Vet, will be providing food service, during QOH's Bike Nights, on May 31st, June 14th and July 12th. Treehouse is raising money for their organization whose mission is to educate, encourage and empower veterans and their families through an attachment to the natural world. They help veterans find their tribe after leaving the military, not just a group of friends or family members you can talk to, but an always growing and developing community to contribute to. They achieve that mission through three core pillars of support; **Direct Veteran Engagement, Wildlife Conservation & Education and Community & Tribe Building.** Please mark these dates on your calendar and come out and support this wonderful Veterans Support Organization.

### June....

The month we say goodbye to spring,

And say hello to that summer thing.

It's fun in the water,

As the weather gets hotter,

Camp outs and staying up late,

And telling fathers that they are great.

Friends riding bikes after May,

And stopping by the Post at the end of their day.

It's the month of June,

Play in the sun, have some fun,

And sing your favorite tune!

**In Spirit of Service, not Self**

**Diana Cooperider, President, Post 639 Auxiliary**



**Post 639 SAL Commander**



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. Service with fun /fellowship - that's what you get !!

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. Jump in and find your spot in SAL. Service and fellowship memories that will last you a lifetime ...

**Curtis Meyers, Commander**

**Sons of the American Legion**



**Post 639 ALR Director**



May's almost done. What a run, and we're not even to peak season yet. Catch your breath and get ready to SPRINT into summer. It's gonna be simply AWESOME.

My sincere thanks to our Riders who turned out to assist with the Dirty Dozen Bike Show at Renegade Harley-Davidson on May 6th **(Pictures Pages 6-7)**. Big time thanks to Renegade for their generosity in providing the food and music for this event, with **ALL** proceeds going to Post 639.

The annual Awareness Ride on Sunday May 7th was very well attended. Thanks to all who represented us. (See pictures on pages 6-7)

Our dear friend **Sue Reis** surprised us with a visit on Sunday, May 14th. Was wonderful to get together and catch up on what's going on in her life.



Please mark your calendars for the K9's for Camo fundraiser on **Thursday, June 1st**. This organization was featured in the May 2023 Newsletter. They provide the priceless resource of K9 companionship to qualified veterans, while at the same time using those who are incarcerated to help train these dogs. The "Wings of Swing Big Band" will be playing a benefit concert for this event. Not to be missed !!!!

We need as many Riders as possible to participate in the escort ride on **Tuesday, June 6th** for "The Wall that Heals" through western Missouri to Springfield. **KSU is 9:30AM** at Post 639.

Please plan on assisting your Chapter at the ALR Fish Fry/Gun Raffle on **Saturday, June 9th** at the June Bug Jamboree event.

The ALR Election of Officers for 2023-2024 will be held during our monthly meeting on **Sunday, June 18th**. To-date nominees are as follows .....

Officer	Nominee
Director	Marsha Crom
Assistant Director	Glenn Smith
Treasurer	David Turner
Secretary	Bob Kalwat
Sgt at Arms/Ride Captain	Ron Jackson
Judge Advocate	Mike Brooks
Co-Chaplains	Will Ogden/Herman Burkett, Jr

**Marsha Crom**

**Director, Chapter 639**



## Post 639 Historian



In 2023, we'll be implementing a Special Recognition/ Celebration for each Service Branch on the date of their actual anniversary. It's been hit and miss up to this point, but we're making some changes for 2023.

We, as a Post, owe it to each and every Service Branch to express our appreciation in the utmost way possible.

The Anniversary dates are as follows. ..

**US Army June 14th, 1775 (Wednesday)**

**(Will be observed/celebrated on Tuesday, June 13th to avoid conflict with Bike Night/Queen of Hearts on 6/14)**

**US Coast Guard August 14th, 1790 (Monday)**

**US Air Force September 18, 1947 (Monday)**

**US Navy October 13th, 1775 (Friday)**

**US Marine Corps November 10th, 1775 (Friday)**

**US Space Force December 20th, 2019 (Wednesday)**

The US Space Force will come into a more ever-prominent role. With the threat evermore emerging to our satellite capabilities, utilized by our ground forces for surveillance, **AND** particularly with the emergence of AI as a strategic tool by our adversaries, **they will be the forefront of this battle**. My special hats-off to this Branch in stepping up to the daunting task that lies before them. I have **EVERY** confidence in their ability to rise to the challenge ahead to protect our beloved country.

Reserve components / related organizations (i.e., US Army Corps of Engineers, US Navy Seabees) will be recognized on the Anniversary of the parent branch. Those organizations are encouraged to organize their own recognition activities at Post 639 at the appropriate time.

No matter the size of representation the branch has at Post 639, our appreciation of Post 639 will be expressed equally on the Anniversary date. A commemorative cake will be provided, as well as a special 5-8PM "Happy Hour" Bar Special for members of the respective branches on the day of their celebration.

Each branch's anniversary will be promoted in advance via a special email notification (Newsletter distribution list), Facebook special posting, and website reference in the Events section.

Please pass the word on these events. Branch members deserve all the recognition we can give them.

**Bob Kalwat**

**Post 639 Historian/Newsletter Editor**

## June VSO Activities/Info

### Give Vets Hope

Our "Give Vets Hope" group continues to grow. The meeting on May 9th included another Vietnam veteran in attendance! We also had some really good lasagna, garlic bread, salad, pop, and dessert. One of our members organized most of this feast and we are grateful.



We have been having good attendance for our meetings and are developing some affective listening skills. There were several times during our meeting that felt powerful because of our attentive silence. Again, being seen and heard are critical processing skills in our journey to develop our community.

Our meetings still take about an hour and a half from beginning to end-not very long. All of the little things we practice at each meeting help us in building our sense of trust and being a part of something bigger than any of us individually.

On the 23rd of May we asked Julie Batson, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, to speak with our group about suicide prevention. She has lots of experience dealing with veterans.

Our group continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, from 5:30 to about 7:00, at the VFW Post 3404, at 1136 E. Atlantic. Anyone that may be part of a veteran's support system is welcome to attend, even though they may not be a veteran.

You may contact David Suits at 417-773-1837 and leave a message if you have any questions. Our next meetings are on June 13th and then the 27th.

**David Suits**  
**Founder/Co-facilitator**

## JROTC Awards



JROTC Award Ceremony for Hillcrest High School Cadet **David Navarro**. Nolan Moody presenting.



JROTC Ozarks High School Award Ceremony for **Cadet Alex Jackson**, American Legion Award for General Military Excellence, (presented by CW03 Jason Allen, JROTC Senior Instructor), and **Cadet Katie McCall**, American Legion Award for Scholastic Excellence (presented by 1st Sgt (Ret.) William Crawford, JROTC Rifle Coach)

## *Veterans Administration Info*

**Accessing Veterans' records from the National Archives or National Personnel Records Center for Veterans' records (i.e., DD-214) from the National Archives or NPRC**

Are you looking for your service records, or those of a family member? The National Archives in St. Louis, MO, is the official repository of millions of records for all military personnel—from all service branches—who served during the late 19th and 20th century.

Though military personnel files constitute its core holdings, the National Archives at St. Louis is the repository for numerous document types, such as the Selective Service System registration cards and classification ledgers that document the military draft between 1940 and 1975; Army General Courts Martial case files (including an in-

dex for records dated 1911-1976, and accessing records dated 1940-1976, with all records dated through 1917 in our Washington DC building, and those dated approximately 1918-1939 in our College Park, Maryland facility; and trade cards describing specific aspects of civilian work in Naval shipyards during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The holdings also include personnel files of individuals employed by the Civil Service, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, Works Progress Administration, Panama Canal Commission, Department of State, U.S. Customs Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and several hundred additional government departments.

**Archival records:** The National Archives at St. Louis maintains Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) of those service members that were discharged, retired or deceased 62 years from the current date. These records belong to the National Archives and become archival 62 years after the service member's separation from the military. This is a rolling date. For example, the current year (2023) minus 62 years is 1961. Therefore, records with a discharge date of 1961 and prior are archival and open to the public. Additionally, various records of Persons of Exceptional Prominence (PEP) are also archival and open to the public. Requests for archival records do not require a signature.

A fire in 1973 destroyed 80% of our Army personnel records from 1912 to 1960 and 75% of our Air Force records from 1947 to 1964, with names alphabetically after Hubbard, James E. Please keep in mind when requesting a record from these particular service branches that the record may be fire related and require preservation treatment. If this is the case, it will take several weeks to either receive a copy of the record, if requested by mail, or view the record in the archival research room, if visiting our facility.

**Non-archival records:** Records of individuals who left service less than 62 years ago are not yet archival. These non-archival records are maintained at the National Personnel Records Center, but remain in the legal custody of the military service departments. A non-archival OMPF is open to the Veteran, the next of kin or to a third-party requester who has the Veteran's written authorization. Under the provisions of FOIA, the general public may only obtain limited information from these records. Requests for non-archival records must be signed and dated. A request for a military personnel record, archival or non-archival, should include:

- \*The Veteran's complete name used in service
- \*Service Number
- \*Branch of Service
- \*Date and place of birth
- \*Dates of service

For archival or non-archival requests, submit a letter or Standard Form 180 with the above information to:

National Personnel Records Center  
1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138

Or, to request an archival or non-archival record via eVetRecs, visit our website and follow the steps provided.

Official Military Personnel Files, as well as auxiliary records, may also be viewed by visiting our research room. If you would like to view archival records, you must schedule an appointment with the Research Room via Eventbrite.

**General Meeting -**  
**Remembering Mary Krasche**  
**May 2, 2023**



**2nd 2023 Bike Night**  
**May 3, 2023**



**Dirty Dozen Bike Show**  
**May 6, 2023**

**The Dirty Dozen BIKE SHOW**  
 SUPPORTING AMERICAN LEGION POST 639  
 HOSTED BY RENEGADE HARLEY DAVIDSON  
 REGISTRATION 11-NOON | AWARDS 3PM  
 FREE SPECTATOR ADMISSION  
 \$25 BIKE SHOW ENTRY (INCLUDES 1 MEAL & EVENT SHIRT)  
 50/50 RAFFLES  
 FOOD & DRINK ON SITE  
 CUSTOM TROPHIES BY LOCAL ARTISTS  
 LIVE MUSIC  
**MAY 6, 2023**

**SPONSORS**

SPOKES GARAGE

BEN SCHMITT LAW FIRM

ELLIS DESIGN STUDIOS	LIFE HAPPENS SPFLD MO
WHEELER METAL	ROUTE 66 AUTO BODY
TWISTED ANGLE GARAGE	PITBULL POWERSPORTS
AMVETS POST 188	SMITTS MIDWEST BOXING GYM
BEAR SIGN & DESIGN	BOB & IKES NEIGHBORHOOD BAR
TWISTED GRIP BBQ	THE OFF TRACK SALOON
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JB'S GOURMET SPICE BLENDS	LIBERTY RIDERS OF AMERICA
GOFORTHAPOLOOZA '23	ACT NOW PROMOTIONS
SPRINGFIELD POWDERCOATING	THE BANK TAVERN
TURNER OF TRADES	ISCAPE CANDLE CO
DARC DRIVING	THE BANK TAVERN



Cont'd on Page 7

Post 639 is raffling this KC Chiefs/Yuengling neon sign (24"x20") Tickets are \$5 each, only 150 tickets will be sold.  
 See Commander Mike Goforth to purchase YOUR chance(s).



# Motorcycle Awareness Ride

## May 7, 2023



**Can You See Me Now?**  
10th Annual Motorcycle Awareness Ride  
**MAY 7, 2023**  
FREE RIDE (Ride Donor or Biked) FREE SHIRT  
STARTING POINT: American Legion Post 639  
2600 S. Scenic, Springfield, MO  
Registration Begins at 7:00 am  
Ride will also end at Post 639  
2600 S. Scenic  
Free ride t-shirts are available  
LIVE MUSIC following the Ride  
Watch for MOTORCYCLES  
For more info, contact:  
Jim Schmitt  
Ride Donor Dept  
(417) 234-6218 (417) 462-9872

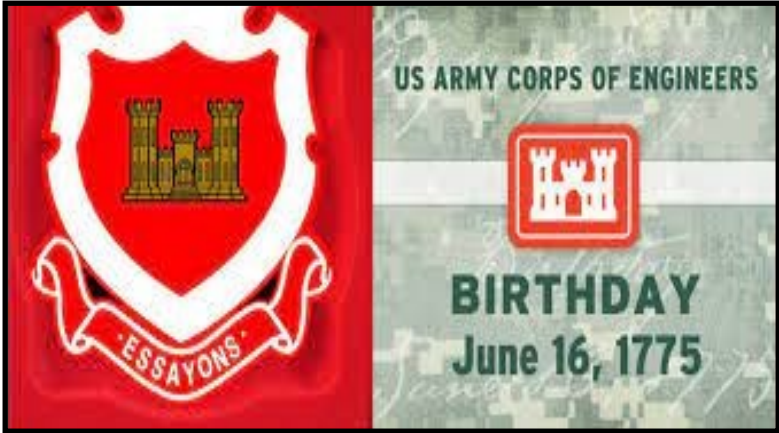


REMEMBER



# BATTLE OF MIDWAY

Battle of Midway - June 4-7th, 1942



US Army Corps of Engineers Birthday - June 16th



# D-DAY

JUNE 6, 1944

ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL

D-Day - Operation Overlord - June 6th, 1944



# The War of 1812

War of 1812 begins - June 18th



United States Army Birthday - June 14th



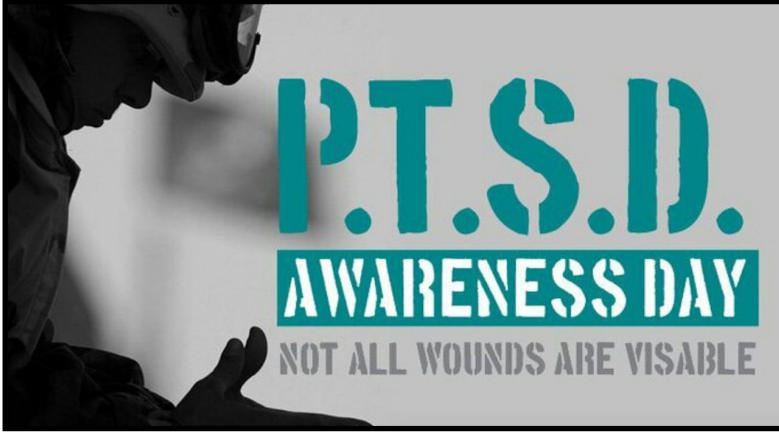
# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday - June 23rd



# FLAG DAY

Flag Day - June 14th



# PTSD AWARENESS DAY

NOT ALL WOUNDS ARE VISABLE

National PTSD Awareness Day - June 27th





# K9S FOR CAMO

*invites you to attend*

**Wings of Swing Big Band Concert**

+ Slingin' Sausage food truck!

**Free K9s for Camo shirt with admittance fee of \$25**

all proceeds from the concert go to K9s for Camo

June 1st | American Legion on Scenic | 6:30-8:00 PM

*Donations are welcome!*

June 8-11, 2023 Open 24 Hours  
922 W. Republic Road, Springfield, MO  
( Located @ Wesley United Methodist Church )



**Free Event To the Public!**



For more information visit us at:

[Thewallthatheals-serenityhonors2023.com](http://thewallthatheals-serenityhonors2023.com)

[Facebook.com/serenityhonors](https://Facebook.com/serenityhonors)

Join Serenity & the VVMF in bringing THE WALL THAT HEALS to our community.  
You can DONATE online or by mail.  
Make checks payable to SERENITY HONORS INC. and mailed to:  
Serenity Honors \* P.O. Box 128 \* Nixa, MO 65714  
For questions call Chris at (417) 590-7500 or email [serenityhenness@gmail.com](mailto:serenityhenness@gmail.com)  
Serenity Honors Inc. is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation.  
Any contributions are fully tax deductible as allowed by law.

Hello everyone - Serenity is proud to announce that her Veterans Charity, SERENITY HONORS, will be hosting The Wall That Heals in Springfield, MO on June 8-11, 2023. The Wall That Heals exhibit features a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. The replica is 375 feet in length and stands 7.5 feet high at its tallest point. The website for this exhibit is below:

<https://thewallthatheals-serenityhonors2023.com>

We would like to invite you and your organization to join us in Remembering and Honoring Our Vietnam Veterans. Please see the attachments for more information & sponsorship opportunities.

We are looking for help in a couple of areas:

1. We are looking for help in getting the word out to ALL of our Vietnam Veterans & community, so they can be aware of the exhibit. Would you please forward this email & attachments to all of your Veteran organizations, business, and/or individuals you are in contact with. We want to get the word out to everyone.
2. If you would like to help Serenity in bringing TWTH to our Vietnam Veterans & our community, we are looking for financial help too. We have Sponsorship opportunities available.
3. We also have volunteer opportunities available - TWTH needs to be set up, taken down, & staffed for the 4 days it is here (open 24 hours).

Please see the attached 4 page document for more information & sponsorship opportunities.

Some quick points of interest about this exhibit:

1. FREE to everyone.
2. Family and Child Friendly
3. Education Center
4. Local Vietnam Heroes will be Honored
5. No concessions, vending, souvenirs, etc, will be sold.
6. This is NOT a fundraising event.

On behalf of Serenity & Serenity Honors, thank you for your time & support

Chris McQuay, President, Serenity Honors, Inc.



REMEMBER

# ★ BIKE NIGHT ★



**@LZ639**  
**EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY**  
**6:30 - 10**

**QUEEN OF HEARTS**  
 CARD DRAW EVERY WEDNESDAY

APRIL 19    MAY 3, 17, 31    JUNE 14, 28    JULY 12, 26    **AUG 9, 26**    SEPT 6, 20    OCT 4, 18

**TOO BROKE FOR STURGIS**



PRESENTED BY  
**SCHMITT LAW FIRM**  
 KANSAS CITY  
 816-400-1000

2660 S SCENIC, SPRINGFIELD, MO  
**FOOD \* MUSIC \* 50/50 & COOL PRIZE RAFFLES**

24  
 JUNE

## CENTRAL FOOTBALL CAR SHOW

9  
 AM

Doors open to the public at 11 am

Please pre-register by June 22, 2023. Pay on the day at the front gate. Pre-registration \$50.00, day of registration \$60.00. Free entry for spectators, vote on your favorite ride. Donations are welcome. Come out and support your local Central High School Football team, enjoy a great time and food.



2660 S SCENIC SPRINGFIELD, MO 65802

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 639**

Registration can be completed at: [Springfield, MO - CHS Football Booster Club](#) | [Springfield MO](#) | [Facebook](#)

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*"Express your love...with the finest"*

## Wommack



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



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Veteran owned (US Navy)



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[www.foxholetechnology.com](http://www.foxholetechnology.com) - Wes Hester, CEO



OZARKS TECHNICAL  
 COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Joshua Boley  
 Outreach Coordinator  
 Veterans Upward Bound

1001 East Chestnut Expressway  
 Springfield, Missouri 65802  
[www.otc.edu/vub](http://www.otc.edu/vub)

Office 417-447-7840  
 Fax 417-447-6925  
[boleyj@otc.edu](mailto:boleyj@otc.edu)

Vietnam Vet Radio



The Music You Remember and The Respect You Earned

VIETNAM VET RADIO ([vietnamvetradio.org](http://vietnamvetradio.org))

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



VIETNAM VET RADIO FROM THE  
 SPRINGFIELD, MO STUDIO

WITH  
**JIM COOPER**  
 U.S. NAVY VETERAN



MONDAY-FRIDAY 1400 HRS

[VIETNAMVETRADIO.ORG](http://VIETNAMVETRADIO.ORG)

Party Time!

Jim Cooper

6PM Friday Central Time USA



[VietnamVetRadio.org](http://VietnamVetRadio.org)



REMEMBER





# JUNE 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>2 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>3</b>  <b>BREAKFAST</b> <b>8 - 10AM</b>
<b>4</b>  <b>BATTLE OF MIDWAY BEGINS, JUNE 4-7</b>	<b>5 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>6 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>LEGION/ALA GENERAL MTG</b> <b>7PM</b>  <b>INVASION</b> <small>Riles Land in France, Smash Axis, Flew, Fines, Chetive, Battle, Boats</small>	<b>7 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6 - 8 PM</b>	<b>8 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>FINANCE COMMITTEE</b> <b>6:30PM</b>  <b>MCL 993</b> <b>6PM-8PM</b>	<b>9 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>LEGION RIDERS</b> <b>FISH FRY/ GUN RAFFLE</b> <b>6-8PM</b>	<b>10</b>  <b>SUB VETS MTG</b> <b>11AM</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>13 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>KOREAN WAR VETS</b> <b>1PM</b> <b>GIVE VETS HOPE</b> <b>VFW 3404 5PM</b>	<b>14 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>BIKE NIGHT &amp; QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6 - 10PM</b> 	<b>15 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>16 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>VFW 3404 FISH FRY</b> <b>5:30 - 7 PM</b> 	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>  <b>ALR MEETING</b> <b>5PM</b>	<b>19 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>20 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>AUX E-BOARD MTG</b> <b>7PM</b>	<b>21 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6 - 8 PM</b>	<b>22 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION 6PM</b>	<b>23 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>USCG AUXILIARY BIRTHDAY</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>E-BOARD MTG</b> <b>6:30PM</b>	<b>27 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>SAL MTG 7PM</b> <b>GIVE VETS HOPE</b> <b>VFW 3404 5PM</b> <b>NEWSLETTER CONTENT DUE</b>	<b>28 LUNCH 11-2</b>  <b>BIKE NIGHT &amp; QUEEN OF HEARTS</b> <b>6 - 10PM</b>	<b>29 LUNCH 11-2</b>	<b>30 LUNCH 11-2</b>	



### The Smith & Wesson CSX 9mm Pistol

**MSRP: \$609.00**

#### American Legion Riders

**Raffle Tickets: \$10.00 each or Three for \$25.00**

(Drawing Held on Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, Need Not Be Present to Win)

#### Product Features

- The CSX is built on an aluminum alloy frame with interchangeable polymer backstraps, providing the user the ability to customize their level of concealment and ergonomic fit.
- Chambered in 9mm, the CSX holds an impressive 12+1 capacity and comes with an additional 10 round magazine for deeper concealment.
- Designed with flexibility in mind and, despite its micro-sized frame, the CSX packs both ambidextrous slide releases and manual safeties.



## Average Weather in June for Springfield .....

Daily high temperatures *increase* by 7°F, from 79°F to 86°F, rarely falling below 71°F or exceeding 93°F.

Daily low temperatures *increase* by 6°F, from 61°F to 67°F, rarely falling below 52°F or exceeding 73°F.

Over the course of June in Springfield, the length of the day is *essentially constant*. The shortest day of the month is *June 1*, with 14 hours, 33 minutes of daylight and the longest day is *June 21*, with 14 hours, 44 minutes of daylight.

The earliest sunrise of the month in Springfield is 5:52 AM on *June 13* and the latest sunrise is 4 minutes later at 5:56 AM on *June 30*.

The earliest sunset is 8:27 PM on *June 1* and the latest sunset is 10 minutes later at 8:37 PM on *June 28*.

Daylight saving time is observed in Springfield during 2023, but it neither starts nor ends during June, so the entire month is in daylight saving time.

The average hourly wind speed in Springfield is *gradually decreasing* during June, *decreasing* from 7.1 miles per hour to 6.3 miles per hour over the course of the month.

The growing season in Springfield typically lasts for 6.6 months (203 days), from around *April 8* to around *October 28*, rarely starting before *March 21* or after *April 28*, and rarely ending before *October 10* or after *November 15*.

The month of June in Springfield is reliably fully within the growing season.

## 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 !!!**

## From the Bar/Galley ...

### Happy Hour at LZ639 :

12PM-2PM 7 Days a Week (.50 off)

6PM-8PM, Monday thru Saturday (.50 off)

### Saturday Breakfast - Morning Chow @ LZ639

1st Saturday of the Month  
8AM - 10AM

The 6am Breakfast crew with this short message for you.

Your Saturday breakfast is made possible by the following 6AM crew - **Bob Dale, Dylan Dale, Mike Chandler** with

**support and assistance of Scotty and Jeff.** Breakfast served 8AM-10AM. Drinks separate charge. No charge for salt and pepper. Tell your friends as it's only \$8 all you can eat. Please thank the people who give up their time to support this Post 639 benefit.

Thanks to all who supported the **May Breakfast** at the Post.

**Jim “Skippy” Cooper (got peanut butter)**

**Your 6AM Support Team**



## Camping Services/Facilities at Post 639

### Contacts for RV Site reservations:

Post 639 Bar Staff	417-882-8639
Adam Jamieson (24/7)	417-343-8723
Mike Chandler (24/7)	417-860-8910

7 Sites (2 Class A, 5 Travel Trailer), Water/Electric (30/50/20) hookups, Max size 45 ft. Available on "First come, First serve" basis. PETS WELCOME !!!!!

**General Public** - \$20/night, **Veterans** - \$10/night, Back-in sites only. **One night maximum.** Extended stays require prior approval. Total # of guests per party must be specified when making the reservation. **NOTE: Post 639 members and families/friends MUST notify the Post 72 hours in advance to ensure accommodation of their reservation request. Extended stays require approval.**

Stroll through our on-site Veterans Memorial Park, featuring a submarine conning tower and two Vietnam-era helicopters. Our 23-acre property is attached to the largest public park in Springfield. **Nearby attractions** - Bass Pro Shops flagship store, Wonders of Wildlife Museum/Aquarium. Springfield Cardinals baseball, Branson entertainment, Silver Dollar City (USA Today's #1 Theme Park in America). **Post 639 is ALSO a Harvest Host participant.**



### Post 639 Hours of Operation:

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.** Full lunch menu served daily Monday-Friday 11AM-2PM. Full Bar open during business hours. Pizzas and appetizers available during business hours. **Happy Hour** - .50 off, 12PM-2PM 7 days a week, 6PM-8PM Monday - Saturday.

Sunday	1PM - 7PM
Monday	11AM - 8PM
Tuesday	11AM - 8PM
Wednesday	11AM - 8PM
Thursday	11AM - 8PM
Friday	11AM - 8PM
Saturday	11AM - 8PM



REMEMBER



## History in June ....

**June 3, 1801** - Confederate president Jefferson Davis was born at Todd County, Kentucky. After the Southern states formed the Confederacy in 1861, he hoped to be named commander of the Confederate military forces but was instead chosen to be president, serving until 1865. Following the Civil War, he was imprisoned but never brought to trial. He died at age 81 in New Orleans.

**June 4-7, 1942—Battle of Midway**, World War II naval battle, fought almost entirely with aircraft, in which the United States destroyed Japan's first-line carrier strength and most of its best trained naval pilots. Together with the Battle of Guadalcanal, the Battle of Midway ended the threat of further Japanese invasion in the Pacific.

**June 6, 1944 - D-Day**, the largest amphibious landing in history, began in the early-morning hours as Allied forces landed in Normandy on the northern coast of France. Operation Overlord took months of planning and involved 1,527,000 soldiers in 47 Allied divisions along with 4,400 ships and landing craft, and 11,000 aircraft. The Germans had about 60 divisions spread along France and the Low Countries. American forces landed on two western beaches, Utah and Omaha, while British and Canadian troops landed farther east on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches. By the end of the day 150,000 Allied soldiers and their accompanying vehicles had landed with 15,000 killed and wounded.

**June 13, 1786** - American Army General Winfield Scott was born in Petersburg, Virginia. Nicknamed "Old Fuss and Feathers" because of his formality, he served in three wars; the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the American Civil War.

**June 14, 1777** - John Adams introduced a resolution before Congress mandating a United States flag, stating, "...that the flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation." This anniversary is celebrated each year in the U.S. as Flag Day.

**June 14, 1775** - The first U.S. Military service, the Continental Army consisting of six companies of riflemen, was established by the Second Continental Congress. The next day, George Washington was appointed by a unanimous vote to command the army.

**June 19, 1903** - Baseball great Lou Gehrig was born in New York City. He played in 2,130 consecutive games and seven World Series for the New York Yankees and had a lifetime batting average of .340. He contracted the degenerative muscle disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, now called 'Lou Gehrig's disease,' and died on June 2, 1941.

**June 24, 1948** - Soviet Russia began a blockade of Berlin. Two days later the Allies responded with an emergency airlift to relieve two million isolated West Berliners. During the Berlin Airlift, American and British planes flew about 278,000 flights, delivering 2.3 million tons of food, coal and medical supplies. A plane landed in Berlin every minute from eleven Allied staging areas in West Germany. The Russians lifted their blockade of Berlin on May 12, 1949, however the airlift continued until September 30th.

# 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



## Post 639 Schedule of Events

### June 2023

- Jun 01 Thu - K9's for Camo Benefit - WOS Big Band
- Jun 03 Sat - Breakfast at Post 639, 8-10AM
- Jun 04 - 07 - Battle of Midway
- Jun 06 Tue - Legion 639/Aux General Meeting, 7PM  
- D-Day, Normandy, Operation Overlord
- Jun 07 Wed - Queen of Hearts/50-50, 6-8PM
- Jun 08 Thu - Finance Committee Meeting, 6:30PM  
- Marine Corps League Mtg, VFW 3404  
6PM Food/Fellowship, 7PM Mtg  
- The Wall that Heals Event (June 8-11, 24/7)
- Jun 09 Fri - 639 Legion Riders Fish Fry
- Jun 10 Sat - Sub Vets Meeting, 11AM  
- June Bug Jamboree
- Jun 13 Tue - Korean War Vets Meeting, 1PM  
- Give Vets Hope, VFW 3404, 5:30PM
- Jun 14 Wed - Bike Night/Queen of Hearts/50-50, 6-10PM  
- US Army Birthday  
- Flag Day
- Jun 16 Fri - VFW 3404 Fish Fry 5:30-7PM  
- US Army Corps of Engineers Birthday
- Jun 18 Sun - ALR Meeting  
- War of 1812 Anniversary
- Jun 20 Tue - Auxiliary E-Board Meeting, 7PM
- Jun 21 Wed - Queen of Hearts, 6 -8PM
- Jun 22 Thu - Fleet Reserve Association 6PM  
- Newsletter Content Due
- Jun 23 Fri - US Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday
- Jun 24 Sat - Central Football Car Show, 9AM
- Jun 26 Mon - Post 639 E-Board Meeting
- Jun 27 Tue - Sons of the American Legion Mtg, 7PM  
- Give Vets Hope, VFW 3404 5:30PM  
- PTSD Awareness Day  
- Newsletter Content Due
- Jun 28 Wed - BIKE NIGHT / Queen of Hearts, 6 -10PM



# LZ639 LUNCH MENU

AVAILABLE MON-FRI

11 AM-2 PM

(ALL BURGERS AND SANDWICHES SERVED  
WITH ONE REGULAR SIDE)

SOFT DRINKS...\$2

- COKE
- DIET COKE
- DR. PEPPER
- DIET DR. PEPPER
- SPRITE
- DIET SPRITE
- TEA

## REGULAR SIDES

- THICK CUT FRIES
- TATER-TOTS

## PREMIUME SIDES

(UPGRADE FOR JUST A \$1)

- ONION RINGS
- MUSHROOMS
- SEASONED CURLY FRIES

(LOAD YOUR SIDE FOR JUST A \$1 MORE WITH  
NACHO CHEESE AND BACON BITS)

(ADD A SIDE **SALAD** OR SIDE OF **SOUP** FOR \$2  
MORE)

Seasonal Soups \$5:

Chicken Tortilla, Loaded Potato, Roasted Red  
Pepper with Gouda Cheese, Broccoli Cheddar, or  
Chili

## BURGERS & SANDWICHES

(Add: Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, or Pickle)

**HAMBURGER...\$7**

**CHEESEBURGER...\$8.50**

Choice of cheese: American, Swiss, Provolone or,  
Pepper Jack

**Blue Burger...\$9**

A burger topped with melted blue cheese crumbles

**BBQ BURGER...\$9.50**

A burger topped with two onion rings, your choice  
of cheese and BBQ sauce

**BRUNCH BURGER...\$9.50**

A burger served with a fried egg & bacon with your  
choice of cheese of cheese

**LZ639...\$9**

A burger topped with grilled onions served on a  
toasted garlic aioli bun with your choice of cheese

**PATTY MELT...\$9**

A burger with grilled onions & Swiss cheese served  
on Texas Toast

**PORK TENDERLOIN SANDWICH...\$9.50**

A 7oz. tenderloin

**GRILLED CHICKEN SANDWICH...\$9**

Grilled chicken breast with bacon, Swiss cheese  
served on a toasted garlic aioli bun

**THE REUBEN...\$9.50**

Swiss cheese melted over corned beef & sauerkraut  
topped with Thousand Island served on rye bread

**BLT...\$7**

Four slices of bacon topped with lettuce & tomato  
served on Texas Toast

**GRILLED CHEESE...\$6.50**

Grilled Texas Toast with your choice of cheese.

**HOT HAM & CHEESE...\$7**

Four slices of smoked ham with your choice of  
cheese served on Texas Toast.



# LZ639 PIZZA MENU

(ALL PIZZAS ARE A 10 INCH CRUST)  
(NO ADD ONS OR SUBSTITUTIONS)

## THE CLASSICS

<b>Cheese</b> .....	\$7.50
<b>Pepperoni</b> .....	\$8
<b>Sausage</b> .....	\$8
<b>Bacon</b> .....	\$8
<b>Canadian Bacon</b> .....	\$8

## SPECIALTY PIZZAS

<b>Hawaiian</b> .....	\$8.50
Canadian Bacon, Pineapple	
<b>Chicken Bacon Ranch</b> .....	\$9
Ranch, Italian Seasoning, Diced Chicken, Bacon Bits	
<b>BBQ Chicken</b> .....	\$9
BBQ Sauce, Diced Chicken, Onions	
<b>Alfredo</b> .....	\$9
Alfredo Sauce, Italian Seasoning, Diced Chicken, Mushrooms, Bacon Bits	
<b>Buffalo Chicken</b> .....	\$9.50
Ranch, Cream Cheese, Buffalo Sauce, Diced Chicken	
<b>Veggie Lovers</b> .....	\$8.50

## EXTRA SPECIALTY

<b>Loaded Hawaiian</b> .....	\$9.50
Canadian Bacon, Bacon Bits, Pineapple, Onion	
<b>Five Meat</b> .....	\$9.50
Canadian Bacon, Hamburger, Sausage, Bacon Bits, Pepperoni	
<b>Supreme</b> .....	\$10
Canadian Bacon, Hamburger, Sausage, Bacon Bits, Mushrooms, Onions, Black Olives, Green Peppers, Pepperoni	

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 one of the bar staff for additional information and to order.

## Lessons Learned

### The British Attack at Taranto

November 11, 1940

Paul A. Doelger

University of Minnesota, Crookston  
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

### Part 1

#### Prelude to War

Following the end of World War One, the war to end all wars, both sides took a pause. The victorious allies including the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, were confident in their military prowess and began to downsize their armed forces. There were a few exceptions, Italy, and Japan both continued to maintain higher levels of military readiness compared to their partners. For the vanquished central powers of Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria, it was a time of humiliation and political turmoil. Some of the defeated countries such as the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist. As they struggled to live with the harsh terms of the treaty of Versailles, their military leaders studied the reasons for their defeat. Learning from the past, they slowly began to rebuild and to rearm. By the year 1939 they were ready to strike, and they stuck hard.

On September 1, 1939 Germany unleashed its Blitzkrieg on Poland and dominated the battlefield. Soon after, Germany also overtook Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. By June of 1940 all countries had been overrun. Before the fall for France, Italy hoping to cash in on the spoils of war, declare war on the allies. Shortly afterwards, the last of the British Expeditionary forces were evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk signifying the end of the battle on the continent (Thomase, 1989).

At that time, there were three main sources of news media: the newspapers, radio broadcasts and Movie Tone news reels that were played at theaters before shows. All were featuring the German victories in Europe and the new style of warfare called Blitzkrieg, or lightning warfare. On the high seas, German submarines formed into hunter groups called wolfpacks and preyed on allied shipping. In the air,

the Germans introduced the world to the Stuka dive bomber and its bone chilling siren as it dove on its enemy. The Allies, although on the defensive, worked quietly on developing their own new technologies, tactics, and strategies for waging war. One technology that was of significant importance was the development of radar which was used to identify approaching aircraft. The Royal Navy, being the largest Navy in the world, was the first to develop purpose-built aircraft carriers and a fleet air arm (FAA) that was intended to challenge the dominance of the Battleship in naval warfare.

### **Standing Alone**

With the defeat of France, England stood alone. Fearing that the French Navy would fall into the hands of the enemy and potentially be used against them, the British Navy turned their guns on their defeated ally and bombarded their fleet based at Mers-el-Kebir, Algeria. Operation Catapult, as it was called, caused extensive damage to the French Navy and helped to neutralize the threat of its use by the enemy (Sebire, 2022). By July, the Battle of Britain had begun with the Royal Airforce (RAF) and the Luftwaffe battling for control of the skies over London. While the British were fighting for their very survival, the Italians, ever the opportunist, made their move in the Mediterranean by invading North Africa and later Greece.

The British did what they could to counter these attacks but were over extended and struggled to keep their armies supplied. The Italians, needing to cross the Mediterranean to support their advancing armies in North Africa, had to run the gauntlet between Italy and Tunis. It quickly became apparent to both sides that control of supply lines across the Mediterranean held the key to any future victory. Both the Italian and Royal Navies squared off for what was soon to become known as the Battle of the Mediterranean, and this is their story;

### **Politics**

Following the end of World War 1, the Italians were still allied with the British and French. It was not until the rise of Benito Mussolini that relations began to sour. On October 3, 1935, Italy invaded Ethiopia over a border dispute with Italian Somaliland. The League of Nations protested and imposed economic sanctions, but they were ineffective. Mussolini's imperialist claims met with disfavor from the Western democracies and Italy slowly moved away from the Allied camp (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020, p. 1). On September 27, 1940, Germany, Italy,

and Japan signed the Tripartite Pact which created a mutual defense alliance between the three nations. The intent of the pact was to mutually assist one another with all political, economic, or military means, should any one member be attacked by a power at present not involved in the European War (Tikkanen, 2022). Besides offering military assistance, the pact also made it clear whose side the Japanese would be on in the event the European War became a World War. The line in the sand had been drawn as Italy and Japan sided with the Germans forming an Axis. With the Italian Army on the move in North Africa, the control of the strategically important Suez Canal came into question.

### **Strategy**

With the opening of the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean became the main artery of the imperial sea lanes of communication for the British (Caravaggio, 2006). The Suez Canal not only provided access to the oil rich nations in the Persian Gulf, but it also provided shorter passage to the British colonies in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Should the canal be closed to the Allies by the Italians, supplies of oil and other critical war supplies, would be forced to travel around the Cape of Good Hope. To put things in perspective, convoys to and from Bombay, India through the Suez would have to travel 7,200 miles to London. In the event the canal was closed, that same convoy would have to travel 12,300 miles. The Italians also had a keen interest in controlling the Mediterranean. Their armies were on the move in North Africa and Greece and their colony in Ethiopia had to be supported and supplied. Both sides began making plans on how to deal with the enemy.

### **The Regia Marina Italian**

At the start of the war, the Regia Marina Italiana (Italian Navy) was a formidable enemy. Since the end of World War One they had spent considerable time and money modernizing their fleet. When Italy declared war on the allies, the Navy, although smaller than the Royal Navy, was of modern design. The Italian navy consisted of four battleships, eight heavy cruisers, fourteen light cruisers, one hundred and twenty-eight destroyers, one hundred and fifteen submarines and sixty-two motor-torpedo boats (Italian Air Force and Navy, 2023, p. 4). Four additional battleships were under construction and would be soon operational. In addition, they had another strategic advantage which was their limited areas of responsibility. Unlike the Royal Navy that had worldwide commitments, the Italian Navy's theater of operations was limited to the Mediterranean Sea and its

surrounding areas. Although powerful they had their achilles heels. The Italian fleet was not equipped with radar and did not have any aircraft carriers or a fleet air arm. Italy's economic weaknesses also meant that they were not able to replace any losses that they may incur. According to the author of *The Attack at Taranto* another limiting factor was their fuel supply. "The Italian Navy had fuel reserves for nine months of operations, after which they would be dependent on Germany for their fuel needs. (Caravaggio, 2006, p.4 For these reasons and the reputation of the Royal Navy, the Italian high command was often reluctant to commit their capital resources to battle. According to Caravaggio,

***“Operational directives issued by the Naval High Command (Supermarina) on 29 May 1940 established a defensive posture in both the eastern and western basins, leaving the Sicilian Channel as the principal theater for offensive fleet operations. Operational-level tasks assigned to the RMI included protecting the Italian coastline and the sea lanes of communications with North Africa, Albania, and the Aegean. Fleet engagements were to take place on terms favorable to the Italians” (Caravaggio, 2006, p. 4).***

The Italian fleet was based at three primary ports along the Italian coast, La Spezia, Taranto, and Naples. The largest of these was the port of Taranto where the balance of their battleships were stationed. The fleet at Taranto consisted of six battleships, seven heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and eight destroyers. The Italians had good reason to believe the fleets were safely moored in their harbors. The high command, being fully aware of what happened to the French Navy at Mers-el-Kebir, Algeria, was on high alert. The Italian Army was tasked to provide protection for the fleet while in port and manned the anti-aircraft defenses. Without the advantage of radar, the Italian Army and Air Force relied heavily on thirteen listening devices that could hear incoming aircraft from miles away. They had three rows of barrage balloons, each with dangling cables, to entangle enemy aircraft. In addition to the balloons, the Italians also manned twenty-one batteries of four-inch antiaircraft guns, eighty-four automatic cannons and more than one hundred light machine guns. Their spotting stations were equipped with twenty-two powerful searchlights, which were intended to blind the pilots of incoming aircraft (Zimmer, 2013, p. 1). To thwart enemy submarines the Navy deployed mine fields and anti-torpedo netting. The fleet was bristling with over six hundred large caliber guns, antiaircraft batteries, and machine

guns ready at a moment notice (Zimmer, 2013, p. 1). The Italians also believed that because the harbor was only forty-five feet deep that air-dropped torpedoes could not be launched in such shallow waters (Caravaggio, 2006, p. 5). The RMI did not possess a fleet air arm, making them reliant upon the Regia Aeronautica Italiana (RAI), the Italian Air Force, for support. Air support from the RAI was difficult at best because the RMI had to compete with other branches of the Italian armed forces for RAI resources.

### **The Royal Navy**

The Mediterranean Fleet was under the command of Admiral Andrew Browne Cunningham whose nickname was (ABC). The Admiral was responsible for the defense of the Mediterranean supply lines through Alexandria, Gibraltar, and the key fortress of Malta. According to the Caravaggio, (2006) Admiral Cunningham's responsibilities were as follows:

- Destruction of the Italian fleet and merchant vessels, and German ships if they appear.
- Support of the Army in North Africa, for any expedition it might undertake.
- Safe conduct of British and Allied merchant ships through the Mediterranean and Red Sea.
- Prevention of enemy attack by sea on Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Egypt, or the Levant coast.

The Royal Navy (RN) in the Mediterranean had two formable fleets consisting of seven battleships, three aircraft carriers, six cruisers, one antiaircraft cruiser, twenty-nine destroyers and ten submarines (Caravaggio, 2006, p. 3). This armada was divided up into two main fleets, A and H. Force A, under the command of Admiral Cunningham, consisted of the armored aircraft carriers *Illustrious* and *Eagle*, plus the battleship *Warsprite*, and a squadron of destroyers which provided protection for the fleet. Force A was based at Alexandria and was responsible for the defense of the eastern Mediterranean including the Sicilian straits. Force H, under the command of Vice Admiral Sommerville, was built around the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*. In support of his fleet, he had the cruiser *Sheffield* and a screen of eight destroyers. Both fleets had smaller forces strategically located throughout the Mediterranean that could be called upon if needed to support other operations.

The RN's main bases were at Gibraltar, Malta and Alexandria with the Island of Malta being only 440 miles from the main Italian base at Taranto. From these bases the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force had tactical and strategic air forces that could be called upon to support fleet operations. Malta being only sixty miles south of Sicily, was a fleet refueling point between Gibraltar and Alexandria and was home to a forward submarine base (Caravaggio, 2006, p. 2). The presence of the Italian Battlefleet stationed at Taranto posed a threat to the sea lines of communication, specifically Malta. The island which was strategically located to the Sicilian channel became the focus of naval operations on both sides and became the key to control of the Mediterranean. The stage was set. The Italian's assuming a defensive posture were conserving their resources, and the British on the offensive, were looking for opportunities to destroy the Italian fleet.

### The British Plan to Strike First

Following the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, the RN thought of the Italians as aggressors and began developing war plans in the event they would have to confront the Italian Navy. One such plan was developed by Captain Arthur L. St. George Lyster on orders from Admiral Dudley Pound, currently the commander of the Mediterranean fleet. In 1935 Lyster was tasked with developing an attack plan on the heart of the Italian fleet based at Taranto. Lyster was in command of the HMS Glorious, the only aircraft carrier present in the Mediterranean theater of operations at the time. The fact that Lyster was in command of an aircraft carrier was significant in the fact that the naval doctrine at the time was centered around the use of the battleship as the primary instrument of naval warfare. According to Caravaggio the plan was as follows.

***“In general, Lyster’s plan envisioned a moonlit attack against the harbor, with torpedo-equipped planes striking the battleships moored in the outer harbor while bombers would aim for ships and installations in the inner basin” (Caravaggio, 2006, p. 7).***

The weapon of choice at the time was the Fairey Swordfish, nicknamed the Stringbag, referencing the cross-hatched net bag that housewives use to trundle home their groceries

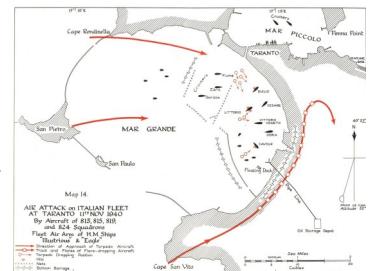


(Zimmer, 2013, p. 1). The Swordfish had a maximum speed of one hundred thirty-eight miles per hour and

with the use of auxiliary fuel tanks, had a range of one thousand thirty miles. The Swordfish was designed to carry bombs or torpedoes.

The RN was confident in their Fleet Air Arm to attack using air-launched torpedoes on enemy shipping. During the Battle of Dakar, also known as Operation Menace, the RN attacked the French battleship Richelieu using carrier borne aircraft. During this attack, the RN experimented with the depth and type of fuses used on their Mark XII torpedoes. The British armed three Mark XII with duplex pistols and three with contact pistols. The duplex pistols were set to run at thirty-eight feet and the contact pistols were set to run at twenty-four feet. All six torpedoes were set to run at forty knots. Richelieu was hit by one of the torpedoes carrying the duplex pistol. Duplex pistols differ from the contact pistols in that they are designed to detonate when they encounter the magnetic field of the target. The contact pistols were engineered to detonate when they come into physical contact with the target. When the torpedo carrying the duplex trigger traveled under Richelieu the magnetic field of her own hull triggered the weapon to explode. What the British had learned is that the torpedoes armed with the duplex pistol were able to mitigate the effectiveness of the torpedo netting by traveling under them, while the contact pistol torpedoes slammed into the netting. For this reason, Planners of Judgement decided to arm their torpedoes with duplex pistols for the attack on the RMI at Taranto.

In preparation for the attack, Lyster’s plan needed to be revised before it could be put into operation. It was decided that the plan had to be adjusted to account for the Italian defenses. For



this, the RN needed intelligence information on the state of the intended target. Flying from Malta, the RAF kept the harbor under constant surveillance up until the day of the attack. Photoreconnaissance not only identified the ships in port, but it also provided exact locations of the barrage balloons, gun emplacements and torpedo netting. The Italians, had originally intended to deploy ninety balloons, but because of the shortage of hydrogen, they were only able to deploy twenty-seven. (Caravaggio, 2006, p. 9).

**(Part 2 “The Attack” will be published in the July 2023 Newsletter)**



(Reprinted from American Legion Post 639 Newsletter, July 2021)

Photo courtesy of US Fish and Wildlife Service)

*In honor of the 81st Anniversary of the Battle of Midway, we are reprinting the portion of Sgt. Ed Fox's recollections of being on the island during the battle. Ed is the last surviving Marine who was on the island during the battle. He was serving on Midway with the 6th Defense Battalion, Fleet Marine Force, at the time of the Battle of Midway, 4-6 June 1942. His post was a machine-gun bunker on the south-eastern shore of Sand Island, the larger of the two islands situated at the southern end of the Midway Atoll lagoon.*

**We go to "Condition Red"** - The day the Japanese attacked Midway will never leave my memory. At one hour before sunrise all personnel on the island went to Condition Red. This had been a normal routine every morning. Word had been passed down that the IJN was close, and an assault on the island was imminent. Not many of us had slept that night. I had spent four hours on beach patrol during the night and my adrenaline was very active on this morning.

During the battle, I was to remain stationed at my machine-gun position on the south-eastern tip of Sand Island. We were charged with guarding the southern tip of Sand Island. Our sole job was to deny the enemy any foothold on the island. I had a .30 caliber water-cooled machine-gun, a .30 caliber BAR, a .45 cal. pistol, 50 fragmentation hand grenades, and two rolls of toilet paper. We joked about the TP. We figured that if we expended all our munitions we'd sure as hell need the TP.

A short time after sunrise, we stood down from Condition Red to a lesser alert. But then, as we ate our cold breakfast, the sirens began to sound, returning us to Condition Red. The IJN had been sighted! My machine-gun bunker was pretty well covered with coral sand and foliage, and had a single open port towards the sea. Sitting waiting, watching the sea out that small port was nerve racking. The Marines manning the beach MG bunkers had to stay underground so as not to draw fire or reveal the location of our bunkers to the Japanese.

**The Japanese bombs begin to fall** - Now it was a waiting game. I do not remember the exact time but the sirens sounded again. Word was passed on the sound power phones that the IJN planes were sighted and to take cover. I waited in my mole hole. Anti-aircraft (AA) fire could be heard, and bombs that were dropped on the island could be heard. The bombardment lasted only a few minutes. The nearby AA guns ceased firing. I then went topside to get a view of the island, and observed the north end in smoke and flames. A single IJN plane came in from the south-west at a low altitude, seemingly headed right for me. I headed for my safe hole again.

**So few of our planes return** - Later that morning, as I waited for our returning planes - sitting in the foliage - hardly a Midway-

based plane returned; only a few of our planes - from a carrier, I was told later. So many flew off that day to deny the enemy access to Midway and to protect me; many never to return. To this day, I have the highest respect for those men. They did not know me, nor I them. What they did was their job, that they were trained to do. They gave the ultimate sacrifice though. I have often wondered if I could have been that brave.

**Midway in Retrospect** - On paper our Midway defenses may have looked great, but the issue would have been in doubt if we'd been invaded. At the time I was untried, untested, too young and cocky to realize the consequences of combat. Iwo Jima taught me how foolish I had been at Midway.

Had the IJN begun to shell us, my position would not have held up. Even a near miss would have brought the coral sand down in front of the port, blinding us for sure. Had the enemy gained the island where would we go? We would stay and fight, doing what we had been trained for.

Since then, I have given much thought to that "what if". Here we are holding off the IJN landing parties. Just maybe, the Army Air Corps or Navy air from Pearl could come to our rescue. We should have had a sizable force in Hawaii air and afloat, at least enough to distract the enemy from landing.

We would have held the ground we were assigned to protect at a terrible loss. I just pray that I would have been as brave as the Navy and Marines that attacked the carriers that day, but were unable to return.

After Midway, I trained as a forward observer for artillery and air support with the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division. I was on the third wave at Iwo Jima and called in several emergency barrages from a battleship. It might have been the *Iowa*. I experienced then what a Navy bombardment and two divisions of Marine artillery can do. ***If the tables had been turned around, we would have been hurting at Midway.***



Japanese carrier-launched bombers have withdrawn after striking Midway on the morning of 4 June 1942. In this view of Sand island, the camera is facing south-west and shows the bomb-damaged laundry building in the foreground and burning oil tanks in the distance. Ed Fox's machine-gun bunker was located beyond the burning oil tanks and on the shore line



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