



The Hezzie Gazette

Official Newsletter of Hezzie Griffis American Legion Post 30

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Commander's Comments

Reflecting on an Outstanding Year

As 2024 comes to a close, I encourage everyone to take pride in our achievements. This year has been defined by service, growth, and community engagement, and I'm proud of all we've accomplished. Let's take a moment to reflect on the highlights of our year.

A major milestone was hosting our first-ever Oratorical Contest. This program provides a platform for youth in our community to develop essential public speaking skills, deepen their understanding of the Constitution and its principles, and compete for significant scholarship awards. It serves as a stepping stone for their personal growth and civic engagement, laying a foundation we can continue to strengthen in the years ahead.



In May, we had the honor of presenting scholastic medals to two outstanding cadets from the Strom Thurmond Navy JROTC program. Recognizing their academic and leadership achievements highlights our commitment to supporting youth excellence and fostering the next generation of leaders.

As we have in previous years, we joined forces with Posts 154 and 222 and the VFW Post 6932 to host county-wide Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies. These events offered our community an opportunity to come together to honor and remember the sacrifices of those who have served. Veterans Day was particularly special as we held a ceremony at the Edgefield Post-Acute nursing home for the first time, ensuring the veterans there were honored and reminded that their sacrifices will never be forgotten.



Our youth programs also thrived this year. We sponsored four students for Palmetto Boys State and our Auxiliary sponsored five students for Palmetto Girls State providing them with opportunities to grow as leaders and citizens. Additionally, our flag education class at W. E. Parker Elementary School taught the students about the significance of our nation's flag, fostering respect and patriotism in the next generation.





Our fundraising efforts, including the annual pecan fundraiser, the rifle raffle, and participation in the Edgefield Block Party, were outstanding. These events not only raised a significant amount of money to support our programs, but they also offered opportunities for community engagement and member participation.

In late September, adversity came calling in Hurricane Helene, disrupting our sense of normalcy. Despite the upheaval, our community rallied together with resilience and strength. Through our buddy check, we reached out to ensure everyone was safe, and Post 30 members supported each other in the aftermath, proving that no matter the challenges, we can always count on each other to pull through.



As we prepare for 2025, we must challenge ourselves to do even more. Volunteering during events and actively recruiting new members are critical to maintaining our momentum and ensuring the future of Post 30. Each of us plays a vital role in the success of our mission. Thank you for your continued dedication and support— together, we will continue to thrive.

-- Winston Boddie, Post 30 Commander

The Story of the Christmas Truce



It was Christmas Eve, December 1914, in the muddy trenches of the World War I Western Front -- narrow ditches dug from the Belgian coast to Switzerland -- a most incredible event occurred between British and German soldiers fighting a very bloody and destructive conflict. Fighting stopped and Christmas was shared among adversaries in true Biblical sense, *"Peace on Earth, Goodwill Toward Men"*.

It was totally remarkable, most likely to never be seen again. Late Christmas eve, British Expeditionary Force soldiers heard German troops across the trenches singing Christmas carols, and they saw lanterns and small trees along the trenches. In the darkness, some British soldiers began to sing back. A German soldier shouted in English, "Come over here." A British sergeant answered, "You come half way, I come half way."

On Christmas morning, British and German soldiers met in "no man's land," exchanged gifts of tobacco and wine, took photographs and played impromptu soccer. There were handshakes and words of kindness. "There was not an atom of hate on either side," said one British machine gunner. They also, in the lull, buried their dead.

While some officers worried that truces would undermine the fighting spirit, they nevertheless spread. Small pockets of French and Belgian troops held cease-fires as well. Despite isolated brief truces later in the war, the high commands on both sides tried to prevent such occurrences. One German scolded his fellow soldiers saying, "Such a thing should not happen in wartime. Have you no sense of honor left?" That 25-year old soldier was Adolf Hitler. Another German soldier said, "Today we have peace, tomorrow you fight for your country. I fight for mine. Good luck!"

And, Christmas was over.

-- J.W. "Pete" Peterson, correspondent at large

From the Adjutant's Desk

We are pleased to report that **77.6%** of our membership has already paid their **2025 Dues**—fantastic progress! If you haven't yet submitted your dues, please consider doing so soon to help us reach our goal of 100% dues paid this year.

We would like to welcome our 3 New members to our Post family:

- Eugene Maxwell, Air Force, Gulf War
- Jacob Smith III, Navy and Air Force, Global War on Terror and Gulf War
- Burdette Gage, Marine Corps, Vietnam

Dues can be paid in several convenient ways:

In Person: Bring cash or check to our monthly meeting.

By Mail: Send a check made payable to American Legion Post 30 to:

American Legion Post 30
P.O. Box 30
Edgefield, SC 29824

Online: Visit Mylegion.org to pay your dues electronically.

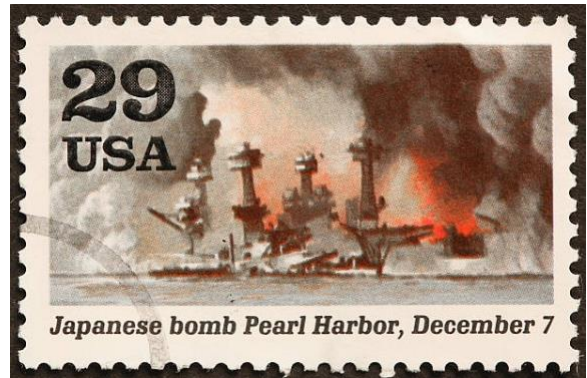
Let's make the **2024-2025** year our strongest yet! If you have any questions about membership or know someone interested in joining, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

"The service of America's Veterans never truly ends."
-- Jane Doolittle, Post 30 Adjutant



The men and women of Hezzie Griffis Post 30 wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2025.

Hey, Those Mitsubishi's Weren't Passenger Cars!



It was a balmy 71° Sunday morning in Honolulu that December 7th 1941. Gentle northeasterly trade winds drifted across Oahu Island, Hawaii. It was a perfect day to spend at the beach and sip a Piña Colada. A radar operator on Oahu spotted a large group of airplanes on his screen headed toward the island. He alerted his supervisor who told him not to worry as it was probably Air Corps B-17 bombers headed to Hickam Field. Back in Washington, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt just finished his lunch in the Oval Office, to turn attention to his stamp collection, when the telephone rang. It was the Secretary of the Navy insisting to speak with the president. The Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor just before 8 a.m. lasting about an hour and 15 minutes.

The Japanese attack force consisted of 353 aircraft launched from four carriers. There were 40 torpedo planes, 103 bombers, 131 dive bombers and 79 fighter aircraft, including Mitsubishi's considered to be the finest of their kind. There was also an armada of two heavy cruisers, 35 submarines, two light cruisers, nine oilers, two battleships, and 11 destroyers.

The surprise attack was devastating, what President Roosevelt called a "Day of Infamy," an event of supreme disgrace or evil. Some 2,403 American service members, including 68 civilians were lost, about half on the sunken battleship "Arizona." Nineteen U.S. ships were damaged or destroyed including seven more battleships. Fortunately, three U.S. aircraft carriers at sea survived. The Japanese were unable to locate them.

This is why Americans acknowledge December 7th each year with the battle cry "Remember Pearl Harbor!"

-- by J. W. "Pete" Peterson, correspondent at large

Chaplain's Corner

BETTER TO GIVE THAN RECEIVE

Christmas is upon us! As is Hannukah! Tis the season! December goes by quickly, filled with holiday events. When I was in college, a friend and I visited a nursing home for the terminally ill on December 25th. Sadly, very few residents had any decorations up or even knew that it was Christmas Day. Except for one woman. My spirits lifted as I entered her room and commented that she had three small trees and several cards! She grumbled and exclaimed "who cares?!" She said her family lived less than 2 hours away and sent cards but hadn't been to visit with her in over a year. At that point I totally understood how much more important time with family is than gifts and cards.

As a boy, I loved to dream of Christmas morning as I looked at all the toys in the Sears catalog. Never got most of what I asked for. But now, as an adult, it really doesn't matter if I get anything for Christmas. I would rather give to others and see the joy on their faces. It is all about time spent with family and giving to others. And it is about not forgetting those in nursing homes or in their own homes alone, who have nobody for the holidays.

God loved us to send us the greatest gift of all - his Son Jesus. At least that's how I see it. That's what Christmas means to me. Because God loved me first, I can love others. We take nothing at all to our graves. But in our waning years we recall those precious moments spent with family and friends. May this holiday season be ALL ABOUT that for YOU! Leave nobody behind. Give of your time. Doesn't hurt your wallet too much and is the most rewarding gift of all!

Love ya! Chappy

-- William Beaver, Post 30 Chaplain ☒



Veterans, A New Mission Awaits, The Honor Flight



"You made us feel so special. It's a trip I'll never forget."
Vietnam Veteran

Veterans, like others, are often bombarded (probably not the best word choice for a veteran) with offers of FREE stuff. But like the old saying, "There's no such thing as a free lunch," such offers are frequently marketing scams. But how would you like a truly FREE trip to Washington, DC. with other veterans to see the memorials that stand in your honor? And it's legitimate!

A non-profit organization called the *Honor Flight Network* invites you to participate in such an event, at absolutely no cost to you. More than 300,000 veterans have already attended, and you can too if you were a service member during specified wartime eras like Korean and Vietnam conflicts. You needn't have been in combat. A typical tour day might include the National WWII Memorial, Korean War Memorial, Vietnam War Memorial, and other sites such as the Lincoln Memorial, Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington, and Audie Murphy grave site. A TLC program gives priority to terminally ill veterans placing them at the top of the list of participants. Wheelchairs and oxygen supply are not a hindrance to participation. Travel, meals, lodging and volunteer guardians are provided. The veteran need not bring money except maybe for souvenirs and the like. The American Legion is among contributors supporting this program.

Honor Flight is operated by participating non-profit organizations through 128 regional "hubs." The Lone Eagle Honor Flight hub services Edgefield County. Honor Flights are a first-come first-served program and there are waiting lists. For more information and to apply, check out the Lone Eagle Honor Flight website: <https://loneeagle.honorflight.org/lone-eagle-applications/> or call: (937) 521-2400. Fly like an eagle, and happy landings.

-- J. W. "Pete" Peterson, correspondent at large

Edgefield Block Party Update

Our booth at the Edgefield Block Party was a tremendous success. We brought in \$715 in sales and received an additional \$95 in tips, with over half of these transactions made using our new electronic payment system. This system made a significant difference, allowing us to serve more customers and streamline the process.

Even more significant than the sales, we welcomed three new members to Post 30 during the event. Growing our membership is always our top priority, and this success underscores the importance of engaging with the community. We also had the chance to meet and interact with several veterans who expressed interest in learning more about Post 30 and our activities. By collecting their contact information, we'll be able to share our monthly newsletter and keep them informed about the work we do, with the hope that they'll decide to join our Post in the future.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to make this event possible. These types of opportunities not only help raise funds but also build connections within the community and strengthen our Post. If you've been considering volunteering, events like this are a great way to get involved, meet new people, and make a meaningful impact. Your participation can help us reach even greater heights.

On the Horizon

Fall Pecan Fundraiser: Our pecans arrived in early November and have been flying out the door. Our ordered totaled 576 bags and we have already sold over 500, with the response being nothing short of incredible. We are quickly running low on everything. If you want to stock up or need more for your holiday baking and gifting, let us know ASAP to ensure you don't miss out.

2025 Rifle Raffle Fundraiser: We officially kicked off our 2025 rifle raffle fundraiser at the Edgefield Block Party, selling 19 tickets and raising \$190 for the post. Fifteen of those tickets were purchased using our electronic payment system, highlighting how crucial this capability is to our fundraising efforts.

Tickets are available now and make great gifts—perfect for Christmas. If you'd like to purchase tickets or help by selling some, please let us know. Every ticket sold helps

support our programs and activities throughout the year.

As a reminder, Sportsman's Warehouse is rewarding each winner with a gift card equal to the cost of the firearm associated with that drawing. This gives winners the flexibility to either purchase the firearm or use the gift card toward other merchandise at Sportsman's Warehouse—an excellent feature to highlight when talking with potential buyers.

Annual Christmas Party: Reservations for our annual Christmas Party is complete and we have 52 confirmed attendees. Our guest speaker, Bob Woodyard, will share stories of Christmas time in a mill town, offering a nostalgic perspective on the season. We'll also take a moment to recognize several members for their continuous years of membership in The American Legion, celebrating their dedication and service.

The meal, prepared by Third Generation features pork loin, rice and gravy, lima beans, mac and cheese, rolls, and tea (sweet and unsweet), with a choice between red velvet cake, chocolate layer cake, or pound cake with lemon icing for dessert. To add to the fun, there will be a few door prizes handed out throughout the night, so be sure to grab a ticket when you arrive.

We look forward to seeing everyone there and celebrating another successful year together.



Treat Everyone Like They're Fascinating, Because They Are, And So Are You

CNN recently published this short editorial in their newsletter "The Good Stuff" and encouraged me to pass it along. It's words that may guide you to strong interpersonal relationships like we find in our American Legion Post 30 camaraderie and help attract new Post 30 members to the fold. Here they are:

"I've never met someone who wasn't fascinating in some way," it said, "given the time, patience and safety to reveal themselves. The person you sit next to on a park bench is an international buyer for a major coffee chain, or maybe they have been playing the oboe for 30 years. The person in the next room in the retirement home is a veteran with multiple honors and a set of very colorful nicknames. The person behind you in line at the grocery store had an upbringing so vastly different than yours that you could ask them questions for hours and still feel you were just scratching the surface. Your neighbors are fluent in multiple languages, your coworker in their 60s can make a perfect three-point shot every time. Treat everyone like they're fascinating, because they are, and so are you."

-- An Opinion by J. W. "Pete" Peterson, correspondent at large

Calendar of Events

December 14, 2024

Wreaths Across America, 1000, Sunset Gardens

December 19, 2024

Annual Christmas Party beginning at 1800

January 9, 2025

Executive Committee Meeting at 1800

January 11, 2025

District 17 Meeting at 1000, Post 30

January 16, 2025

Monthly Meeting, dinner at 1800, meeting at 1830

January 18 or 25, 2025

Tentative date of Post 30 Oratorical Contest, time and place TBD

February 8, 2025

Quadrant two Oratorical Contest, 1000, Post 20 in Greenwood, 106 Main St, N. Greenwood

February 13, 2025

Executive Committee Meeting at 1800

February 20, 2025

Monthly Meeting, dinner at 1800, meeting at 1830

NOTE IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING:

You must call Jane Doolittle (803-480-1061) or email the post no later than the Monday prior to our scheduled meeting so we can have an accurate headcount for dinner.

