



# The Hezzie Gazette

*Official Newsletter of Hezzie Griffis American Legion Post 30*

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## Commander's Comments

### Securing the Future of Post 30

As we look ahead to the future of Post 30, our membership vision for 2025 is clear: retain our current members and recruit new ones. I'm proud to be a veteran and member of Post 30, and I make it a priority to renew my membership dues every year without fail. I encourage every one of you to do the same. Our dues help to keep our Post operational and support The American Legion's crucial programs. Without these resources, Post 30 and The American Legion would not be able to operate effectively.

Recruiting new members is a challenge, but one we can overcome with a concerted effort. Over the next few months, we will develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy that represents Post 30 values. This process will begin with a brainstorming session to generate a list of ideas, which we will then refine into actionable steps. Once we have a well-thought-out plan of action approved by our members, we can begin implementing it.

Our marketing approach will be key as we move forward. Where should we focus our efforts, and how do we present our ideas to potential members? Come to our next meeting ready to participate in the discussion.

To provide some context for our current membership, let's look at the numbers. Over the past 5 1/2 years, we have lost 17 members, while adding 21 – a modest gain of just four members. While every new member is important, this growth is not sufficient to ensure a healthy future for our post. Especially considering our median member age is approaching 77. While these statistics reveal challenges, there is still hope. With the

right approach, we can engage the approximately 2,000 veterans in Edgefield County and recruit them into future members of Post 30.

The future of Post 30 lies in our hands. Together, let's ensure it remains a valuable resource for our community.

-- Winston Boddie, Post 30 Commander

### South Carolinian Elected American Legion National Vice Commander



Legionnaire Joseph "Joe" Lysaght of James Island, South Carolina has been elected as one of the five new American Legion national vice commanders at the 105th American Legion National Convention held in New Orleans which concluded on August 29th. He joins the Legion's executive staff headed by the newly elected National Commander James LaCoursiere of Moosup, Connecticut, four other new vice commanders and six constitutionally mandated officers to lead the American Legion nationally into the 2024-2025 operational year.

Vice Commander Lysaght is a veteran of the US Air Force and South Carolina State Guard from which he retired as a lieutenant colonel in 2014. He has held extensive leadership roles at the post, district, department, and national levels. Notably, he served as the Department of South Carolina Commander from 2015 to 2016 and spent eight years as the Deputy Director of Veterans Affairs for Charleston County. He has been a life member of the Ralph H. Johnson American Legion Post 147 in James Island since 1998 and is a recipient of South Carolina's Order of the Silver Crescent award for his exemplary service to the state.

Other newly elected national vice commanders include James Kellogg of Adams, Minnesota; Charles "Chuck" Robbins of Seaside Heights, New Jersey; Gary B. Leach of Woodland, California; and Roger Mathison of Coon Valley, Wisconsin.

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

### **Adjutant Advisory**

We gained another new member since our last Newsletter, Justin Bailey! Our Post is currently at 55 members and 31 members have paid their 2025 Dues. We are at 56% for paid 2025 Dues. Let's keep the momentum going!

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

We accept cash or check, and you can turn in your dues to me at our monthly meeting, or you can mail your check, made payable to American Legion Post 30, to:

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

Thank you for being part of our Post 30 family!

-- Jane Doolittle, Post 30 Adjutant

### **Welcome Post 30 Newest Member**

Justin Bailey, Corporal, U.S. Marine Corps, served from 2003 to 2008 as a Special Intelligence Communicator assigned to the Marine Cryptologic Support Battalion at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. In 2005, he deployed to Anbar Province, Iraq, with the II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Justin was born and raised in upstate South Carolina and currently serves as the Assistant Varsity Football

Coach at Wardlaw Academy. His wife, Libby, is a U.S. Navy veteran who served from 1999 to 2008. Their son, Colt, is a senior, football team captain, and Student Body President at Wardlaw Academy, where he attended Palmetto Boys State this summer as a Post 30 delegate. Their daughter, Charlotte, is a sophomore, cheerleader, and basketball player at Wardlaw Academy.

On behalf of everyone at Post 30, let's welcome Justin and his family as our newest members!

### **Happy Birthday U.S. Air Force . . . And Many More!**



The United States Air Force turns 77 on Wednesday, September 18. Its origins however date back to a decision made just four years after the Wright brothers made their first airplane flight in 1903 at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Their craft, a powered heavier-than-air flying machine with a 40-foot wingspan hit 30 miles-per-hour in human-controlled sustained flight. This momentous occasion heralded the era of manned flight.

By 1907, the U.S. Army Signal Corps established an Aeronautical Division which grew bigger as aviation technology grew throughout World War II. By 1947, the Army Air Corps became the United States Air Force, an autonomous service. Today's Air Force is comprised of around 5,000 aircraft of all descriptions, about 400 ICBMs – Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles – and some 320,000 officers, airmen and civilian employees, growing leaner but meaner from rapidly advancing warfare technology.

Air Force history also embraces an interesting story about its service song that begins "Off We Go Into The Wild Blue Yonder . . ." In 1938, Liberty magazine sponsored a contest for a spirited musical composition to become the official Army Air Corps song. Of 757 scores submitted, the one by a composer and pilot named Robert MacArthur Crawford (1899-1961) was selected, believe it or not, by a committee of Air Corps wives. The song is now known as "The Air Force Song."

On a personal note, Robert Crawford was one of my mentors. With "Air" as my Zodiac element and my middle name being of a family friend survivor of the 1937 Hindenburg disaster, it's tongue-in-cheek like being ordained to become a pilot. Crawford was a great guy for whom I'm most grateful for encouraging my Air Force career.

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

## Chaplain's Corner

### Setting Boundaries is Healthy

As an active-duty Army Chaplain I serve as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. I counsel individuals, couples and families of all ages and eras at my Fort Eisenhower office. (By the way, I can also provide free professional level, 100% confidential counseling at no cost to all military retirees, if you are ever interested call 706-564-7769.)

I cannot tell you how often the topic of setting boundaries comes up during many of my counseling sessions. You see, a lot of folks find themselves struggling with some relatives or friends who tend to exert a negative influence on them. Feelings such as guilt, fear, or a sense of duty, sometimes prevent a person from telling the other person their honest feelings. As a result, they allow the unhelpful person to exert a lot of undue stress on them. Why is it that even when we as grown adults with years of life experience behind us, have difficulty setting boundaries and simply saying "no" to people who think they know better about decisions we should make? Maybe because we have big hearts and don't want to hurt someone's feelings. Sometimes, the hardest people to set healthy boundaries with are people who share our last name.

Honestly, there are some people in my own family and wider circle of friends whom I have had to set some boundaries with. I am not the same person I was in my youth, yet those in my family who never seem to want to let me grow up tend to bring up the past far too often. They tend to stick their noses into my healthy relationships due to jealousy, pride, and sometimes a sense of self-righteousness, offering a lot of unsolicited advice. My wife Jane noticed, for instance, how I would grind my teeth when I was on the phone with my mother. I love my mother but for years she has needed professional help, and I am not the person to provide that. When I finally had the courage to ask her to get help so that we could have a healthy mature

relationship, she balked. As painful as it was, I had to set a boundary with her for my own mental and emotional health. Setting boundaries with loved ones is difficult, but necessary if we want to experience a happy life and relationship with our partner. You are never too old to set a boundary with someone for your own health.

As we approach the holiday season, I encourage you to assess your relationships and see if there are some boundaries you may need to set with some people. You are worth it, and there is no rule that says you must live up to someone else's expectations. Ask the Lord for help setting boundaries and seek professional help if needed.

Blessings,

-- William Beaver, Post 30 Chaplain

### My Buddy Warren is Missing in Action

Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Recognition Day on September 20<sup>th</sup> stirs personal memories of a USAF pilot friend who was shot down and went missing during a combat mission in Laos some 58 years ago. Warren and I had flown together as multi-engine airplane pilots, but his ambition was always to fly single-engine fighter aircraft.

By 1966, Warren had distinguished himself as a Forward Air Controller flying small single-propeller Cessna O-1 aircraft in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam conflict. He had earned a Silver Star and five Distinguished Flying Cross medals. It was a dangerous job, locating enemy targets and marking them for fighter aircraft air strikes. On June 22<sup>nd</sup> of that year his aircraft was struck and he crash landed his plane in a jungle clearing. A fighter aircraft pilot buzzed the area and saw Warren slumped in the cockpit. That was the last time he was seen. Warren Parker Smith, Jr.'s name is today enshrined on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall in Washington D.C. along with those of over 58,000 servicemen and women who lost their life in the Vietnam war.

Post 30 asks you this POW/MIA Recognition Day to honor the sacrifices of American service members who lost their life or are unaccounted for. Fly your POW/MIA flag purposefully and participate in outward displays of support whenever you can. It's the American thing to do.

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

## Humor in Uniform: A Drill Sergeant's Rivalry

Back when I was a drill sergeant at Fort Huachuca, AZ, I marched my soldiers to and from the classroom every day, proudly parading past the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps barracks. We called cadence with passion, and my soldiers took immense pride in being in perfect step and loud enough to make the other services envious, especially the Marines. Try as they might, the Marines could never match the excellence of my soldiers, so they hatched a plan to even the score.

One day, while I was eating lunch in the mess hall, my drill sergeant hat mysteriously disappeared from the hat rack—an unthinkable offense! Luckily, I had a spare in my office, so I sent a soldier to retrieve it. A few days later, as we marched to class, my hat reappeared in front of the Marine Corps barracks, but with a Marine Corps hat badge replacing mine.

I still have that Marine Corps hat badge as a trophy of our friendly rivalry. They may have taken my hat, but they could never outshine my soldiers!

-- Winston Boddie

## On the Horizon

**September Meeting:** Don't miss our upcoming meeting, where Post 30 and the Auxiliary will welcome our Boys State and Girls State delegates along with their families. They will share their experiences and insights, and we will present them with certificates to honor their participation in these valuable programs.

**Fall Pecan Fundraiser:** Our pecan order has been placed, and we will distribute the presale slips to all those interested in selling pecans at our September meeting.

**Edgefield Block Party:** Save the date for the Edgefield Block Party hosted by Christine's Farm to Fork on Saturday, September 28, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Christine has generously provided us a free vendor spot, allowing us to engage with attendees, promote Post 30's mission, recruit new members, and presell pecans.

Volunteers are needed for setup, staffing, and takedown. If you're interested, please contact Winston Boddie at 803-761-2508 or email [alpost30sc@gmail.com](mailto:alpost30sc@gmail.com).

**Annual Christmas Party:** Join us for our Christmas party on December 19 at 6:00 PM at the Post! The menu will

feature pork roast, two sides, and dessert, catered by 3rd Generation Catering & Restaurant. Ticket prices are still pending and will be available for presale soon. Deadline to purchase tickets is December 1. For further information or to purchase tickets, please contact Jane Doolittle (803-480-1061) or email the post at [alpost30sc@gmail.com](mailto:alpost30sc@gmail.com). We look forward to celebrating the season together!

## Calendar of Events

### September 14, 2024

District 17 Meeting at 1000, Saluda Post 65, 108 South Rudolph St, Saluda

### September 12, 2024

Executive Committee Meeting at 1800

### September 19, 2024

Monthly Meeting, Dinner at 1800, meeting at 1830. The menu will feature Chris's bacon chicken wraps accompanied by baked beans, Alan's green beans and potatoes, Allen's famous pan cornbread, and Ellis Firehouse chocolate cake for dessert.

### September 28, 2024

Edgefield Block Party, 1000 to 1500, Edgefield Town Square

### October 10, 2024

Executive Committee Meeting at 1800

### October 17, 2024

Monthly Meeting, Dinner at 1800, meeting at 1800

### October 25-27, 2024

2024 SC Department Fall Conference, The Columbia Marriott, 1200 Hampton St, Columbia

### November 11, 2024

Veterans Day Ceremony, Edgefield Veterans' Memorial Park, Time TBD

### November 14, 2024

Executive Committee Meeting at 1800

### November 21, 2024

Monthly Meeting, Dinner at 1800, meeting at 1800

## 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.