



The Hezzie Gazette

Official Newsletter of Hezzie Griffis American Legion Post 30

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January 2025



Commander's Comments

Lead the Way: Your Involvement Matters

As we welcome 2025, we have a chance to embrace new opportunities and set meaningful goals. Let's reflect on our personal aspirations and consider how we can collectively strengthen Post 30. Together, we can build on our successes from 2024 and make 2025 even more impactful.

When we set personal resolutions, we examine ourselves and identify areas for improvement or goals we want to achieve. Let's apply that same introspection as we consider how we can enhance Post 30. The first question I would like you to ponder is: What is your why? Why did you join The American Legion? What attracted you to become a member of Post 30?

As we consider our individual whys, I encourage you to think about how these motivations can translate into action. Post 30 supports various programs and activities that need your unique talents and passions.

Whether you're interested in supporting veterans, mentoring youth, or engaging with the community, there are many ways to contribute. As we embark on this new year, I challenge each of you to identify at least one program or activity you would like to **lead** or **volunteer** for. By participating, we honor our commitment to service and strengthen the camaraderie that makes Post 30 special. Please share your ideas on how you wish to contribute so we can work together to create a plan for the year ahead.

Additionally, let's work on strategies to recruit new members. Invite fellow veterans to join us at upcoming events or meetings. By sharing your experiences with

Post 30, we can inspire others to become involved. Increasing our membership will enhance our capacity to support our fellow veterans and play a crucial role in securing the future of our Post.

Let's make 2025 a year of growth, solidarity, and engagement. Together, we can create lasting change and ensure that Post 30 continues to thrive for years to come.

-- Winston Boddie, Post 30 Commander

Rock Music That Ended Conflict in The Americas



I've never been a fan of rock music, hard nor punk, but I do have awe for the part that certain rock played in bringing about an end to a distinctively small, short, contemporary conflict in Panama. It all started with Operation Just Cause, an invasion begun in mid-December 1989 to depose *de facto* ruler Manuel Noriega and extradite him to the U.S. to face racketeering and drug trafficking charges.

The initial attack focusing primarily on Noriega's headquarters in Panama City occurred in darkness just five days before Christmas. U.S. forces overcame most organized resistance in short order. But Noriega eluded

capture by taking refuge in the *papal nunciature* [embassy] . At this point Psyops [psychological operations] folks took over, launching a sonic assault, blasting nonstop rock music at deafening levels targeting Noriega's sanctuary. Just imagine, ten days of pop rock with titles you may have never heard of, like The Clash's "*I Fought The Law*" with lyrics "breaking rocks in the hot sun"; Van Halen's "*Panama*" words "an on-ramp comin' through my bedroom"; "*All I Want Is You*" by U2 with "from cradle to the grave"; and Bruce Cockburn's "*If I Had A Rocket Launcher*" with its most controversial lyric, "If I had rocket launcher, some son-of-a-b***h would die".

Needless to say, the words of these renditions may have been as demoralizing as their volume. A deafened Noriega surrendered on January 3, 1990, and was taken into custody by DEA [Drug Enforcement Agency] agents for transport to the states.

Chalk up the successful invasion of Panama with low casualties and rapid securing of the country as a political victory for the United States.

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

Coming Soon: The National High School Constitutional Speech Contest



The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program, known as the American Legion Oratorical Contest, is underway. This speech competition focuses on the U.S. Constitution and awards scholarships annually. Top national winners can receive up to \$25,000, with additional scholarships at the quadrant and department levels. The contest enhances appreciation of the U.S. Constitution while developing leadership skills, public speaking abilities, and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship. The National Finals are on May 16-18 in Hillsdale, Michigan. South Carolina orators have won the contest four times in past. See the On the Horizon column for details about the 2025 Post 30 contestant.

-- J. W. "Pete" Peterson, correspondent at large
American Legion Post 30 Newsletter

From the Adjutant's Desk

As of this Newsletter, 79.3% of our membership have paid their 2025 Dues.

When does my American Legion membership expire?

Your membership expires on Dec. 31 of the paid year shown on your membership card. It can be confusing because your annual dues are supposed to be paid by Jan. 1 each year, so National Headquarters starts accepting dues for the upcoming year on July 1. The goal is to have everyone renewed for the new year by Jan. 1. If Dues are not paid by Jan. 1, the member becomes delinquent. On Feb. 1, the member is suspended, and on June 30, the member is dropped from the membership rolls.

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. My phone number is: 803-480-1061.

"The service of America's Veterans never truly ends."

-- Jane Doolittle, Post 30 Adjutant

Waffles and Gumption

I signed on to the Internet the other day to learn that it was Waffle Day. As a lover of puns, my mind immediately drifted to waffle as meaning indecision, a failure to make up one's mind. And I thought is this why many American Legion posts are prone to report that it seems that ten percent of their membership does 100 percent of the work? I also thought of the word "gumption", spirited initiative and resourcefulness, with a Southern spin favoring to mean "courage" and "get-up-and-go." So where is the gumption in American Legion posts, I thought? It takes gumption to get things done, especially difficult things. Someone who accepts challenges and takes risks without being afraid has gumption. There is a significant parallel between what a former United States president who in 1961 said in a handwritten note concerning our citizenship, and Legion membership: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." It

equally applies to our participation in Legion affairs. Volunteerism is a core value of the American Legion and volunteers are considered the foundation of the organization. We need to reexamine the reasons we joined the Legion and act. So if it applies, please tell me it wasn't just to pay an annual membership fee and attend a monthly dinner meeting. You have "enlisted" in the Legion to serve your fellow veterans, and your commanders have laid out the mission. Unfurl your unique talents and let them shine. Let's consume the waffles and energize the get-up-and-go gumption to support our stated military objectives!

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

Chaplain's Corner

End of Year Inventory!

Every January lots of folks make New Year's resolutions. I've done so before and would give myself about a 70% success rate at keeping them, if I'm being honest. There is something that a lot of businesses do that gives me a better idea, though. My wife will be doing one at her Edgefield shop, The French Garden Market.

End of year inventories are where we take stock of what we have, what we lack and need to obtain, and what we no longer need. Imagine doing an end of the year inventory on ourselves? Think about it. What new skills or resources or knowledge have you gained the past year? Which of that do you want to hang onto? What things do you no longer need in your life? Material goods? Those old items you've been saving for who knows how long - but you still haven't used them. Would someone else appreciate them more? What old habits do you need to let go of? Any toxic people in your life you need to set boundaries with? What is something you need to obtain in 2025? A new habit? A new skill? An upgrade to your equipment?

January is indeed a time to look back, take an assessment, and look forward. But as your Chaplain, let me encourage all of us to pause to count the blessings God has brought into your life this past year. Thank HIM for them! And see if you can bless someone else this year with resources God has given you. A new year is always a fresh start. What will 2025 bring? I look forward to finding out! See you at our January meeting!

Blessings, Chaplain Beaver

-- William Beaver, Post 30 Chaplain ☑

Legionnaire Spotlight: For God and Country



Chaplain Branch Insignia

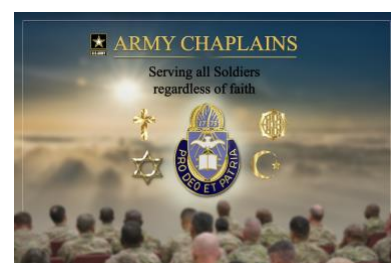
Two-hundred-fifty years ago, the Continental Congress established the military chaplaincy. Military chaplains have faithfully served in every American war since, providing spiritual and religious services to combat troops. Not surprisingly, Legion founders turned to military chaplains for spiritual leadership, charging them with the spiritual welfare of Post members.

William "Will" Beaver is the Chaplain for Post 30. He is currently an active-duty Army major serving as the Family Life Chaplain at Fort Eisenhower, Georgia. Chaplain Beaver has been a part of Post 30 for over two years and Legion member for more than 13 years. He's originally from Macon, Georgia, where he entered the Army at age 46 in 2011. He holds master's degrees in counseling, social work, and undergraduate education.

"I did not join Post 30 to become the Chaplain," says Beaver, but "I felt God calling me to accept." With over 20 years in ministry, and 13 more as a present active-duty U.S. Army chaplain, he says, "It's quite an honor to additionally serve the post. I have never been one to simply attend meetings, but love being as involved as my schedule allows," he adds.

I will continue being as involved as I can. I'm available as a licensed marriage and family therapist and counselor. My wife Jane and I will build a retirement home in Johnston in the near future. After retiring from the Army, I aspire to provide comprehensive counseling services free of charge to our members, extending my role beyond just leading prayers at meetings. I want to see our post membership grow and am encouraged to be part of such a vibrant organization.

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



Generous Donation Received

Post 30 received a \$500 donation from Dr. and Mrs. George M. Inabinet, Jr. This contribution will support our programs and activities throughout the year. Mrs. Inabinet is the daughter of former member and Commander Bob McKie. Thank you to Dr. and Mrs. Inabinet for their support.

On the Horizon



2025 Oratorical Contest: Post 30's contestant for the this year's oratorical contest is Elizabeth Parks from Wardlaw Academy. Elizabeth and her mother, Nikki, have been invited join us at our January meeting, where Elizabeth will present her competition speech.

In a format that emulates the contest, she will first deliver her prepared eight to ten-minute speech. Following that, an assigned topic will be drawn from a list of four designated amendments, and Elizabeth will have five minutes to prepare a three to five-minute speech on that topic. This format provides her with valuable practice before the competition.

Elizabeth will automatically advance to the quadrant level contest as we have only one contestant. The quadrant contest will be held at 1000 on Saturday, February 8, 2025, at Post 20 in Greenwood, located at 106 Main St, N. Greenwood. We invite all members to attend and show your support as she competes.

Fall Pecan Fundraiser: We still have a limited supply of pecans available, and need your help to sell the remaining bags. Currently, we have chocolate-covered, roasted & salted, and cinnamon glazed bags left. Let us know if you'd like to purchase or sell any.

2025 Rifle Raffle Fundraiser: Tickets are available. If you'd like to purchase tickets or assist in selling them, 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.

Calendar of Events

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.

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. Menu will be a breakfast meal with dessert TBD.

January 18 or 25, 2025

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

Farewell to a Commander in Chief



Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Naval officer and Legionnaire, dies Sunday, Dec. 29th, 2024, in Plains, GA. He was 100 years old and a 1946 graduate of the United States Naval Academy. He was a submariner rising to the rank of lieutenant. Thursday, Jan. 9, 2025, is declared a day of mourning. U.S. flags will be flown at half-staff.

A Night to Remember: Post 30 Christmas Party Unites Veterans and the Community



We can't keep it a secret any longer and you may have already heard: Edgefield Post 30 is ***the place for veterans*** to gather if you want to enjoy good company and make lifelong friendships. The most recent proof was the sound of laughter and camaraderie coming from the Post 30 annual Christmas party amid record turnout on December 19, 2024. Nearly 50 members, spouses, and honored guests crowded the brightly festive dining room, enjoyed top-notch entertainment, and dived into savory southern cooking. As we approach the end of another great year, it was the capstone event for connecting with new and old friends and reminiscing over our shared experiences supporting fellow veterans in our communities.

After dinner, a costumed Reverend Bob Woodyard delivered a humorous monologue that transported us back in time to Christmas 1929 in an old mill town. As poignant as it was funny, his story evoked a simpler era one in which community was made up of a crazy patch-work of personalities woven into the fabric of daily life. Through the laughter, we were reminded that we are still fortunate to enjoy a similar high quality of community bonds in Edgefield County today.

Another highlight of the evening was the opportunity to honor the legionnaires who have dedicated years of service to The American Legion and our community. Former Commander Tommy Tripp was thanked for his three years of leadership at Post 30 during his tenure. It was our privilege to bestow recognition on John Kemp for his 30 years of dedication. Also inspiring were honorees for 15 years of Post 30 service: Luther Beason, Jimmy McCary, and Wayland Winn. Representing the resilience of our growing ranks of "new" members were certificates for 5 years of service to William Asforis, Freddie Miles, Michael Bowers, and Winston Boddie. Long-distance and new member John (Pete) Peterson traveled across the country just for the gathering and was recognized for his well-researched and highly-entertaining article contributions as the Post 30 Hezzie Gazette newsletter "correspondent-at-large."

As the evening drew to a close the warmth of shared stories and laughter reminded all of us of the importance of service, community, and togetherness. We left with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to our mission and to looking forward to another year of service and fellowship within Post 30.



photos by Diane Peterson
Special to the Gazette