

# THE BEACON



**AMERICAN LEGION  
POST 202 COLUMBIA, MISSOURI  
November - 2025 Christmas  
event is December 17. No official  
meeting this month.**



**Commander Comments,**  
Legionnaires,

**“For unto us a child is born”**

And before you know it, it's December. The cold weather has started and the holiday season is in full swing. I would like to say thank you to all the members again for all the service you have given to this Nation.

As the holidays get more intense, I would like each of you to take the time to reach out to a fellow veteran and family just to check on them. Remember to be mindful of yourself also and take a little time for self-care.

Look forward to seeing everyone at 1700 (5pm) December 17th at the Holiday dinner as we share it with the VFW Post 280. Have a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Thank you,

Roy Stigers

Post 202 Commander

13DEC25 – Wreaths across America

15DEC25 – Army/Navy game, Go Army

17DEC25 - December's meeting will be our Holiday meal.

25DEC25 – Christmas Day

31DEC25 – New Year Eve

## Post meeting dates:

2026: January 21st, February 18th, March 18th, April 15th, May 20th

District Meetings for 2026.

January 11th Post 5 Jefferson City, 12:30

April 11th Post 317 In Freeburg, 1:00

June 14th Post 624 in Sunrise Beach, 11:00

September 13th Post 52 in Boonville, 1:00, K of C Hall, 1515 Radio Hill Road, Boonville.

Legionnaires,

Thank you,

Roy Stigers, Post 202 Commander

## Honor Guard News – Paul Hobbs

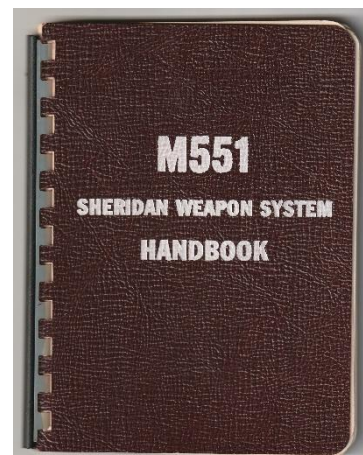
We've had several funerals in recent weeks. Were breaking out the winter uniforms to deal with the cold. We have ordered another batch of Honor Guard Challenge coins.



We had a funeral on Veteran's Day after which we gathered at the Olive Garden for a great lunch. We also had breakfast before the funeral at Hy Vee. It was a great breakfast and all attendees, and there were many, received a beautiful challenge coin.

**A thank you from a fellow veteran in New England.** Back in November I came across a Sheridan Tank Handbook on ebay. I bought it for \$18 including shipping. In my feedback to the

seller I made a comment that this will be a nice addition to our Sheridan tank at our American Legion Post. A week later I got a message that my money had been refunded. The seller was a veteran and happy to donate the book to our Post. This book has great photos of the tank inside and will be used to try to reinstall some of the equipment we got with it.



## EVENTS – Lorrie Mayes

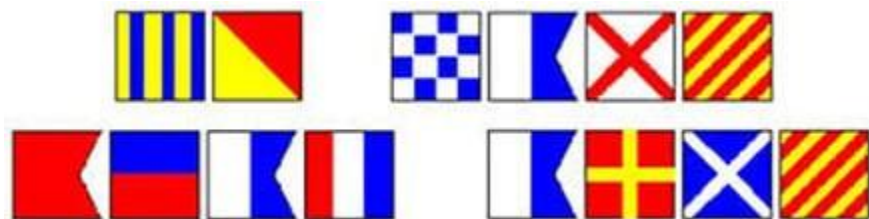
No big news about rentals at this time. We continue to be busy.



I hope everyone is gearing up for the Holiday Party! Mark your calendar for December 17th. Social starts at 5 pm with dinner at 6pm. This is a combined event with VFW Post 280.

There will be a presentation of their Patriot Pins and Voices of Democracy participants. There may be a game.

This year you do not need to bring any side dishes. The entire meal is being catered. You do need to RSVP by December 12th to rentalagentpost202@gmail.com or my cell phone 816-582-2834.





## **Legion Rider News- By Mike Williams**

After months of planning and preparation, the annual ALR Chapter 202 Toy Run and Craft Fair was held on November 1. Partnering with our friends at Head Motor Company, we were able to collect several saddlebags worth of toys and make a \$2,000 donation the Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots campaign before returning to the post for a delicious lunch and a ballroom full of vendors offering handmade Christmas gifts for sale. Huge thanks to all the Riders who participated, organized, and volunteered, as well as all the vendors and shoppers who spent the day with us.



**Toys For Tots donation**

One week after our own toy run, we continued the effort to ensure local kids have a good Christmas by participating in the Sovereign Disciples Toy Run. Additional fundraising efforts for the month included the Welcome Home Casino Night supporting area homeless veterans and the cancer research benefit in Salisbury. Finally, we purchased a memorial brick to support the Hallsville Police Foundation fundraiser. Altogether we made a total of \$4,698.03 in charitable donations and volunteered 428.5 hours of our time.



**Veteran's Day dinner**

In celebration of the Veterans Day holiday, we gathered at Olive Garden for dinner and supported the Moberly Veterans Day parade. We also honored six of our nation's fallen heroes as part of the post honor guard and Patriot Guard Riders. Social rides included trips to Marquart's Landing, Lake of the Ozarks, and Mike and Bridget McGuire's place where they hosted us for a dinner and campfire on one of the last warm nights of the year. This added up a total of 6,442 miles logged and \$639.15 spent in fuel during the month of November.



**Columbia Christmas Parade**

Finally, we began celebrating the holiday season with a potluck dinner at the post two days before Thanksgiving and had fifteen riders and 4 passengers in Columbia's Salvation Army Christmas Parade.

Looking forward, we are busy preparing for our Texas Hold Em Poker Night on January 26 in support of the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation and our Tuesday night Corn Hole league starting on January 20. Whether or not you are a card

player or bag thrower, please save these dates on the calendar and come out to join us some great winter fun.



### **December 2025 Sons of the American Legion Activities and Events - by Oliver Brilhante IV**

December will be a busy month for the Sons of the American Legion. We will be planning on helping with projects to improve the post and provide upgrades to the aesthetics of the building both inside and outside.

The Sons will be presenting their donation of \$210.00 earned through the November raffle to the Welcome Home Foundation to help the veterans of Columbia. Stay tuned for more information.

We are also planning on dedicating some of our time and efforts to community outreach and service in and around Columbia. Part of this effort will be to continue identifying and replacing torn or otherwise tattered American Flags, starting with not-for-profit organizations and veterans who may not be able to afford to replace their flag.

There is a continuing effort to recruit new Sons of the American Legion members and encourage active members to renew their membership. If you know someone who may qualify to be a Sons of the American Legion member, please let one of us know so we can plan on contacting them.

The current officers are planning on documenting their service by updating their photo for display at the post. We are hoping to have this done as soon as possible so stay tuned for more information to come.

SAL is also looking into serving dinner for those who attend the Friday night poker nights at the post. We will meet via zoom Tuesday December 9th at 5:30pm to discuss and vote on any agenda items.

### **Did You Know - by Paul Hobbs**

#### **Uncle Joe, Flak, B-24s and Col. Jimmy Stewart**



**Uncle Joe Boone and crew. Uncle Joe is tall man in the back.**

How often do you learn about important events in someone's life only after their death? My Uncle Joe Boone's service in WWII was one of those surprises to me. In all his family's visits to our farm and all the family reunions, I never heard any mention of his WWII service. As a B-24 Liberator bomber pilot Uncle Joe flew 27 bombing missions from Italy and Africa into Germany. On their 27<sup>th</sup> mission word came over the radio that the war was over. They returned to

their base and soon home. I had no clue until he was gone of this heroic service.

Even now, I know little about his service. All I have is a photo of him and his crew and a photo of flak out his B-24 window I got from his son Ray. Another B-24 in his squadron can be seen in the flak photo. According to my cousin, flak brought one of his dad's planes down to a crash landing on a temporary steel plank runway. Ray said "the shrapnel took out their hydraulics so they couldn't get the landing gears down. They were forced to land on a runway on an island designed as a temporary landing strip for fighters. I believe it was Capri."



**Dark sooty smoke of flak bursts out Uncle Joe's B-24 window**





**German 88mm flak gun**

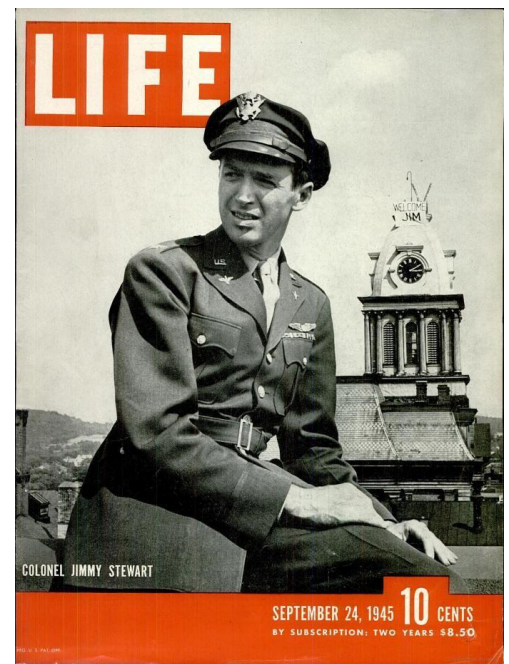
“Flak” is an acronym for the German word, Flugabwehrkanone, meaning aircraft-defense cannon. Flak was not to shoot bombers down, but to force them to drop their bombs from a higher altitude. This reduced their accuracy. Aircraft damaged or shot down was a bonus. Flak guns, mainly German, 88s fired explosive shells that created a barrier of shrapnel. The shells had timed or proximity fuses so they would detonate in the area of the aircraft. On explosion they scattered a cloud of steel fragments in the flight path.

The late actor and Air Force Brigadier General Jimmy Stewart was also a B-24 Liberator pilot. Early on he was also a multi-engine flight instructor at Hobbs Air Base in New Mexico. He missions out of England from late 1943 to early 1945. In 1966 He flew one combat mission in Vietnam in a B-52 as an observer.

Jimmy Stewart was drafted in March of 1941. He was already a famous actor having done several movies including *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *The Shop Around the Corner*.

He was also an accomplished private pilot, was patriotic and was determined to fly combat in Europe. Higher ups in the military up to the President did not want this famous actor in combat and getting shot down. That would lead to much unwanted publicity. But he was determined and used various ways to convince them to assign him to combat. Higher Officers were often pressured to give him “milk runs” posing little danger.

Stewart flew 20 combat missions. Jim Myers, who served as a squadron bombardier, flew 13 combat missions with Stewart. According to Myers, Stewart’s closest call was a bombing run over Stuttgart, when a fragment of a flak burst shot up between his legs, just missing him in the co-pilot’s seat. After another mission, his plane came back with a reported 400 holes from enemy fire or flak.



Stewart was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Distinguished Service Medal,

Distinguished Flying Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal and the Croix de Guerre with Palm from France. He became a Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force Reserve on July 23, 1959.

*It's a Wonderful Life* was Stewart's first movie upon his return home from the war. Some say that a few scenes in that movie show hints of "battle fatigue" that we now call PTSD. Not many give credence to this idea. It's just great acting.

Jimmy Stewart died in 1997, never having talked much about his war experiences, like many of his generation, including my Uncle Joe Boone.



**Jimmy Stewart receiving the Croix de Guerre**



**"Remember no man is a failure who has friends. Love Clarence. Thanks for the wings!"**