



The Hezzie Gazette

Official Newsletter of Hezzie Griffis American Legion Post 30

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November 2025



Commander's Comments

...With Gratitude

It's almost Thanksgiving and there's a lot to be grateful for at Post 30. As we continue to expand in membership, we're also growing in purpose, energy, and in our connection with the veterans and community we serve.

I'm thankful both for our newer members who have brought fresh energy and a willingness to get involved and for our long-time members who are the backbone of our group. Some are serving quietly behind the scenes and others are out front representing us. Whether preparing meals, helping with events, maintaining the building, supporting fundraising efforts, offering wise counsel, or simply looking after one another, every act is remarkable in its own way. Each of us makes an important contribution.



Photo by Diane Peterson

I appreciate not only the tasks our members carry out, but the way they conduct themselves.

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"Tanks, But No Tanks"

A clever pun is irresistible, especially when the title for the story aptly portends the complete obliteration of an estimated 3,300 Iraqi tanks in just 42 days during Operation Desert Storm (January 16 - February 28, 1991) of the Persian Gulf War.



An M1A1 Abrams tank races across the Kuwaiti desert.
(Photo by Department of War via DVIDS)

There were two noteworthy winners in this conflict: U.S. Army General "**Stormin' Norman**" **Schwartzkopf**, commander of the US-led coalition of 39 allied forces; and the M1A1 Abrams tank, named after General **Creighton Abrams, Jr.**, former U.S. Army chief of staff and commander of military operations in Vietnam.

The U.S. deployed some 1,900 Abrams tanks to the war zone. They were called "Whispering Death." Reportedly, it was said, "By the time you hear an Abrams tank, you're already dead." The U.S. Marine Corps manned their own battle tanks, older M60A1 Patton models with a 105-inch gun that packed a wallop. America's allies also brought their own beasts. The British destroyed more than 400 Iraqi tanks. One of the kills was made three miles distant.

On February 26, 1991, the coalition forces swept in from the western deserts of Kuwait with more than 3,000 tanks and armored personnel carriers, in what would become one of the largest tank engagements in U.S. military history.

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It would be known as the Battle of Norfolk after a strategic location, but to participants it would be known as "Fright Night" because it took place at night. Sadly, most of the coalition casualties, six dead and 32 wounded, were due to friendly fire.



To maintain low-profile modern tanks typically feature the driver in a reclining position. If the driver's hatch is blocked, he can exit the tank through the turret. (Photo by Quora)

The coalition forces achieved a decisive victory, destroying approximately 850 Iraqi tanks and numerous other combat vehicles, effectively crippling the Iraqi Republican Guard's capabilities in the region. Two days later on February 28, 1991, the war ended with an Iraqi defeat and retreat from Kuwait.

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

Membership Update

79% of our membership has paid their 2026 Dues. Our goal is 100% dues paid by Veterans Day.

Our annual dues are \$60.00 and can be paid in several convenient ways:

- In Person: Cash or check to our monthly meeting.
- Mail: Check made payable to American Legion Post 30 to: American Legion Post 30 P.O. Box 30 Edgefield, SC 29824
- Online: Mylegion.org to pay your dues. ***Note:** Multi-year membership option locks in our current dues rate for the next three years and avoids dues increases.

November Birthdays at Post 30

Let's wish a Happy Birthday to our members:
David Beagle, Johnny Hensley, and Stephen Julian.

From the Adjutant's Desk

Welcome Home, Sir: Lt Col (Ret) **Tommie Williams**, STHS NJROTC instructor joined us at our October meeting.

Special Offer for Veterans with Aches and Pains: Dr. **Ade Salami** from Lux Wellness Chiropractic in Johnston, stopped in at our October meeting. Dr. Salami is a veteran, Clemson graduate, and VA-accredited community provider, who offers chiropractic care, manual therapy, laser therapy, and a host of related services. Every Friday is "Freedom Friday" at Lux Wellness, where all veterans, regardless of branch or service duration, and their accompanying family members can receive a "Full Lux Adjustment" for just \$76. You may call or text 803-701-0181 to reserve your spot or simply walk in. <https://luxwellness.net>.

Veterans Lead the Festivities: **Edgefield County Veterans** have been selected as the 2025 Grand Marshal to lead the upcoming Christmas Parade. This is a tremendous honor and the perfect opportunity to showcase our collective pride, so we hope all veterans will join us on our float, supplied by Legionnaire **Johnny Hensley** who has his trailer ready for the parade. Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 7th, at 3:00 p.m.



We always have a great time when we're together: Our Christmas Party will be on December 18 at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$25.00, pre-sale only. Please see Jane or email alpost30sc@gmail.com to purchase tickets by November 30th.

Free Karate Lessons: Post 30 members are eligible to participate in Karate classes at no charge with **Shawn Risher** of Edgefield Martial Arts. Adult classes are convened at the legion building at 7 p.m. each Tuesday and Thursday. Text Shawn at 803-270-6428 to sign up.

Our Post keeps getting stronger because of members who step up. Thank you all for everything you do.

--Jane Doolittle, Post 30 Adjutant

Leadership Lessons from Boys State

Strom Thurmond High School senior **Christian Haskins** attended our October meeting, accompanied by his grandfather **Hugh Bland**, to express his appreciation to Post 30 veterans and our donors and to give us an update on his Boys State experience. Before he gave an impromptu talk, we awarded Christian a certificate of appreciation and a Post 30 challenge coin.



Christian Haskins receiving his certificate and coin.

Christian described Boys State as a week that pushes young men out of their comfort zone in a positive way, saying, "You're kind of thrown in with a group of guys you never really knew, and you have to live with them." As for what he considered the most impactful, he shared that the experience led to "some of the best bonds I've made" and "some of the best foundations you can have in life." He added, "The most valuable lesson I learned is the importance of brotherhood and making sure you stick with the guys that you're around."



Christian Haskins and his grandfather Hugh Bland.

Christian also emphasized personal development and the critical networking opportunity, pointing out that,

"whatever you go into in life, it's not necessarily about your own individual efforts. It's just as much about who you know and who you can be with."

Before departing, Hugh shared his sincere thanks with the Post, saying that not only did the experience help Christian mature but the week-long absence also prepared Hugh for the coming empty nest. Christian plans to attend Clemson University next year to study engineering.

-- Winston Boddie, Post 30 Commander

We Need Your Help: Annual Pecan Fundraiser

Our annual pecan fundraiser – our most important source of funding – is about to be underway. The pecans will arrive in mid-November. **Each bag is \$12** and is critical to supporting Post 30's programs and outreach in the community.

We are really hoping that every member (and supporters in our community) can **sell at least ten bags**. Our goal is to have everything sold before Christmas. They kind of sell themselves. In addition to being fresh and delicious, our pecans are popular for Christmas presents, co-worker gift exchanges, and hostess gifts when you attend holiday parties.

This year's selection includes:

- Mammoth Pecan Halves
- Roasted and Salted Pecans
- Cinnamon Glazed Pecans
- Milk Chocolate Covered Pecans
- Glazed Pecans
- Roasted and Salted Cashews

You may place your order three ways:

1. **Paper order form:** Available at our November meeting or by contacting a Post 30 officer.
2. **Text message:** Text "**PECANS**" to **864-413-7121** with your **name, type, and quantity**.
Example: "**PECANS – John Smith – 2 Milk Chocolate, 1 Cinnamon Glazed**"
3. **Email:** To alpost30sc@gmail.com with your **name, type, and quantity**.

We will notify everyone to schedule pickup as soon as the pecans arrive.

Post 30 Christmas Party: Can you lend a hand? We really need four volunteers to help decorate for our annual Christmas Party at 2 p.m. on Wed, Dec 17. See Winston or Jane or email alpost30sc@gmail.com to sign up.

Military Uniform Display at Edgefield Welcome Center

Authentic uniforms and military gear from World War I to present day, many discovered stored at Oakly Park, are on display at the Edgefield Welcome Center through November. The collection also includes items on loan from Edgefield County veterans and treasures from the personal collection of **James "Fab" Burt**, among them a South Carolina Defense Force jacket worn by **Strom Thurmond** during his service.



James "Fab" Burt holds a bazooka training round. Photo by Diane Peterson

Post 30 Commander **Winston Boddie** welcomed attendees to the opening event, a "Veterans Day Open House" on October 26, 2025, featuring Lt Col (Ret) **Tommie Williams**, Senior Naval Science Instructor at Strom Thurmond High School NJROTC, as guest speaker. On behalf of the Welcome Center, **Doug Timmerman** expressed appreciation to board members of the Civic League for making the event possible. The room was filled with guests, browsing the tables of military gear and uniforms displayed on mannequins provided by **Jennifer Stevens** of Octavia's Bridal Shop.



Uniform and gear on display. Photo by Diane Peterson

Sponsors for the event are the Edgefield Welcome Center, Edgefield Civic League, Oakley Park Museum, and American Legion Post 30. Look for the Edgefield Advertiser's article on the event.

The Welcome Center, 104 Courthouse Square, is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Don't forget to sign in upon arrival to help document the center's importance to our community. The display runs through November.

-- Winston Boddie, Post 30 Commander

Chaplain's Corner

Overcoming Challenges

Over the years I have seen friends and colleagues try to avoid challenges. Perhaps they look for shortcuts, turn to substance abuse, blame others, or simply won't admit to the issue. But some challenges simply can't be avoided. For me it was my body. I'm a big guy.

In the Army, because of my height and girth, I was required to undergo physical measurement with a tailor's tape at my annual height and weight check. That was okay until 2023, when the Army changed its measuring protocol, which caused me to suddenly fail and be flagged for possible involuntary separation. Initially I was angry for many months. How could I possibly lose six inches in my waist or drop over 70 pounds to pass? At age 60 with multiple permanent physical limitations, the challenge seemed insurmountable. I felt defeated.

After first getting angry at the Army, I faced it head on and sought help. I began to pray in earnest and utilize the military's medical facilities. With much determination, this week, the "impossible" became reality. I lost 75 pounds and six inches in my waist and passed my annual height and weight check. Involuntary separation is no longer a threat. Best of all, now I can receive a proper retirement ceremony and award. I faced my challenge and God answered my prayers.

It has been very hard work, but I was reminded again that some challenges we simply must go through to get to the other side. But we don't have to go it alone. We can rely on God and the encouragement and support of friends. I pray that whatever the challenge, you will find the courage to go through it, while trusting God and reaching out for help from friends and family. If I can drop from wearing an XXL-Long uniform to a Large-Long uniform, passing the Army's new "tape test," then you can make it.

-- William Beaver, Post 30 Chaplain

Comments (continued from p.1)

Post 30 isn't about a name or a building, it's about our people who make others feel welcome and valued. Veterans come here because someone shook their hand, invited them to a meal, saved them a seat, provided them with valuable assistance or called to check on them. That kind of genuine connection draws veterans to us, and I am grateful for all of you because you have helped build and maintain that warmth.

We would be less, as a Post and Auxiliary, without our extended community of family, friends, donors, county leaders, and the local businesses whose caring network is a constant reminder that the work we do has value beyond our walls. I am thankful for their willingness to partner with us in our mission.

Looking back at what we have accomplished together this year, I feel satisfaction and accomplishment. But when I reflect on how we interact as members of this organization, what comes to my mind is appreciation and gratitude for each of you. I am proud of what we are building together and thankful for your friendship.

-- Winston Boddie, Post 30 Commander

Flag from Afghanistan Gifted to Post 30

At the October 16, 2025, meeting, Post 30 received a U.S. flag that was flown over Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan on July 4, 2010, during Operation Enduring Freedom.



Commander Boddie and Adjutant Doolittle present the flag at October meeting. Photo by Diane Peterson

It was entrusted to Post 30 by member **Pete Peterson** who received it from IN-Joy, the senior ministry group at Arizona Community Church where he and his wife, **Sandy**, are long-time members and church leaders. He hoped that it could be a reminder of the service and

sacrifice of those who served during the Global War on Terrorism.

It had been flown by the 158th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of the Arizona Army National Guard and includes a certificate of authenticity signed by the battalion commander and command sergeant major. It was greatly appreciated by Post 30 members who greeted the gift with loud applause, and it will be displayed inside our meeting room.

We hope to see you at the

Post 30 Christmas Party

Thurs, Dec 18, 6 p.m.
Deadline is Dec 4. **\$25**

Live music & entertainment

Catered by John Abney

- Ham • Turkey • Rice & Dressing
- Giblet Gravy • Macaroni & Cheese •
- Green Beans • Cranberry Sauce • Rolls
- Red Velvet Cake • Tea • Coffee

Purchasing early helps us plan for this special holiday event.



2026 Rifle Raffle Fundraiser: Help Us Raise Funds

The 2026 Rifle Raffle is another important funding opportunity and Post 30 needs help from our members and community friends. Last year, Post 30 had two winners! Available starting in early November, tickets are **\$25** each, **\$10** of which stays with Post 30 for our community programs. Raffle tickets have been popular as holiday gifts or stocking stuffers for friends or family. We could really use your help selling them and you may pick them up at the November meeting.

Sportsman's Warehouse in Columbia, is our sponsor, drawing two tickets daily for 26 days. Winners receive a Sportsman's Warehouse gift card equal to the value of the prize associated with that day's drawing. Lucky winners may either claim the day's prize or use the gift card for any sporting purchases of their choice up to the cash value of that day's prize.

You may obtain tickets three ways:

1. **In person:** Available at our November meeting or by contacting a Post 30 officer.
2. **Text message:** Text "RAFFLE" to 864-413-7121 with your name and number of tickets.
Example: "RAFFLE – John Smith – 2 tickets"
3. **Email:** To alpost30sc@gmail.com stating the number of raffle tickets



Edgefield Block Party Fun

Our Edgefield Block Party booth was a great success. Post 30 members **Charles Ashley, William Beaver, Winston Boddie, Jane Doolittle, Ken Wingeier, Jon Notestein, and Bruce Mears** had a good time connecting with people and sharing what makes Post 30 a place where veterans want to be.

Among those stopping by were **Joe Thompkins** and **Angie Thompkins** who signed up to join Post 30. We also had six community members sign up to receive our newsletter each month. The conversations we had reinforced our belief that, when we spend time with people, they like what we have to offer and want to be part of the veterans' social and community organization we are building. We were also very productive and collected **\$232 in donations** and **\$180 in pecan sales** that will help support our programs.

Community Cadence Fitness Walk Success

We had our biggest turnout yet for the October Community Cadence Fitness Walk with 16 veterans and community members joining us on the Edgefield Walking Trail.



We were really excited to welcome six first-time participants who came out to walk, talk, and enjoy a cool fall morning together. The morning was filled with good conversation and steady pace as small groups formed naturally along the trail. Community Cadence continues to build momentum because it's a really simple way to connect. Every month we see new faces, stronger friendships, and the kind of fellowship that makes people want to stay involved with Post 30. Join us for our next walk on **Saturday November 1 at 8:00 a.m.** in the Piedmont Tech Parking lot.



Military Display Coming to McCormick: A military equipment display from the personal collection of **James "Fab" Burt** will be open November 13-15 in McCormick, SC. The exhibit features authentic combat gear from WW1 to the Gulf War. Free and open to the public.

Location: American Legion Post 19, 316 McCracken St, McCormick, SC
Thursday, November 13, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Friday, November 14, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday, November 15, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free Veterans Breakfast at 10 a.m. (Saturday only)

Calendar of Events

NOTE: IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING

You must speak with Jane Doolittle, respond to the Post text message, or email alpost30sc@gmail.com no later than the Monday prior to the meeting for an accurate dinner headcount.

October 31, 2025: Trunk or Treat, Edgefield Town Square from 6-8 p.m.

November 1, 2025: Community Cadence Walk: Piedmont Tech parking lot at 8:00 a.m.

November 2, 2025: Holiday Market, Patriots Smokehouse, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

November 11, 2025: Edgefield County Veterans Day Program, Edgefield Veterans Memorial Park at 11 a.m.

November 13, 2025: Executive Committee Meeting at 4:00 p.m.

November 20, 2025: Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 6:30 p.m. Kissed by smoke BBQ sandwiches, golden tater tots, baked beans with Bethany's No-Regrets Upside Down Pineapple Cake for dessert.

December 7, 2025: Edgefield Christmas Parade at 3:00 p.m.

December 11, 2025: Executive Committee Meeting at 4:00 p.m.