

THE BEACON



AMERICAN LEGION POST 202 COLUMBIA, MISSOURI March - 2026

Next Post 202 meeting is March 18th

Happy Birthday American Legion March 15 - 17

Commander Comments,

Legionnaires,

I would like to start this month by saying Happy 107th Birthday to the American legion. The birthday is on the 15th of March; I would like to invite everyone to join us for a piece of cake prior to the meeting on the 18th of March in celebration.



I would also like to request from our members to donate any colored service patches for the wall in the Memorial room. I know there are quite a few up there but, if one of yours is missing, we would love to update the wall to reflect the service of our members. I will also be updating a set of service ribbons, to put in the frames, to reflect the service of our members have given to our country, and our service in various conflicts and wars. If you have extra ribbons that could help in this effort they would be greatly appreciated. I hope to have it looking better before our open house in July.

America's 250th, 4th of July. I would like to invite everyone to a family friendly 4th of July event at the Post. The time for the event will be 1100 to 1500 (3pm) and open to the public. The event will begin with our Honor Guard doing a flag raising ceremony. More information will come out in the next few months. If you would like to be a part of the planning committee, our next meeting is March 28th at 1000 at the Post.



The American Legion Riders 202 have their friendly game of Cornhole Tuesday nights through March 10, 2026, 6pm. If you get a chance to come out and support them.

Like to thank everyone for their membership and look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting, and thank you for helping to make the Post better.

Thank you,
Roy Stigers
Commander
Legion Post 202

Reminder for the Friday night poker night we serve a simple dinner/sandwiches. We need to have some volunteers for this each month. Please coordinate to help support these events.

1st Friday of the month is the VFW Post
2nd Friday of the month is the American Legion Post and Sons
3rd Friday of the month is the VFW Auxiliary
4th Friday of the month is the American Legion Auxiliary
5th Friday of the month is the American Legion Riders

Post meeting dates:

2026: March 18th, April 15th, May 20th, June 17th, July 15th, August 19th

District Meetings for 2026.

April 11th Post 317 In Freeburg, 1:00

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

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

Thank you,
Roy Stigers
Post 202 Commander

Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial

For reasons unknown to us, we are hearing from veterans daily who served during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm who are just now learning that a memorial honoring their service and sacrifice is in progress at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial is now under construction and will be dedicated on October 24, 2026. This project was started in 2010.

We respectfully ask organizations such as Veterans of Foreign Wars VFW, AMVETS National Headquarters, The American Legion National Headquarters, DAV, U.S. Department of Veterans

Affairs , The Marine Corps League, and others to share this information with the veterans you serve. Many still do not know this memorial is being built in their honor.

Details on the memorial's dedication can be found here: <https://www.ndswm.org/dedication-ceremony>

Here is the Facebook Event for the Dedication Ceremony: Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial.

Missouri Veterans Commission's estate planning clinics

Missouri Veterans Commission's estate planning clinics in Columbia on March 30th and April 27th will be held at the Truman VA Hospital located at 800 Hospital Drive, Columbia, MO 65201 in the Patient Education Center, Classroom D between the hours of 8:00 am and 12:00 pm. At these clinics, I will be drafting wills, powers of attorney, advanced directives, and beneficiary deeds for veterans and their spouses at no cost. Those are the only legal services we will be offering at those events.

Appointments at these events are not required, but they are encouraged. Would you like to set an appointment?

Thank you, Scotty L. Allen, General Counsel, Missouri Veterans Commission

T: (573) 522-4224, F: (573) 751-6836, <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov>

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY Unit 202– Lorrie Mayes

The last meeting of the Auxiliary was held on February 18th at the Post. Shanna Erlam was elected to serve in the office of Auxiliary President. She is already looking at the different items involved with the unit. She is going to do a wonderful job. She is thorough, a great communicator and patient.

I want to thank everyone who has supported me during my years as president. I will continue to be and active member of the unit.

The Missouri Girls State committee met on Sunday, February 22nd and made sections. Three girls were selected from each of the following schools: Battle High School, Hickman High School and Rock Bridge High School. We had sponsors for each of the girls.

After we finished selecting MGS delegates, we reviewed the three Ella Glascock Scholarship applications we had received and tentatively chose two. Deadline for submission is March 1st. FYI: Next year we will be able interview and review grades. A big thank you to Char Swaney,

Sharry Charest, Shanna Elam, Krystal Powell and Michelle Schaben for taking the time to review applications and make decisions.

The Missouri Sport Shooting Assn. dinner will be held on March 28th and Auxiliary will be providing the dinner. This is a fundraiser for us.

The next SAR breakfast is on March 21st and a menu is in the works thanks to Doug and Val Garrett.

Auxiliary's Friday night to serve poker is March 20th. Suggests for the meal and help are needed.

Don't forget poppy day is May 22nd. We are going to have a booth at Stephens College as well as other places.



By the time this newsletter comes out the first meeting of the 4th of July Celebration committee will have taken place and the planning will have started. If anyone is interested in helping, please contact Roy Stigers, Commander, or myself. More in the event section of the newsletter. The next Auxiliary meeting is March 18th at 7pm. Hope to see you at the Post.

EVENTS – Lorrie Mayes

A family friendly 4th of July Celebration is to be held at the Post from 11am – 3pm!!! A committee had their first meeting on February 28th. Lots of good ideas were brought forth and assignments were given. The next meeting is March 28th at 10 am. Anyone who wants be on the committee please come. We estimate we need at least 25 people to help the day of the event. This is a combined event with the American Legion family, the VFW family, Mizzou Marines Corp and hopefully more.

Trivia nights have been a great success at the Post this year with the bar doing very well. The people who come for these events are very friendly and always have questions about the Post. It's fun to play along from the bar. The last big trivia night is Saturday, March 14th. This one is put on by Kids First Optimist Club and all the money raised benefits Cedar Creek Therapeutic Riding Center. If you like trivia, come on out and play the cost is \$30 per person. It's a great night of fun.

April 11th the Blue Star Mothers are holding a spaghetti dinner at the Post. The cost is \$12 per dinner. Please come out and support this group and the work that they do. It is open to the public. RSVP is appreciated. I sent a flyer out earlier.

VFW continues to hold their pancake breakfast each month. The cost is \$13 and the food is great. The next one is on Saturday, March 14th from 8-11 am.

Friday night poker dinners continue. Thank you to the American Legion Post for doing the March breakfast. The Sons of the American Legion are doing the April 10th breakfast. The VFW family and American Legion Auxiliary serve on the other Fridays.

Honor Guard news – By Paul Hobbs

A few changes have been made to the Honor Guard wall in the Club Room. Looking at this display I am proud of all we have done since 2017 when we were first certified by the Missouri National Guard. We helped with post finances, gave to Boys and Girls State, bought gas for Run For The Wall, aided students in the community with various endeavours, donated to various causes and provided military funeral honors to 331 Veterans. It was all done on a voluntary basis by our Honor Guard members. Thank you to all who gave their time and talents to our effort over these years.



Sons of the American Legion Activities and Events - by Oliver Brillhante IV

The Sons of the American Legion Post 202 Squadron has been busy in the month of February as we continue to make an impact on the community in as many ways as possible.

From helping Veteran Organizations like Welcome Home to working to locate and replace worn or tattered American flags, the Sons are excited and ready to be involved in a variety of aspects within the community.



Sons and Riders present check to Welcome Home

Post 202 Sons of the American Legion presented their gun raffle check to Welcome Home and the appreciation was apparent. Becky was happy to receive the proceeds and stated that everything that is donated goes directly to help the veterans that they work with. She was very grateful and insisted on commemorating the occasion with a group photo.

The Sons of the American Legion are continuing the pursuit of identifying and replacing American Flags that are worn, tattered or torn. The most recent replacement took place on February 28th at Tiger Treasures in Columbia. This was a simple exchange “out with the old, in with the new” and now the store owners Connie Furlong and Chet King are proud owners of a brand-new American Flag that they plan on proudly displaying out in front of their store.



Flag replacement at Tiger Treasures

The Sons are planning on helping serve dinner at an upcoming Friday poker night on March 13. The menu for the evening will be Biscuits and Gravy. There’s nothing better than having breakfast for dinner. This is just another way that the Sons are staying involved and giving back to the post and the community.

We look forward to increasing our activities and events so if there is anything that you think we can help with or do for the greater good of our fellow Post family or the community in general, please feel free to let one of the SAL members know and we will be happy to lend a hand in anyway we can.

We are always looking to expand our membership so, if you know of others who would like to join the Sons of the American Legion squadron, please let one of us know or have them contact an American Legion member. We would love to help grow the American Legion family.

Thank you for your continued support of the Son of the American Legion and we look

forward to another great month of contributing our efforts to better ourselves and one another.

Post 202 SAL Squadron Commander
Oliver Brilhante

Legion Rider News- By Mike Williams

February may be the shortest month of the year, but the Riders of Chapter 202 have managed to pack a lot of excitement into just a few weeks. Our annual cornhole league has continued throughout the month, bringing together 28 teams from around the community for ten weeks of food, fun, and fellowship all while raising funds for area veterans' charities. Food has ranged from barbeque to sub sandwiches and we are incredibly grateful for all the servers, score keepers, set up and tear down crew, and bar staff who make this weekly event possible. There is still one more night on the calendar, so we would love to have you come out and join out and join us next week.

While most of our time and energy has been focused on corn hole, we have still managed to take part in other fund raisers around the community. We supported our sister VFW Post 280 at their monthly pancake breakfast, participated in the Band of Brothers Chili Cook Off, and contributed to the Midwest Infidels fundraiser for Stacy Mathy. In addition, many of our Riders are also members of the Sons of the Legion who contributed to Welcome Home homeless veterans outreach and provided a replacement for Tiger Thrift's worn out American Flag. Through all of these efforts combined, Chapter 202 has made \$3,338.82 in charitable contributions and donated 303.26 hours of time this month.

The improving weather finally has finally allowed people to get back out on the road. Besides informal rides and daily commuting, we also had organized trips to Glasgow, Fulton, Hermann, and the Show-Me Bike Show in Sedalia. Meanwhile Steven Rush continued his trip through the southwest, making us all jealous with his daily weather reports. Including his journey, we logged a total of 4,199 miles and spent \$369.70 on fuel. As spring returns, weekly bike nights at D&D are becoming more highly attended and more events are showing up on the calendar. Plans are being made for the annual ALR Legacy Ride in June, as well as commemorations for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.



Eric Strathman at Post 202



Glasgow ride

We also had the joy of welcoming three new members this month. Jodie Roth, Julia Floyd, and David Bundy all joined the Legion and Legion Auxiliary and became members of our chapter as well. We look forward to having them with us and would love to invite anyone else who might be eligible to come and join us on the roads. Finally, we would like to highlight the efforts of two members of our post, Bob Hartman and Austin Roderick. Bob has started "Bob's Closet,"

to ensure that everyone has the proper gear to wear. He is collecting gently used gear and motorcycle accessories to give to other riders. If you would like to see what he has, or make a contribution, he brings the items to post and chapter meetings. Contact him for more information. Meanwhile, Austin has been busy reaching out to area university veterans' groups to better connect them with our Post. If you would like to support his efforts, please plan on stopping by the Student Veterans Association open house at Stephens College on Wednesday, March 11, 1-4 p.m.

Let's learn a new term – "Trench Art" – Paul Hobbs

"Trench art" refers to decorative or functional objects handcrafted from battlefield debris or other military items by soldiers, sailors and prisoners of war during armed conflicts. While originating long ago this folk art continues today as a creative outlet or therapeutic activity to pass the time and create personal keepsakes. Some of it is created by very talented artists and craftsmen.

Although the term implies that it was created in the trenches, much of it was made on base and ship machine shops, in hospitals, POW camps or even fox holes. Examples include engraved belt buckles and lighters, ashtrays, wood carvings, jewelry, and miniature models.



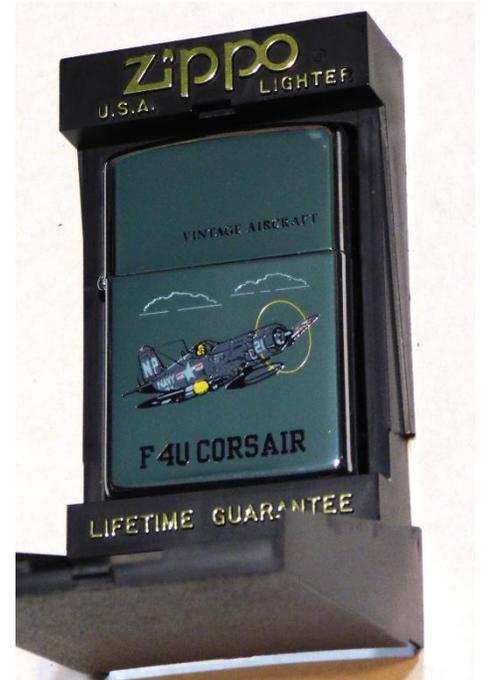
W WII Trench Art ashtray

Did You Know - by Paul Hobbs

Zippo - "It works, or we fix it free." From various internet sources

Going through my late father-in-law's treasures a while back I found a never used Zippo lighter with a beautiful image of a WWII F4U Corsair fighter-bomber. I'm not sure why he had this as he was 30-year career Army beginning in WWII. He was a radio operator at a weather station in the Baffin Islands that was critical to the D-Day invasion. His unit lived with the Inuit Eskimos.

Back in the day when I had too many bad habits, I had a Zippo with my Polaris submarine, USS Thomas Jefferson, logo/patch and dolphins on it. It was with me all over the Atlantic, Caribbean, the Med and the Barents Sea in classified locations and depths. The colors are all worn off and the lid hinge is loose. Now it resides in a display case with other Navy and submarine memorabilia.

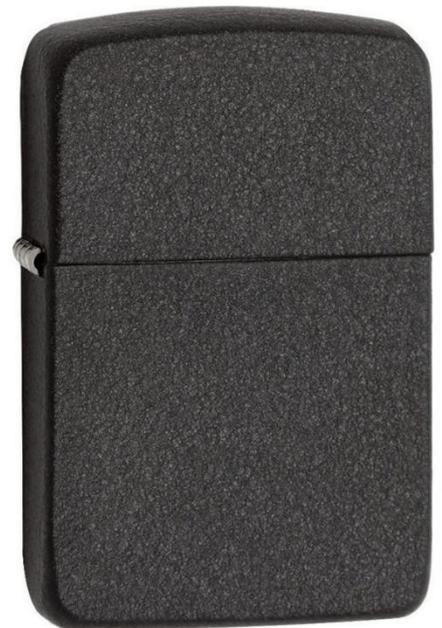


In 1932 George Blaisdell in Bradford, Pennsylvania, invented the Zippo lighter as a durable, one-hand, windproof reliable lighter with a lifetime guarantee. The company's motto is "It works, or we fix it free."

In 1941 when we entered WWII, Zippo ceased production for all consumer markets to support the war effort. Zippo dedicated its entire production to the U.S. military, manufacturing millions of the reliable, windproof lighters for troops, sailors and airmen. Known as the "Black Crackle" lighters, these steel-cased, black, non-reflective models became an iconic, American military staple. The finish was important for reducing visibility and glare in combat zones.

U.S. war correspondent Ernie Pyle wrote a letter to Blaisdell commenting that "Zippo is probably the most important element on the front."

In 1942 due to the rationing of brass, the case material was switched from chrome plated brass to a low-grade steel. To prevent



rust, the lighters were coated with a heavy black paint and baked. This created the distinct "crackle" finish. A pristine original black crackle zippo with box can be valued over a thousand dollars. Zippo does make replicas of these so do some research and check the date code on the bottom if you are in the market for one.

There are Zippo collector clubs all around the world and high dollar collector items generate counterfeiters so beware of fakes. If you purchase online, there is a great risk of getting a counterfeit tribute Zippo. Vietnam era "trench art" Zippos are some of the most faked Zippos of all of them. So much so that Sherry Buchanan wrote the book *Vietnam Zippos* to provide details on how to tell real from fake. Unless you have direct provenance (e.g., it was carried by a friend or relative), it is highly probable that any Vietnam-era Zippo for sale is a fake.

In addition to lighting cigarettes, Zippos were used to heat rations, ignite explosives and start warming fires. For many Veterans, including myself, these lighters served as tangible mementos of experience, bearing witness to their service and survival. They were frequently viewed as "amulets and talismans" intended to bring the owner protection, good luck, and a sense of invulnerability against dangers – kind of like a rabbit's foot.



Zippo is a very patriotic company and has made lighters for nearly every military unit since WWII. Their lighters have appeared in over 2,000 movies serving as props to signify cool, toughness, or period accuracy. Key films include *Die Hard*, *The Godfather*, *Platoon*, *Good Morning Vietnam* and *MASH TV*. The distinctive, "click" and flame often highlight crucial moments or character personality.

General Eisenhower was a heavy smoker and lit his Camels with his "4-star sterling silver Zippo" gifted to him by George Blaisdell. In a thank-you letter Eisenhower expressed his gratitude to Blaisdell, noting that "it was the only lighter he owned that would "light at all times"



Since March 2011, due to decrease in sales from 18 million lighters a year in the mid-1990s to about 12 million lighters a year, combined with increasing medical pressure on people not to smoke, Zippo has tried offering a variety of products such as watches, leisure clothing, sun glasses and men's and women's cologne (in lighter looking bottles) using the Zippo name.

In 2018, Zippo trademarked the sound of its lighter, making the lighters “click” officially recognized. On June 3, 2020, the company manufactured its 600,000,000th lighter. Today, the Zippo Company remains in Bradford, PA, employing around 500 people who continue to produce the popular lighters. It is "a legendary symbol of America." They also own Case knife company.



USS McCloy - DE 1038 Zippo

Today there are thousands of Zippo lighters listed on Ebay – many fakes. With a 30 second Google search I found Past Commander Doug Garrett’s destroyer escort USS McCloy Zippo almost new in the box. Buy it now was set at \$99.



Zippo eau de toilette

Some ways to tell if its real

The top is a bit rounded, not flat.

Misspelled words.

The bottom name is stamped, not engraved.

There is a tiny trademark R at the end of the Zippo stamp.

Check the date code on the bottom. Does it match the event era?

The flint wheel has a crisscross pattern, not straight.

The hinge should be 5 barreled going small, big, small, big, small. Some very early ones and crackle replicas have 4-barrel hinge.

The flint screw should be protruding slightly and not flush to the bottom of the insert.

The insert has small print of stamped data, not engraved.

Older used Zippos hinge can be loose. A tight hinge is a red flag on an old, well used Zippo.

Quite a few small changes over the years. All you want to know is on www.Zippo.com

