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Dexter Celebrates Honor Tour

APRIL 29TH 2011 BY NEWS

Dexter Celebrates Honor Tour

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

They were from communities like Dexter, Bloomfield, Essex, Poplar Bluff, and Cape Girardeau. And as young men they put their lives on the line in p Bastogne, Normandy, Sicily, in the Coral Sea and at Midway, and in the skies over Dresden, and at places like Pointe du Hoc and Omaha Beach.

Today, they are living testaments to the courage, conviction, bravery and tenacity that saved the Free World six decades ago.

And on Friday, the area came to salute them, their generation and a group departing on a different type of “tour of duty” – the Honor Tour for veterans of World War II. It was a patriotic rally unlike most any other; a multi-generational celebration of America and the men and women who fought for their country.

The Bearcat Event Center was “filled to the rafters” with students, families, fellow veterans, friends and community leaders to salute the 30 men who departed on an Honor Tour of Washington, D.C. to see “their” memorial – the National World War II Memorial.

School children from Southwest and Central schools marched into the BEC like young soldiers – all with white shirts with the American flag – and sat on one side of the BEC,

while middle school and DHS students on the opposite side. The DHS Jazz band and the Honors Choir both participated, and high school students carried American flags and served as escorts. .

A large group of Dexter High School students formed two long lines down the center aisle of the BEC with large American flags to create a walkway for Honor Tour veterans walked through on the way to seats of honor. The DHS Jazz Band under the direction of Scott Rybolt played “2001 Space Odyssey” and “In The Mood.” Seated behind the Honor Tour men were their families and fellow veterans.

On the program were Dexter Supt. Dr. Thomas Sharp, U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, State Sen. Rob Mayer, State Rep. Billy Pat Wright and Jennifer Kasten of U.S. Senator Roy Blunt’s staff.

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson told the group that she had hoped to be in Washington, D.C. this weekend to greet them at the World War II Memorial. However she has been in the area all week and will be here through the weekend to work with constituents and agencies fighting the flood.

“Here among all the folks in Dexter - this is the heart and soul of America,” she said. “We are here today because of each and every one of you. None of you would ever call yourselves heroes. But we can call you heroes because in your humbleness you have watched out for us, you have given us all the tools that we have to carry on and make a much better community and a much better country. We thank you for your service to our country and the sacrifice that you made.”

Emerson said she hoped the travelling veterans would remember that when they get off the bus at the World War II Memorial that that memorial was a “small token” to thank and honor their service and for “serving as role models for your children and grandchildren.”

Guest speaker for the morning was Charles Kruse, Dexter High School graduate, area farmer, former president of the Missouri Farm Bureau and a retired brigadier general in the Missouri National Guard.

“Today, Dexter, Missouri is standing tall,” Kruse said He commended Sharp and the school district’s administration and faculty for their work in planning the ceremony. “The Dexter Public School s has really made a great showing here and made us all proud.”

Kruse noted that the chairman of the community committee that planned Friday morning's event, Dr. Roger Alsup, was unable to attend the ceremony. Alsup is the principal at T.S. Hill Middle School and is a veteran of the Iraq War.

"Roger was so proud that the Dexter Public Schools were going to be involved in this activity," Kruse said. "It's quite ironic that Roger is not able to be with us today because he is on his way to St. Louis to Jefferson Barracks with his daughter Katie. Katie and many other members of the Missouri National Guard soldiers are going to be deployed to Afghanistan."

Kruse asked the audience to keep Katie and all area residents in serving in the military in their thoughts and prayers.

"The word 'hero' should not be used often. It should be used to describe the best of the best; the bravest of the brave' people we hold up and honor for doing great deeds," Kruse. "We are privileged to have the opportunity to honor 30 special heroes – 30 veterans of World War II."

Veterans at the ceremony had their own stories to tell, Kruse said. They were all young men when they went off to war.

"Think about that – being a teenager and being told that you are going to war – being told you are going to leave your family, your loved ones and community – and not knowing if you'll ever come home again."

These men and women stepped forward 60 years to do what had to be done.

"We can only imagine the courage that these folks demonstrated, stepping up and saying, 'I will serve my country,'" he said. "If it had not been for the bravery and courage of these men and all the others who served in World War II, we would live in a much different country today. So many of the freedoms we enjoy and take for granted would most likely not even exist."

Kruse said every member of the Honor Tour is a hero, and he expressed the community's thanks for their courage and honor.

Following Kruse's remarks, T.S. Hill Middle School students presented each of the 30 men on the tour with a special cap for their journey. The musical ensemble Replica from Sikeston performed a selection of World War II era popular songs.

To close the program the DHS Honors Choir under the direction of MaryRuth Boone sand “Armed Forces – The Pride of America” and Boone and the choir led the entire gathering in singing “God Bless America.”

After the veterans were escorted from the BEC, they gathered their belongs and said farewell to family and friends, they made their way to the charter bus for the first leg of their journey to Washington, D.C.

The Honor Tour will return to Southeast Missouri Sunday evening.

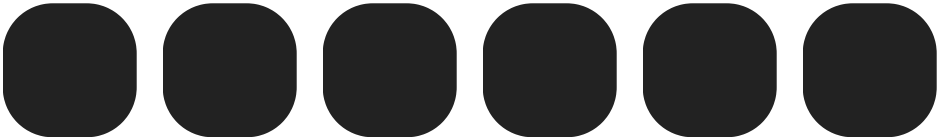
Photo Above: Four members of the Honor Tour during the departure ceremony Friday morning at the Bootheel Event Center, (from left) Lawrence Konzen of Branson, Chet Medler and Joe Hutchason both of Dexter, and Harold Springs of Sikeston.

ShowMe Times Photo Gallery

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Corps: Goal Is To Not Execute Plan

APRIL 29TH 2011 BY NEWS

Corps: Goal Is To Not Execute Plan

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

SIKESTON, Mo. - Fighting floods in 2011 is an art coupled with science, according to the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in charge of directing efforts on the Mississippi River.

Col. Vernie L. Reichling, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District, said the corps top priority is public safety as the floodfighting on the river is coming down to a matter of inches and cooperation from Mother Nature.

Reichling spoke Thursday afternoon at the corps information center in Sikeston. He explained that floodfighting in 2011 is taking a “systems-wide” approach – what one part of the river does affects the whole. “‘Hold as much as you can.’ That is our message to our brothers north and east of us,” Reichling said. He explained the corps is holding back as much water as possible in Lakes Barkley and Kentucky, reducing the waters flowing into the Ohio and into the Mississippi. “This is a system approach to try to prevent not only the operation of the (Birds Point New Madrid) floodway, but reducing the risk of flooding all over.”

“We are not out of the woods yet,” he said. As of Thursday, Reichling reported the corps had a large contingent in the region fighting the flood.

“We have plenty of boots on the ground,” he said. There are currently 200 men and women in the field and the corps has spend \$3.3 million in fighting the flood since it activated on Sunday, April 24.

Reichling is the officer in charge of the corps operation in the floodway, but he reports to Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh, president of the Mississippi River Commission. It is the

commission that will issue any order to activate the floodway in Southeast Missouri.

Reichling and his staff said the corps was doing everything possible to avoid activating the floodway – accomplished by blowing holes in the Birds Point levee. However, the stage is set if such an action is ordered. The MV Mississippi, a corps motor vessel is currently at Hickman, Kent., with two barges carrying the munitions that would be used to blow three holes in the floodway levee – one at the northern end and two south. But this action would submerge over 130,000 acres of prime agriculture land, destroy homes and the livelihood of a region.

The corps has completed the ground preparations at two of the three sites on the levee system, and the third expected to be completed by the end of Thursday. But the munitions will remain downriver and no further action will be taken until – or if – the order is given to activate the floodway.

“We are listening to the river ,” Reichling said “This is not a science – it is an art. We are taking a holistic approach and reacting to the stresses on the system. We are constantly evaluation conditions,” he said. “Our goal is to not execute the floodway.”

Photo Above: Col. Vernie L. Reichling, Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District, points out features of the Birds Point New Madrid Floodway during a briefing.

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Highway 60 Reopened Dexter To Sikeston

APRIL 29TH 2011 BY NEWS

Highway 60 Reopened Dexter To Sikeston

By Annabeth Miller
[ShowMe Times Editor]

MOREHOUSE, Mo. - Water flooding the the roadway forced the Missouri Department of Transportation to close a major highway in Southeast Missouri on Thursday.

U.S. Highway 60 between Sikeston and Dexter was closed at late Thursday afternoon as the Missouri Department of Transportation fought flooding across the roadway near Morehouse.

By 4:30 p.m. Thursday westbound traffic leaving Sikeston was delayed in two lane, bumper-to-bumper traffic that inched its way toward Morehouse. Once to Morehouse, traffic was turned as drivers returned to Sikeston and forced to find alternative routes.

Much westbound traffic toward Dexter was re-routed to I-55 to Portageville, and then Highway 62 to Malden where drivers were able to turn north onto Highway 25.

By 6:30 a.m. Friday, Highway 60 was re-opened to traffic. Motorists can expect two-lane traffic on the eastbound lanes from Route E to Route AH.

Motorists are urged to use extreme caution near the area.

Photo Above: An ariel photo of the Highway 60 at Morehouse, taken Thursday afternoon by the New Madrid County Sheriff's Department.

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Dexter Prepares To Honor Veterans

APRIL 28TH 2011 BY NEWS

Dexter Prepares To Honor Veterans

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

The flags are being being unfurled and last minute preparations completed as Dexter citizens prepare to honor on Friday members of "the greatest generation" - veterans of World War II.

The Honor Tour organization will gather Friday morning and depart on another tour of Washington, D.C. with 30 veterans of World War II. The departure ceremony honoring these veterans and their colleagues will be held at 8:30 a.m., Friday, at the Bearcat Event Center on Grant Street in Dexter."

Three Dexter men are a part of this Honor Tour journey - Chet Medler, Joe Hutchason and Russell Orville. A total of 30 men from Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, and California will make the journey.

The 30 men on the tour will be recognized prior to their official departure on the tour. The tour is sponsored by the Honor Tour group and coordinated by Rob Callahan.

Students from all four Dexter schools will be attending the departure ceremony, with several high school students - including the Honors Choir and Jazz Band - participating.

"My hope is that the community will come and be a part of this ceremony," said Dr. Roger Alsup, principal at Dexter's T.S. Hill Middle School. He has chaired the community planning committee for Friday's event.

A number of special displays will be featured both outside the BEC and inside for the public to view.

The bus with the veterans will leave Poplar Bluff early Friday morning and will arrive in Dexter by 7:30 a.m. The motorcade will enter the city at the Route AD exit off Highway 60, and will follow Business 60 to One Mile Road and the BEC. City crews will line the route with American flags.

Following the departure from the BEC, the motorcade will travel east on Grant Street to Catalpa, and then turn east onto Stoddard Street.

Event organizers encourage groups, businesses and individuals unable to attend the ceremony to line Stoddard Street from Catalpa to the Dexter City Administration Building as a tribute to the veterans. Boy Scout Troop 200 will post the American flags along the part of the motorcade, and individuals on the route are encouraged to have flags.

When: Friday, April 29

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Where: Bearcat Event Center on Grant Street

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MoDOT Closes Area Roadways

APRIL 27TH 2011 BY NEWS

MoDOT Closes Area Roadways

BREAKING NEWS, THURSDAY, 4.28.2011

A SMT News Report

Flooded Roads in Southeast Missouri Update 6:00 a.m. SIKESTON - The Missouri Department of Transportation announced at 6 a.m. today the list of roadways in Southeast Missouri closed due to the recent flooding. Motorists are urged to use extreme caution and plan alternate routes.

Routes that are closed include:

Stoddard County

- Route 51 - from Puxico to Route C (Bollinger County)
- Route 60 - WB traffic diverted to EB lanes from CRD 785 to Route N
- Route 91 - Diversion Channel to Route T
- Route 91 - Route P to the Scott County line • Route AB - beginning at 1 mile before Route N and ending at Route N

- Route BB
- Route D - from CRD 751 to CRD 725
- Route E - Route FF/E Intersection to Route N/E at Circle City
- Route K - from Route 51 to Route 25
- Route M - from Leora and Route K
- Route MM - from Route U in Stoddard County to County Road 102 in Dunklin County
- Route N - from Route AB to Route 60
- Route O - from Route P to CRD 309
- Route P - Route O to Route 25
- Route T - from Route 51 to the intersection of Routes T and J
- Route V - Sturdivant
- Route Y - from Route AB to Route Z
- Route Z - from Route VV to West City Limits of Bernie

Bollinger County

- Route 51 - from Route C to Puxico (Stoddard County)
- Route 91 - Diversion Channel to Route T
- Route H - from Route 51 to Route 142
- Route N - Route F to Route 25
- Route V - Sturdivant
- Route W - Route 51 to the end of state maintenance

Butler County

- Route 53 - from Route J to Route 67
- Route 142 - from Route 67 to Route W (Ripley County)
- Route 142 - from Route 158 ending 1 mile before Route 67
- Route 158 - from Route BB to Route 142
- Route AA - from Route 51 to Route B
- Route B - at Route 51 and ending 2 miles after Route AA
- Route BB - beginning 4 miles before Route 158 and ending at 158
- Route CC - from Route 53 to Route U
- Route EE
- Route FF - from Route CC to Route 51
- Route H
- Route HH
- Route N - near Oglesville from Route 53 to Route 51
- Route OO - from Route FF to end of state maintenance
- Route T - from Route D to CRD 517
- Route W - from Route O to 1 mile from US67

Cape Girardeau County

- MO 25 - closed from Route K to Route 77
- Route 74 - from Route 25 to I-55
- Route 177 - from CRD 657 to Cape Rock Drive
- Route A - from Route U to Route F
- Route N - Intersection of N, U and T to Route F
- Route N - Allenville Spur to Route F (Bollinger County)
- Route RA - from Route U to the end of state maintenance
- Route T - Intersection of N, U and T to Route F
- Route U - from Route N to Route A

Dunklin County

- Route DD - from Route 53 to the end of state maintenance
- Route MM - from CRD 102 to Route U (Stoddard County)
- Route UU - from CRD 729 to the end of state maintenance

Mississippi County

- Route 62 - City of Bertrand
- Route 77 - at the Mississippi River
- Route 77 - from Route D to Route A
- Route 80 - from the Mississippi River to Belmont
- Route 102 - from Route 105 to Route 77
- Route 102 - from the levee to CRD 526
- Route A - from Route 102 to Route 77
- Route AA - from Route 80 to Route 77
- Route F - beginning Route 77
- Route FF
- Route J - from US 60 to Route AB
- Route NN - intersection of Routes NN and 62
- Route OO - from Route BB to CRD 525
- Route Y - from Route 60 to Route K
- Route YY

New Madrid County

- Route 80 West - from I-55 to Route H
- Route 153 - 1 mile after Route EE to Gideon City limits
- Route 162 - at the Mississippi River
- Route H - from Route E to Route FF
- Route M - from Route F to Route 162

- Route MM - from Route D to CRD 621
- Route P - from I-55 to Route BB
- Route V - from Route P to Route 80
- Route W - from CRD 621 to CRD 623
- Route WW

Pemiscot County

- Route 153 - 1 mile after Route EE for 2 miles (runs into New Madrid County)
- Intersection of Route 164 and DD (Cottonwood Point Road)
- Route EE - from Route 153 to Route A
- Route T - from Hayward to the end of state maintenance

Scott County

- Route 62 - east of Interstate 55 overpass
- Route 91 - from CRD 413 to Route CC
- Route 114-in Morehouse at Cole St.
- Route BB - Intersection of Route Y and Route 114
- Route CC - from Route 91 to Route W
- Route E -from Route N to end of road at Commerce
- Route EE - from Delta to Chaffee
- Route HH - from Jennings Lane to St. Johns Ditch
- Route N - from Route D to Route K
- Route P
- Route U - one mile west of Haywood City
- Route W - from CRD to Route P
- Route Z - from Route 61 to Route 114

For more information, please contact MoDOT's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (1-888-275-6636) or visit the Traveler Information Map at:
<http://maps.modot.mo.gov/timi/index.aspx?district=10>

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