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June ShowMe Spotlight: Rachel Putnam

JUNE 01ST 2012 BY UNKNOWN

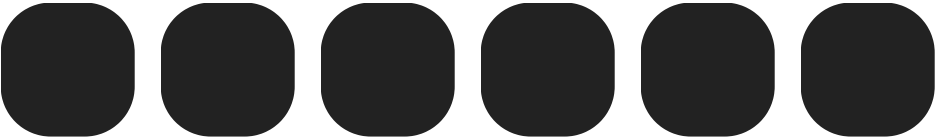
June ShowMe Spotlight: Rachel Putnam

June: the beginning of summer, cool ice tea on the porch, baseball, vacations, and fun times. And it's birthday time for Rachel Putnam, the ShowMe Spotlight girl for the month. Rachel will turn 15 on June 23, and she is a busy young lady. Not only is Rachel a member of the Dexter Show Choir and will leave this weekend on the show choir's concert tour in Branson, she is a member of a number of activities at Dexter High School as well. Rachel is a member of the DHS Dance Team, is a Varsity Football Cheerleader, a member of the DHS Student Council, Family, Career & Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, was selected as a member of the All District Choir and is in the Top Ten Percent of her class. Rachel is the daughter of Denny and Shannon Putnam of Dexter. The ShowMe Spotlight is a monthly feature of the ShowMe Times, featuring one of the Top 12 finalists in the annual Miss Dexter Pageant. (Photo by SMT Reader Shannon Putnam. Thanks, Shannon, for everything!!)

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Memorial Day - Time To Remember Heroes

MAY 29TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Memorial Day - Time To Remember Heroes

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

BLOOMFIELD - While many area residents marked Memorial Day with a family cookout or a trip to the beach, the mood was poignantly somber at the hallowed burial grounds of fallen soldiers and decorated war veterans.

At the Missouri Veterans Cemetery, the area's military cemetery, hundreds of tiny flags waved in the breeze - each beside an identical headstone, and larger American flags placed alongside the roadway in the cemetery snapped at attention in the afternoon wind.

A large crowd of veterans, survivors, family members and friends, and Patriot Guard Riders gathered for the early afternoon ceremony at the Committal Shelter in the Cemetery. For the for time, several large tents were erected to shelter the audience from the heat and sunshine.

The ceremony was marked by speeches, a presentation of the POW/MIA Table Ceremony a 21-gun salute and the sounding of taps. The Stoddard County Honor Band provided music.

The importance of Memorial Day – at home and around the world – was the focus of remarks by U.S. Rep Jo Ann Emerson. She noted that while Memorial Day is a somber day in America, it is a day that is actually observed throughout the world.

“In every state in our country, gatherings like this are being held, family members are remembering loved ones, veterans are remembering their brothers in arms, and communities are remembering the patriots who laid down their lives for our liberty,” Emerson said. “On foreign shores, a great debt of gratitude is being paid to American heroes who sacrificed everything so those folks, too, might have a taste of the freedom that we strive to make possible in the world. In a cemetery in Normandy, there is a gathering amid a field of white crosses, in a community merely miles from the DMZ in South Korea, a wreath is being laid, and in Afghanistan, American soldiers have a fallen comrade in their thoughts today.”

Emerson noted that the sacrifice and impact of America's veterans ripple through generations and nations.

</images/AB 2012/5.29.2012 mem day flags.jpg>

“They were the vanguard of our commitment to freedom, they were the best essence of our communities here at home, they were the unwavering guardians of the light of liberty in some of the darkest places in the world, in some of the darkest corners of history. They are, and will forever be, the deepest inspiration for every aspect of Americans lives and services. Our hearts break for the sacrifices these Americans made in line of duty for their families but also feel the awe they inspire and the greatness of our country, our constitution, of our great God-given fortunes in the world. All of these are worth defending with our very lives,”

Emerson said.

She noted that one week ago, the Rolla community saluted the return of Army Pfc. Richard Lewis , who was killed in service on May 13 in Bowri Tana, Afghanistan when the vehicle he was driving hit an improvised explosive device.

“We have men and women who wake up every day knowing they may pay the price for our liberty. Yet they keep doing it. They volunteer, they put their honor, they leave their families and some don’t return. And yet still more go – year after year, generation after generation,” she commented. She noted that they don’t serve with a political agenda, or to “show off their daring”, or without thought of the sacrifices they make. “Without them there is no guarantee of freedom for any of us. Without them there is no safeguard for liberty. Without them America is not what we know it must be for each of us.”

State Rep. Billy Pat Wright of Dexter said that one of the “proudest” things he did during his last eight years as a member of the Missouri General Assembly was serving on the Veterans Committee.

“We are here to honor those who have given the ultimate sacrifice and also to the living veterans,” Wright said.

State Senators Rob Mayer of Dexter noted that in the cemetery were heroes of great American battles of the last century – from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

“As we gather our thoughts are not on that of tombs or graves or deceased veterans but of standing on hallowed ground. Today, in this cemetery, are great American heroes,” Mayer said.

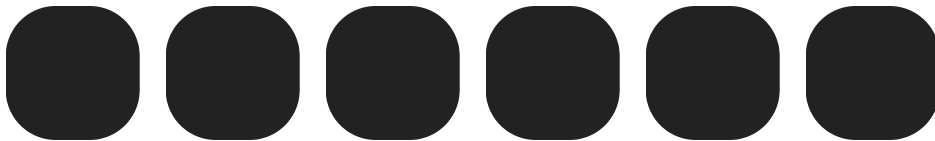
The ceremony concluded with a rifle salute and the sounding of “Taps.”

Photo Above: U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson chats with World War II veteran L.E. Caudle of Dexter following the Memorial Day service at the Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield on Monday. (ShowMe Times photo by Annabeth Miller)

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Show Choir: Dexter's Musical Ambassadors

MAY 23RD 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Show Choir: Dexter's Musical Ambassadors

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

They have been the musical ambassadors for Dexter for more than a decade, performing throughout the nation, garnering the highest of praise, trophies and the applause of audiences wherever they have travelled.

They have taken their unique style, talent and enthusiasm to audiences at the United Nations in New York, Jackson Square in New Orleans, the brightest stages in Branson, the Sears Tower in Chicago, and Magic Kingdom in Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla.

And now, the young women and men in the 2011-2012 Dexter Show Choir are preparing to embark on another adventure, - returning to Branson to open for one of the hottest shows, and perform at one of the favorite themes parks in the entertainment capital.

Since last fall, the ensemble has practiced and prepared for the spring concert tour. They have learned music and choreography, worked together as a team on music, dancing, and fundraising, and every week take a few more steps forward in preparation. Now, as they look forward their journey, they are presenting their show to the community.

“The choir is excited about performing at home, and showing their hard work,” said Dexter Show Choir Director MaryRuth Boone. Boone has directed the choir since its inception, and continues to lead the community youth choir.

The choir will have a special concert presentation of their 2012-2012 show on Thursday, May 31. The performance will begin at 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; admission is \$5 and dessert will be served.

Boone explained that musical ability is, indeed, a part of being a member of the auditioned choir. Members must audition, and combine musical talent with the ability to dance, being enthusiastic on stage, and a touch of acting. Dexter Show Choir is not a part

of the curriculum at the local high school, and in fact not all members are part of a high school choir or even attend Dexter High School.

“It’s certainly been an exciting year for Show Choir,” Boone said. She said this year’s music is from the Broadway musical ‘Hairspray’ and features snappy tunes and exciting performances from the choir.

“This show is one of my favorites,” she said. “The musical is set in Baltimore in the 1950s, and the music reflects this exciting time. The tunes are everything from upbeat and fast-moving to a beautiful ballad. The kids have had fun, and so have I, all year.”

The Show Choir meets each Sunday evening at the First Baptist Church, which has opened its facility to the community choir.

“I especially want to thank First Baptist for being so gracious this last fall. When changes were made and a new rehearsal location had to be found, they were right there ready to help and support the young people. We certainly appreciate their support and open arms,” Boone commented.

Boone is helped each week by a faithful corps of volunteers, including Roger and Malisa Mayo, Annabeth Miller and Vikki Ross.

Boone said the choir will be open to young people in high school and college from throughout the area next year. Young people interested in joining the choir are encouraged to attend the May 31 performance to learn more about the choir and the work the young people do each year.

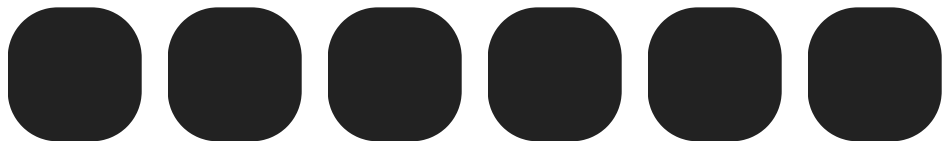
Dexter Show Choir members include:

Young ladies - Afton Harris, Alexis Smith, Darcie Lane, Emily Triplett, Hannah Noe, Kaitlin Viers, Mackayla Burge, Malinda Mayo, Michaela Lesley, Miranda Rogers, Morgan Cliff, Rachel Putnam, Reale Cook, Samantha Midget, Shelby Gathings, Shyann Jines, Stephanie Gee, Whitney Layton.

Young men – Alex Morgan, Austin Richardson, Brad Swallows, Brooks Probst, Colton Averett, Dalton Putnam, Drew Mason, J T Putnam, Jackson Hubbard, Joe Foster, Jonathon Foels, Jordon Dodson, Keaton Altom, Logan Quertermous, Noah Kronk, Ryan Mayo, Sam Ward, Zach Midkiff, Zach Sims.

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Helping Those Who Served The Nation

MAY 19TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Helping Those Who Served The Nation

By Annabeth Miller
ShowMe Times Editor

They have served the nation – helping preserve the freedoms and liberties that are so often taken for granted. Many served overseas in harm's way. And they now are disabled – confined to wheelchairs, walking with artificial limbs, walking with canes or crutches. Their access to many things once enjoyed – such as hunting, fishing, enjoying the outdoors – has been restricted by their physical handicapped.

But now a local veterans organization is taking a beautiful, rugged piece of Stoddard County land and equipping it with the modifications for access for area disabled veterans to enjoy and appreciate.

Tom Love and the Kenady-Hanks American Legion Post 59 in Dexter are taking Gobbler Ridge Ranch, and equipping it for hunting, fishing, and outdoor enjoyment by local disabled veterans. Just as these veterans' service was heroic, so too is the work the local American Legion and the sponsors of the project.

Gobbler Ridge is a rugged piece of rolling Crowley's Ridge – with deep woods, hills and valleys, beautiful vistas, a pond for fishing. It's been a family retreat – for hunting, family gatherings, and good times by the Love and Hedrick families.

“We decided to turn this into a disabled veterans facility,” To Love said on a recent visit to the ranch. “We are going to turn it into a place for hunting, wildlife viewing, just driving around and being out in nature. “

Love says he has talked to a number of veterans who tell him they don’t care what they do, the chance to get outdoors again is something they desire and need.

“Thanks to Kenady-Hanks Post 59, we have this project rolling and off the ground,” he said.

“The project” is making a rugged camp into a place that is handicapped accessible and conducive to hunting and other outdoor activities. Wheel chair ramps are being built to the furnish cabin on the grounds, and doorways and restrooms inside have been expended to accommodate wheelchairs.

Out on the property other accommodations are being made – including an elevated “blind” – a stand for hunting, wildlife viewing and photography, taking in the beautiful scenery. A well-designed ramp leads from the woods floor up to the elevated platform, that will be sheltered and heated.

The vista from inside the stand is nothing short of stunning. A broad, beautiful valley rimmed with deep woods – perfect for turkey and deer and other wildlife.

“So far we have had good support,” Love said to a group of veterans and community supporters.

In addition to the physical improvements to the property, a number of food plots and habitat are being developed in a manner consistent to standards established by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Clover, wheat, beans, corn, milo, and chicory in addition to the natural grasses will all be planted to provided for diversified wildlife habitat.

“Southeast Coop has been wonderful,” he said. The agricultural coop has been assisting in he preparation of the wildlife food plots, providing seed and supplies. “I’ve just called and they’ve been here.”

“The veterans will have first priority,” he explained, with veterans in Stoddard County receiving first priority. “It is 100 percent for veterans any time they want it.”

The cabin will even be available for veterans group meetings.

Love explained the facility will be for Stoddard County veterans confined to wheelchairs or with a disability that restrict their mobility.

“We can never fully repay our veterans who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. However, we can offer a heartfelt ‘thank you’ by improving and maintaining the Disabled Veterans Wildlife Facility,” Love said.

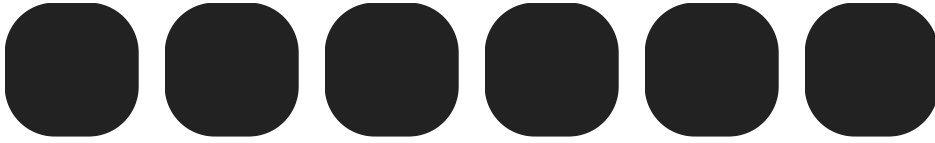
Donations are tax deductible – and may be monetary or in the form of supplies and equipment for the project, or volunteer work.

For more information on the project and to learn how to make a donation, contact Tom Love at 573-820-0802 or the Kenady-Hanks American Legion Post 59.

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McCaskill Wages Fight To Save Post Offices

MAY 15TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

McCaskill Wages Fight To Save Post Offices

EAST PRAIRIE - Today, as a temporary ban on post office closings expires, a local official in southeast Missouri is speaking out about the successful fight waged by U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill to save 29 local postal facilities from closure-and what McCaskill's effort means for families and businesses in the region.

"For a lot of rural towns and villages these post offices represent something more than a place to send or get mail, and Claire has understood that from the start," said State Representative Steve Hodges of East Prairie. "It does not make sense to close post offices when it would have a negative impact on community spirit that already suffers from economic challenges and job loss."

The U.S. Postal Service announced plans last year to shutter thousands of post offices across the country-most from rural communities-as part of a larger cost-savings package. Twenty-nine post offices in southeast Missouri were slated for closure

McCaskill waged a year-long battle against the closures, arguing that shutting down rural post offices would not help the Postal Service achieve substantial cost-savings, but would

deal significant blows to communities across rural America. McCaskill helped win a [temporary moratorium](#) on closures, and then [successfully passed an amendment](#) to the Senate's postal reform legislation that protected rural communities from losing their post offices while implementing major cost-saving reforms like addressing the Postal Service's pre-funding requirement for retiree benefits.

As a result of McCaskill's efforts, the U.S. Postal Service [reversed course](#) last week and announced that it no longer intends to close down rural post offices.

"I waged this fight because, as a daughter of rural Missouri, I know exactly what these post offices mean for the small towns they serve," said McCaskill, who was born in Rolla. "I've fought alongside folks on the ground in Missouri to send a message that our post offices are more than just brick and mortar-they're the lifeblood of rural America. And that message has been heard loud and clear. That we were able to save these post offices means that seniors will still have access to life-saving prescription drugs, that area businesses won't have to contend with losing their shipping location, and that hard-hit small towns won't have to lose good-paying jobs. But I'm not going to rest on our accomplishment. I plan to keep working hard in the weeks and months ahead to ensure that families and businesses in southeast Missouri can continue relying on their local post offices."

McCaskill also again called for action by the U.S. House of Representatives, which has so far failed to move on postal reform legislation. Unless the House acts to pass legislation addressing its finances, the Postal Service will likely be forced to make drastic cuts to service resulting in slower mail delivery, an end to Saturday delivery, and the shuttering of mail processing facilities in Missouri-changes that would hurt rural businesses and families in small towns across Missouri.

Link of Interest

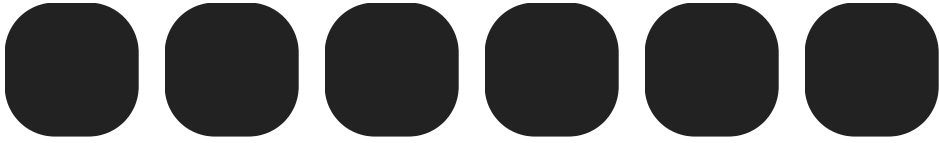
- [Map of Proposed Closures](#)

(Photo Above) The Grey Ridge Post Office was one of 27 in Southeast Missouri originally on the list to be closed by the US Postal Service. (ShowMe Times archive photo)

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