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Veterans Day Program Honored Those Who Served

NOVEMBER 12TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Veterans Day Program Honored Those Who Served

Dexter, Missouri - The annual Veterans Day Observance Program was held on Tuesday, November 11th at the Bearcat Event Center in Dexter, Missouri. The Program is sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution, American Legion Auxiliary, City of Dexter, and Dexter Public Schools.

U.S. Army Gulf War veteran and owner of Countywide Insurance, Alan Hedrick, was the guest speaker for this momentous occasion. The entire student body, members of the community, and several Veterans gathered to honor and remember those who served and those who sacrificed their lives for our freedoms.

Alexis Smith, DHS Student Body President welcomed the packed Bearcat Event Center. Dexter Boy Scout Troop 200 presented the colors and the Dexter High School band played the National Anthem. Alexis lead the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance and the younger students could be heard loud and clear over and above the adults. So proud that they know the Pledge of Allegiance and can recite it with pride!

Rev. Roy Sherfield performed the Invocation.

Mayor Joe Weber introduced many distinguished guests on stage. Weber credited longtime Daughters of the American Revolution member Delores Bailiff with heading up the annual Veterans Day observances in the City of Dexter. Her late husband, Bill, was a decorated veteran of the U.S. Navy and fought during World War II. Photos can be seen on our Facebook page of many of the honored guests on stage by clicking **[HERE](#)**.

Before Hedrick took the podium, the Dexter High School Band played a *Tribute to the Armed Services (A Medley)* and *America the Beautiful*. As each armed forces song played, Veterans, would stand, wave, and salute as they heard their anthem or hymn.

Mayor Weber spoke of Alan Hedrick remembering his days as a child growing up in Parma and then Dexter.

"Russell Alan Hedrick was born in October of 1963 and raised in a small farming community of Parma, Missouri. In 1970, his family moved our community and he attended Dexter Public Schools. He was multi-sport athlete, a slightly above average student and a graduate of Dexter High School in 1982.

Alan was a gypsy during his college days. As a scholarship athlete at



Pittsburg State University, Alan pursued his sports passion as a tight end on the PSU Gorilla's Football team. After one fall season, he transferred to the University of Missouri-Columbia to walk-on the Missouri Tigers Football program. An injury in the summer of 1984 sidelined Hedrick, who then transferred to Missouri State University to complete his BS degree in Agriculture Business.

With a dedication to civic involvement, Alan made a career decision to join the County Wide Insurance Agency team as a sales producer in December of 1989. He achieved notable success as a sales producer for the agency, in spite of a five-month absence from County Wide in late 1991 when he served with the 1221st Transportation Unit of the Missouri Army National Guard in Kuwait during the Gulf War.

Hedrick has continued to serve others through his church, community and insurance affiliations. Alan's virtues and commitments to work fall secondary to his dedication to his faith and his family. He has been married to his wife, Tracy Hedrick, for 26 years. They have two son's, Zach Hedrick and Morgan Hedrick."

Mr. Hedrick began his speech by focusing on the need for young students to recognize the efforts of those around them who have served in the military. He thanked Mrs. Deloris Bailiff for the honor of being able to speak to everyone.

"Veterans Day is set aside to remember every man and woman who has taken up arms to defend our country," stated Hedrick. "We honor every soldier, sailor, airman, Marine, and Coastguard member who gave some of the best years of their lives to the service of

the United States and stood ready to give their life on our behalf."

Hedrick went on to say that life was a journey and some of the best things in life simply occur by accident. He spoke of his son Morgan who is a student Arkansas State University. "He loves college life so much," chuckled Hedrick, "That he wanted to stretch his college years to the 6 year undergrad program just like his dad." To which Alan replied, "Morgan, what day next week would you like to meet with the recruiter?" You see Alan was on the six year plan himself and to pay for college he chose the military to help pay for college. "Life has a funny way of pushing unplanned experiences into our lives!"

Hedrick named several heroes in his life. To name a few were Starling Guinn, Dallas Buchanan, Pet Hester, Don Daddy Jack Mathis, Harry Dean Bennett, Mayor Joe Weber, Clifford Manlove, Jim Bland, Steve Rahm, and David Mage Adams. "I am a Veteran and now I am obligated to carry forward that honor."

"Our freedom came with a price tag. Whether in the mountains of Afghanistan to the deserts of Iraq, or the steamy hot fields of Vietnam, the bitter cold of the Korean War or the brutalities of the World Wars, our nation will always be proud of the service of each and every soldier."

"Today we pause to pay tribute to the men and women who did not live to be called "VETERANS". Those who did not make the round trip home. Veterans remember their faces. Veterans remember their voices. We recognize the grief of those families of these service men and women. We recognized every patriot who placed duty and country before their own lives. They gave us the gift of FREEDOM! And all who have worn that uniform have won our thanks. They deserve our honor!"

This writer saw a few men cry today. One shed tears on stage, a few in the crowd. They saw the faces of their fallen friends and they remembered! We should always remember!

/images/2014 Images/Lapierre.jpg

In closing Hedrick asked the young in the audience to hold sacred the honor of our Veterans.

"Shake their hand. Look them in the eyes. Simply say the words, 'Thank you for your service. Let our veterans know that you understand the sacrifice they made as they defended our freedom.'"

"Let a Veteran know 'YOU GET IT' and you understand the price they paid for your

freedom. Buy them a cup of coffee or even lunch. Just show them your appreciation."

"Our nation values freedom, not just for ourselves, but for all. And because Americans are willing to serve and sacrifice for this cause, our nation remains the greatest force for good among all the nations on the Earth. What veterans have given our country is beyond our power to fully repay, yet, today we recognize our debt to their honor."

"On this national holiday, our hearts are filled with respect and gratitude for the veterans of this United States of America. May God bless our Veterans and their families and may God continue to bless our great nation."

And with that being said, Alan Hedrick received a standing ovation from a crowd filled with tears, smiles, and respect of those around them - the Veterans of our community!

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American Legion to Host Annual Ham & Bean Dinner

NOVEMBER 07TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

American Legion to Host Annual Ham & Bean Dinner

Dexter, Missouri – The American Legion Kenady-Hanks Post 59 will host their Annual Ham & Bean Dinner on Saturday, November 8th from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

You will receive a delicious Ham & Bean Dinner with cornbread, fried potatoes, a home-made dessert and a drink for just \$5.00.

They will also have people from John J. Pershing Veterans Hospital on hand to answer questions and to sign people up for VA Benefits. They will be there at 9:00 a.m. and it is a drop in event, no appointment necessary.

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Shop With a Hero Program Announces Enrollment Dates

OCTOBER 30TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Shop With a Hero Program Announces Enrollment Dates

Dexter, Missouri - Stoddard County Shop With a Hero program will be accepting enrollment during the month of November. This wonderful program provides a shopping trip for children at Christmas and is sponsored by the emergency response personnel in Stoddard County.

Criteria for the program:

1. Must be 3 - 10 years of age
2. Live in Stoddard County
3. Qualify for free lunch program in their school district

The first 300 children that qualify will be enrolled. Those enrolling should bring proof of free lunch qualification, a birth certificate for the child and proof of current address.

The enrollment dates and times are Tuesday, November 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 12th from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and Thursday, November 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Stoddard County 911 Services office located at 512 Cooper Street in Dexter.

If you would like to donate to the Stoddard County Shop with a Hero program please contact the Stoddard County 911 Services office at (573) 624-9086.

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Dexter Elks Lodge Delivers Dictionaries to 3rd Grade Students

OCTOBER 29TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Dexter Elks Lodge Delivers Dictionaries to 3rd Grade Students

Dexter, Missouri – Each year the Dexter Elks Lodge travels Stoddard County and delivers dictionaries to 3rd grade students. Last week they stopped Central Elementary in Dexter.

This is the 5th year they have endeavored to give each and every student their own dictionary. Mary French of Charleston, South Carolina founded the Dictionary Project in 1995. The Dexter elks have distributed over 2,000 dictionaries and worldwide well over one million dictionaries have been given to 3rd graders by Elks Members.

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Masonic Lodge to Host Annual Ham & Bean Dinner

OCTOBER 26TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Masonic Lodge to Host Annual Ham & Bean Dinner

Dexter, Missouri - The Masonic Lodge AM & AF #369 of Dexter would like to invite you to their Annual Ham & Bean Dinner.

For more than 20 years the local Masonic Lodge has offered a Ham & Bean Dinner twice each year to raise money for local Lodge improvements, Little League Baseball, and each year they adopt families for Christmas.

The event will be hosted on Monday, October 27th from 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Carry-outs are available. You receive a delicious ham & bean dinner including cole slaw, corn bread, a home-made dessert and drink. Cost is only \$4.00 at the door, but if you purchase a ticket in advance it's only \$3.00. Either way you get a wonderful home cooked meal for a great price and help local families!

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