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# National MIA/POW Recognition at MO Veterans Cemetery

SEPTEMBER 19TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

## National MIA/POW Recognition at MO Veterans Cemetery

**Bloomfield, Missouri** - On Friday, the Missouri Veteran's Cemetery honored National POW/MIA Day with their annual ceremony made possible through the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center and Ken Swearingin, Director of the Cemetery.

Also on hand were the Stoddard County Veterans Honor Guard, VFW Auxiliary Post 4556 from Piggott, Arkansas, Daughters of the American Revolution, and members of the Kenady-Hanks American Legion Post 59.

Paul Schuerenberg, Vocational Community Employment Coordinator for the Veterans Administration welcomed everyone in attendance and gave a brief history of the National POW/MIA Day.

"It was July 19, 1979," stated Schuerenberg. "when the first commemoration was held to honor America's POWs and MIAs." Congress passed the first resolution and a national ceremony was held in the National Cathedral.

"Today," Schuerenberg continued, "we honor the sacrifices and remarkable determination of veterans captured as prisoners of war, and we remember those who remain unaccounted for, and we wish their families some small comfort in knowing that America has not forgotten them."

Keynote speaker was Seth W. Barlage, Associate Medical Center Director with the John J. Pershing VA Medical Center.

Barlage said, "Throughout our history, when enemies of freedom were on the march, great Americans took up arms and stopped their advance. They answered their nation's call to duty."

"More than 142,000 American servicemen and women were captured from World War I to the Gulf War. Twenty thousand are alive today. They endured the uncertainties, deprivations, and hardships of hostile captivity. The true cost of wartime imprisonment may never be known."

Two of those servicemen were present today. Jay Barber who was captured in North Korea and taken prisoner on December 3, 1950. He spent nearly three years in the hands of the North Koreans. He was a member of G Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division during the Korean War. On August 5, 1953 he was finally freed.

Edward Bender of Cape Girardeau was captured by Germans in 1994 during World War II and is now 97 years old. He flew B17s for the U.S. Air Force. He spent one year and four days in prison camps throughout Germany and Poland before being freed.

Barber and Bender met for the first time Friday morning. They were honored for their service, their courage and their ability to survive and return home to their families.

Lilly Hoggard and Pamela Wayer of the VFW Auxiliary Post 4556 placed yellow roses for each conflict. A touching POW/MIA Table Ceremony was performed narrated by Gary Kitchen SFC USA RET while Bloomfield student Allison Statler played Amazing Grace on her violin.

Representing the armed forces were James Adams SFC USA RET (US Army), Tom Love CAPT USMC RET (US Marine Corps), Carl Bess PO1 USN RET (US Navy), Michael Williams CAPT USAF (US Air Force), and Justin baker CW04 USCG RET (Us Coast Guard).

Donna Reynolds, Chief of Voluntary Service, VA, Chris Luecke, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA, and Bennie Hicks, Voluntary Service Assistant, VA presented gifts to former POWs Barber and Bender.

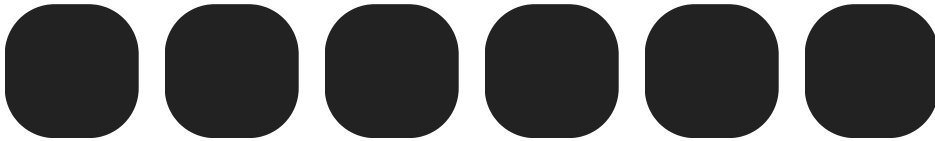
Firing of the Volley was by the Stoddard County Veterans Honor Guard and Bloomfield student John Lancaster performed TAPS.

[/images/MIA POW 900.jpg](#)

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## Wrestling Event At Stoddard County Fair Provides Homecoming for Former Dexter Resident

SEPTEMBER 18TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Wrestling Event At Stoddard County Fair Provides Homecoming for Former Dexter Resident](#)

**Dexter, Missouri** - When the superstars of World League Wrestling (WLW) bring their form of family entertainment to this year's Stoddard County Fair on Sept. 23, the event will have special meaning for one Southeast Missouri native.

Brian Thompson, a 1999 graduate of Dexter High School, is the regular ring announcer and play-by-play commentator for WLW, a professional wrestling organization based in Troy and operated by the legendary Harley Race. Thompson, who now resides in Lebanon, said the event is a “dream come true for him.”

“I am excited that WLW is coming to the Stoddard County Fair this year,” said Thompson. “This is the first time I’ve been part of a wrestling show, as a performer, in Dexter in nearly 10 years.”

Thompson grew up in Dexter and as a child became a pro wrestling fan, idolizing some of the business’ greats such as Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair, Sting, Bret “Hit Man” Hart and “Stone Cold” Steve Austin. Upon high school graduation, Thompson was able to become involved in the unique world of pro wrestling as a ring announcer for Gateway Championship Wrestling (GCW), an organization based in St. Louis at the time.

He has since spent the last 15 years traveling across the United States performing in the business that he loves primarily on weekends. He works in the field of economic development at what he calls his “regular job” during the week.

“I’ve been very blessed to travel to more than 28 states during the last 15 years doing what I love to do,” said Thompson. “However, there is just something extra special about coming ‘home’ to Dexter and doing a show right here.”

Thompson, who is also a graduate of Three Rivers Community College and Arkansas State University, said the opportunity to perform in front of friends and family still living in the Dexter area makes the event even more meaningful. His parents Jimmy and Thelma Thompson still live in Dexter as well as his aunt Brenda Williamson.

The WLW Wrestling event at the fair will be held at Arena A and will begin at 7 p.m. Wednesday. Featured wrestlers include “The Legacy” Leland Race, “The Ego” Dustin Bozworth, Roy Lewis, “Black Hand Warrior” Dave Delorean, Karim Brigante, Brandon “Espy” Espinosa, “The” Ace Hawkins and more. Admission for the event is \$5 per person. Fans age 5 and younger will be admitted to the event at no charge.

For more information on WLW Wrestling, visit [www.harleyrace.com](http://www.harleyrace.com).

For schedule information on this year’s Stoddard County Fair, visit [www.stoddardcountyfair.com](http://www.stoddardcountyfair.com)

Photo Credit -Joshua Mashon Photography.

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## Dedication of Historic Marker in Bloomfield

SEPTEMBER 02ND 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Dedication of Historic Marker in Bloomfield

**Bloomfield, Missouri** - Historians Jim and Sue Mayo along with Dr. Frank Nickell, and Rev. Ron Dunavin were on hand for the unveiling of the latest historical marker at the old Stoddard County Courthouse in Bloomfield on Sunday afternoon.

Dr. Frank Nickell, director of the Southeast Missouri branch of the Historical Society of Missouri told a story of Asa Ladd, a Bloomfield native who enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861 and was executed along side six Confederate soldiers who were innocent of any crimes. It was an incredibly sad tale of a Civil War hero who was executed for the deaths of six Union soldiers.

Dr. Nickell read two letters from Asa Ladd, one to his wife and one to his father. Neither of the letters ever reached his family. Amy lived the rest of her life not knowing what really happened to her husband.

</images/2015 Images/Asa 1.jpg>

"Asa had written a [letter to his father](#) explaining what was to happen between two and 4 o'clock. He told his father not to worry about the state of his faith as it was well founded. He asked that his father take care of his debts and stated that he wanted his family to come back to his home place. The original letter still remains yellowed, and crumbled, tucked away in the bible of my Aunt," commented Ron Dunavin.

"He wrote a letter to his [dear wife Amy](#). He advised her not to cross the St. Francis River when the water was up. He told her to stay there until the dry season. It has been told that Amy did not receive the letter for she had packed up and went to her home lands in Ark before the letter had ever arrived. Ransom had spent many months trying to locate Amy. It is said that Amy never received the letter from her husband and it was kept in Ransoms Bible until it was one day claimed by Asa's son-in-law Ike Emery," stated Dr. Nickell.

[/images/2015 Images/Asa 2.jpg](#)

On the bronze plaque outside of the courthouse the marker reads, "Dear wife and children, I take my pen with trembling hand to inform you that I have to be shot between two and four o'clock this evening. I have but a few hours to remain in this unfriendly world. There is six of us sentenced."

Rev. Ron Dunavin traveled from Arkansas to attend the dedication. He is a direct descendant of Asa Ladd. His mother was the granddaughter of Asa and Amy.

According to military records, Asa Ladd enlisted in the Civil War March 10, 1861 in Stoddard County, Mo. He served with Jacksons Co A, Burbridge's Regiment, 4th Missouri Calvary. He was captured by the Union army in Sedelia, Mo. on October 16, 1864.

He was then taken to Jefferson City and remained there for eight days, then was sent to Gratiot Street prison in St. Louis on the 25th of October 1864.

Asa had been a farmer, and all this fight and run tactics must have been very wearing on him. He seemed to be quite confused at his interrogation in Gratiot Street Prison; he answered some questions as though he were not entirely sure of his answers. For example: To the question "Have you a wife - children?" he replied, Wife and four children. The Census Records show that he had seven children. To the question "Have you relatives in the Rebellion?" he answered that he had two brothers-in-law; this was scratched out and "a brother" inserted. (His brother-in-law, John Allen, served in the Union Army).

One can only imagine what he was going through and what he must have worried about during those long desperate. One thing for sure is that Asa was a Godly man. He was raised of the Methodist faith; his father pastored at the Sadlers Chapel Church in Dexter.

At the Battle of Pilot Knob, near Bloomfield, Mo., in September of 1864, Union Major James Wilson and six of his men were captured by the Confederates.

According to Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Fletcher, USA, "they were held for one week, then turned over to Major Tim Reeves, CSA of Marmaduke's command. Major Wilson was taken out and hung and his men were shot.

When word of his execution reached Gen. Rosecrans, commanding the Department of the Missouri, he issued a retaliatory order to the effect that a Major and six enlisted men of the Rebel captives be shot.

In carrying out this order, only those prisoners who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance to the Federal Government were selected. These men were taken into a room where they were ordered to draw marbles, of which there were six black ones, was held above eye level so the men could not see the color they were drawing. The ones drawing a white marble were freed - those drawing a black one were to be executed. Asa drew a black marble. and hence the execution of Asa Ladd went into the history books of man who paid for a crime he did not commit.

It is a dream of Jim and Sue Mayo to complete 21 total bronze markers in the area. This was number ten. Taps was played while the unveiling of the marker commenced and a prayer was said over the marker.

***Shown in the photo are Dr. Frank Nickell, Jim Mayo, Sue Mayo, and Rev. Ron Dunavin.***

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## Michael's Pizzeria Ribbon Cutting

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AUGUST 26TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Michael's Pizzeria Ribbon Cutting

**Bloomfield, Missouri** - The Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce hosted a Ribbon Cutting for Michael's Pizzeria. Owned by Michael Kirkland, the pizzeria has been in business a few months; however recently had a new building put in place.

Located at 404 Highway 25 in Bloomfield. They offer more than pizza. You will find their new taco salad on the menu as well as wings, chocolate chip pizza, pasta, subs, and cheesesticks.

Follow them on Facebook by clicking **HERE** to find out weekly specials. Give them a call at (573) 568-3755 and order your delicious pizza!

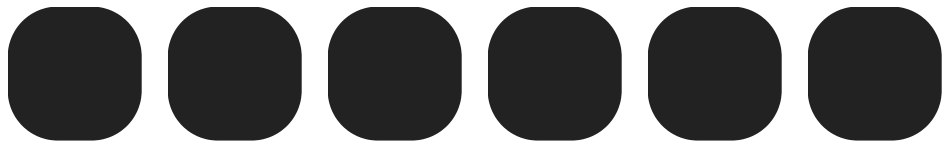
***Shown in the photo are front row from left to right: Sue Mayo, Jim Mayo, Goldie DeGroup, Michael Kirkland, Alex Bell, Katy Jones and Paula Yancy. Back row are Glen Cantrell, Brooke Allen, and Toni Hill.***

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## From Soup to Nuts - Katys House

AUGUST 24TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

[From Soup to Nuts - Katys House](#)

**Bloomfield, Missouri** - The Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce held a Ribbon Cutting for From Soup to Nuts Katys House located at 307 East Court St.

Owner, Katy Jones, opened the restaurant that features daily lunch specials and catering services. Her small bistro specializes in hillbilly gourmet!

Katys House is open Monday thru Friday from 11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Full meal includes drink, dessert, and tax for \$8.00. The sandwiches are to die for and the dessert is mouthwatering good!

Some of the items found on the menu included Katy Melt, Chicken Salad, Pimento Cheese, Broccoli Salad, Cucumbers & Onions, Pea Salad, Cottage Cheese, Fruit, Mac & Cheese, Scalloped Potatoes, Blueberry Sorbet, Strawberry Margarita Pie, Chicken Green Chili Tacos, Refried Beans & Rice, Grilled Pineapple, Raspberry Custard, Low-Sugar items, and more. Just depends on the day what she might have cooked up and ready to serve.

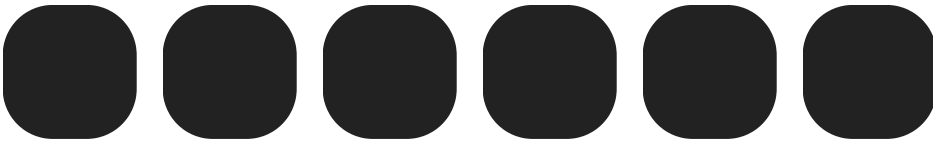
Please follow her on Facebook for specials by clicking **HERE**.

**Shown in the photo are front row from left to right: Paula Yancy, Jessy Martin, Katy Jones, Sue Mayo, Brooke Allen, and Goldie DeGroup. Back row are Michael Kirkland, Diane Mitchell, Jim Mayo, Toni Hill, and Glen Cantrell.**

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