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Missouri Veterans Cemetery Receives Large Donation

MAY 28TH 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Missouri Veterans Cemetery in Bloomfield received a donation of \$51,320 from the Sikeston American Legion.

The funds were raised at the Legion's annual cook off and poker run fundraiser event. The event also featured a corn hole tournament, barbeque dinner and more. The event has raised more than \$220,000 in the 10 years it has been held. The event raised \$9,967 the first year and has increased each year up to the more than \$51,000 this year. A presentation ceremony was held at the cemetery.

Members of the Sikeston American Legion, Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and Missouri Veterans Cemetery gather for a photo in the committal facility at the cemetery. Photo courtesy of Tammy Smith

“It's a team effort, it's the Legion, the auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion and the riders,” said Blair Moran, President of the Bloomfield Assistance League. “It's a labor of love for all of them, each and every year. This is the tenth year and this being the tenth year this was our best year. We have doubled what they have done in the past and we truly appreciate it.”

Money raised from the Poker Run and Cook off have done such things as enclose the Committal Shelter and installed heat and air for the comfort of the families during a service. The bell in the bell tower has been replaced, a new sound system was installed and more.

“I just want to thank the American Legion Family for a wonderful tenth year,” said auxiliary member Vicki Wilson. “I knew that the sponsors were up this year, but I was in awe when the final totals came in, I was just busting at the seams.”

“Thanks to the American Legion Auxiliary, the Legion, the S.A.L. (Sons of the American Legion), the riders,” Wilson continued. “And you poor riders, one of these days we are going to have this poker run and it is not going to rain. We have had it in April, we have had it in May, we have had it in September we have had it in October and it has rained every single time. So I think you guys are just going to have to deal with it and you do a good job. Thank you guys for going through the weather to make that happen.”

Despite the rain 25 vehicles were in the poker run, 23 of them motorcycles. The cook off featured 15 teams representing Missouri, Illinois, and Arkansas. Royal Oak Charcoal provided all the charcoal for the event and the Legion provided the meat.

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