



Elks Lodge #9 St. Louis

Veterans Support Committee

2019 Activities

The #9 Vets Committee has had a busy year, so far, with more to come;

In January we provided a donation to the St. Louis Veterans Home to provide holiday comfort to the residents. We started our year with a new 11th hour raffle for a \$650 market voucher.

In February we hosted the ladies of American Legion Post 404 who gave us information about their efforts to assist homeless veterans in the area. Tim Brennan ran a bumper board for the Superbowl and we had a blast at the party during the game.

In March we visited the St. James veterans Home and provided lunch and swag bags to the residents along with 3 TVs for individuals. We held a successful Fish Fry. We drew our raffle and member Jane Jennemann graciously donated the prize back to the committee to support future events. That started our next raffle board for a pistol prize. This wonderfully sold out in less than 2 weeks and was drawn at our New Year's Eve party on March 30th with a very happy Evan Thomas collecting a Sig Sauer 9mm pistol.

Speaking of our party; we held a VERY successful Steak Night at the Lodge, thanks to member not only as a fund raiser but as a venue to make donations to various veterans support organization partners. The Joshua Chamberlain Society,

Paralyzed Veterans of America, FOCUS Marines, H.E.R.O.E.S. Care and the SSGT Ron Bozikis Memorial Fund all received funds to assist their efforts.

Member Tim Brennan single handedly raised over \$1,000 for our mission during the NCAA Basketball Final Four.

April was again a busy time with another Fish Fry and the start of yet another 11th hour raffle. This time the prize was 30 tickets to Lodge Steak Night. A bargain at only \$11 a ticket. During April we were advised we had, once again, been successful in obtaining a Freedom Grant from the Grand Lodge, to enable us to conduct our annual community awareness event, in August. We made a donation to Team River Runner to assist them in their annual white water veteran kayak event.

We again visited the St. James Veterans Home in May, in partnership with Lodge #2664 Ellisville and this time as well as food and goodie bags we provided entertainment. TVs were again donated. The residents are so appreciative and it warms the heart to be able to give them comfort and company. Despite marginal weather, member Ray Roberts stepped up and took charge to produce a great effort with our Veterans Day BBQ. The best laid plans etc etc.

June seems to be a quieter month for us, but after Mark Gabauer won the 11th hour raffle (for the second time in a year), we have opened a new board for a voucher to the outdoors via Bass Pro. The current Blues fever in their journey to the Stanley Cup (game #7 is tonight as I write this), is drawing the attention of everyone. Even so, this Saturday we'll participate in the Lodge Flag Day Ritual.

July is heavily weighted towards the National Convention being held right here in St. Louis. We have some ill-defined plans for a BBQ or other event mid-month. Stay tuned. At the end of the month we'll man an aid station for the Joshua Chamberlain Society Bike for Heroes event.

August will see our signature event when we host the 2nd annual Kayak with a Vet community awareness event on Creve Coeur Lake the 3rd. This event last year was a huge success, despite being held in October with consequent cold and an unusually very windy day. We're hoping for better weather and an even bigger and better event this year. A video of the day last year will be an introduction at

the National Convention – don't get much better kudos than that!! Planning is well underway and we're looking forward to an enormous success.

At the beginning of September, we'll partner with the American Legion Post 556 Chesterfield, to host veterans to the Spirit of St Louis Airshow. Again, we were dogged by weather last year (October is not a great weather experience in St. Louis), but the event was still an opportunity for veterans to be entertained and given recognition.

In October we'll hold our 4th annual Clay Shoot. Would you believe our original venue is under water due to the record flooding? Not to worry. We found an alternate and the event will proceed as usual and be an unqualified success. By the time of the event we're hoping to have a shotgun raffle complete and drawn on the day.

We celebrate "Elktober" as usual with our own beer on tap throughout the month and a kick-off at the start of the month and a full-fledged Elktoberfest dinner at the end.

In November, we'll again visit the residents of the St. James Veterans Home. We will co-ordinate a Sportsman Dream hunt for one (and maybe two) veterans during deer season.

The Army/Navy game in December has become another of our signature events, and we'll throw a great party, as usual.

As you can see, we do a lot, give a lot and enjoy a lot.

"As long as there are veterans, the Elks will be there to support them."