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FEATURED

## American Legion coming back to life

Erin Jusseaume Dec 12, 2018



American Legion District Adjutant Bobby Baker was all smiles during the dinner as he watched five local members be awarded for their recruitment efforts that resulted in the local post now being at full membership requirements.

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Local American Legion Post 30 in Paris is coming back to life with membership growing each week.

Monday evening saw the post welcome 20 new members to the local chapter during the organization's Christmas Dinner.

Post Adjutant Bud Mackey, Post Service Officer Amy Burton, Post Sergeant at Arms Willy Wooten, and post members Charles Miles and James Council were all recognized for their recruitment efforts with certificates and pins.

"It wasn't very long ago that we only had four active members, so being able to grow with new active members is very exciting for this post," Mackey said. "We've been actively recruiting members to build the club back up to where we can really serve our community."

Burton added the Post was starting to see some real diversity in its membership, something she was excited to see.

"This is a great organization for vets to be involved in. We are all about empowerment, respect and validation amongst a lot of other things, and as a group, we want to help and be involved in something great," Burton said.

The long-standing club has seen its fair share of ups and downs with membership since its inception in 1915.

"We have struggled over the years with active memberships, but it looks as though it is turning around now which is great," Mackey said. "At the dinner Monday night, Charles Miles brought his recruitment to the event, and it turned out that new recruitment made our membership base hit 100 percent."

Now as the club sits at full membership for the organization requirements, Mackey said he and his fellow members are excited to push forward with into the new year.

"There are programs within the American Legion that we have to take part in so we are looking at the programs and finding which ones will fit best for our community so we can get those going in the new year," Mackey said.

"We have such a diverse membership that it looks as though we will keep growing strong as we get set to welcome more and more vets," Burton said.

Every third Saturday of the month, the American Legion Post meets at the Elks Lodge, 2110 36th St. NE in Paris, at around 10 a.m. after the Elks Veterans breakfast.

"The timing of the breakfast works well, and the Elks have been very gracious to allow us to meet after they put on the breakfast," Mackey said.

According to the American Legion website, in order to qualify for membership, potential members need to have been assigned to at least one day of federal active duty service any time during the eligibility periods determined by the U.S. government, and received an honorable discharge/discharge under honorable conditions, or currently serving in one of the U.S. armed forces.

"This is just a great organization to be involved in. We have great members here and are always looking to welcome more," Burton said.

Mackey said, as the membership has grown over the last few months, Post 30 also is looking at creating an auxiliary for female members as well due to the high interest.

As they get set to jump into 2019, the American Legion Post 30 in Paris is ready to get amongst the community and help in any way they can.

For local vets interested in information on how to join, call Bud Mackey at 903-732-3869.

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