



A Situation Report on activities of San Tan Valley American Legion Post 97 Spring, 2015



Robert Krumwiede, incoming commander

Post 97 elections held at April meeting

Robert (Bob) Krumwiede was elected commander of Post 97 on April 13, with John (Radar) Meyer elected First Vice Commander, Gary Weber elected Second Vice Commander, Tony Gunderson re-elected as Adjutant & Financial Officer and Paul Lorenzen and Dennis Gardner both elected to terms as members at large. Installment of the officers will be held at the monthly meeting on Monday, May 11 at the Central Arizona College campus

on Belle Vista Road, beginning at 6 p.m. with a potluck supper, meeting to follow at 7 p.m.

“I would like to thank everyone for having the confidence in me to be commander of Post 97,” said Krumwiede. “Our post is doing a great job with the youth of San Tan Valley, but to continue doing that job and serving local veterans we all need to work together. We offer a large variety of programs, so there is probably something to interest everyone. I encourage you to pick a program and volunteer your time.”



A Post 97 volunteer positions an entrant

Car show fantastic success; biggest in STV history?

The second annual Cruise-In For Vets Car & Bike Show was held on Saturday, March 7 at Poston Butte High School in ideal conditions. The event was staged in conjunction with the Community First Responders and Law Enforcement Fair sponsored by the AZ Public Safety Foundation. Last year’s show was a big success and this year’s event was even better, with 142 entries of cars and motorcycles in 17 trophy classes offering first, second and third place trophies based on peer judging.

drawing over 4,000 people who got a chance to examine emergency vehicles and helicopters and view law enforcement demonstrations of all types, including vehicle extractions and a helicopter transport for a high school drama student from Poston Butte High School who volunteered for the role.

Title sponsors this year included Ted’s Shooting Range and San Tan Ford. Raffles, food vendors, and Kids Zone bouncy games helped make the day a fun family gathering,

Reviews of the event are ongoing, as organizers work to improve on all aspects of the show in anticipation of staging a third Cruise-In for Vets in 2016. This year’s function was a financial success for Post 97; proceeds being dedicated to programs for veterans and the youth of San Tan Valley. Later reports indicate this might have been the largest car show in the history of San Tan Valley, thanks to Chair Doug Horner and Jeff Kramer.



Adjutant Tony Gunderson, Commander John Dunton present colors and lead Pledge

Several youth programs gaining momentum

In recent weeks Post 97 youth programs have generated interest among San Tan Valley youngsters, with six boys signing up for the 2015 Boys State; another upcoming season of Legion baseball (with six teams set to take the field); and a re-invigorated Venturing Crew (#2116) following a

‘High Adventure’ theme and a campout with caving/spelunking scheduled for May 22-24 (check Facebook page). This year no cadet candidates came forward for the 2015 American Legion Law Enforcement Academy, but Post 97 is already recruiting young adults for the 2016 academy (jenysaurus@yahoo.com).



Previous Post 97 venturing crew on a hike



Contestants come by wagon and bicycle



Moms and dads wae always a big help



Phil Jordan (left) and Kenneth Hayes



Military aircraft perform flyovers above Sacaton



Partygoers prepare for birthday cake

Fishing contest reels in a bunch of kids and adults

The first annual Hooked on Kids Fishing Derby, hosted by San Tan Valley American Legion Post 97 and Johnson Ranch, attracted 97 registered boys and girls from the area, accompanied by parents and grandparents with approximately 400+ people gathered around the shore of the Johnson Ranch fishing pond on Saturday, April 11.

The kids were fishing for stocked catfish, as well as tilapia, carp and other fish in the pond. Each fish caught was weighed and scores kept with a brother and sister (Mark and McKenzie Duffin) taking home prizes for most fish caught in the 12 and under category. Skyler Nelson was the only person to catch a fish in the 13-17 category, so she was also a winner. All fish were returned to the water.

Bob Krumwiede, Post 97 chairman of the event, says he was pleased with the turnout and the response: "I think it went very well. We had many grateful comments, with one grandfather saying it was the best day he had ever spent with his grand kids."

The Arizona Game and Fish Department provided 50 fishing poles, 25 of which were pressed into action to supply kids without poles. Free bait was handed out to each entrant, along with a goody bag filled with brochures and gift certificates. Local businesses and merchants chipped in with prizes and gifts for drawings at the end of the four-hour event.

The Post 97 chapter of the American Legion Riders served up free grilled hot dogs, chips and drinks to the registered boys and girls fishing in the contest. Member veterans were on hand to help out with the youngsters and adults.

Iwo Jima flag-raising celebrated 70 years later

One of the Marines made famous by the raising of an American flag above Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima near the end of World War II was Ira Hamilton Hayes, born at Sacaton, AZ In January of 1923. In recent years, American Legion Post 84 in Sacaton, at the Gila River Indian Community, has held a ceremony and parade honoring their native son and on February 21 the post in Sacaton once again invited veterans and supporters to a very large gathering.

Attracting 110 entrants to the parade, which stretched for more than a mile at one point, the ceremony's grand marshal was Kenneth Hayes, Ira's youngest brother and himself a highly decorated veteran of the Korean War.

As Kenneth took his seat of honor along the parade route, opposite the reviewing stage, he was located very close to Post 97's oldest member, Walter 'Phil' Jordan, a WWII veteran who served on board a destroyer escort in the last year of the war ... a ship that was providing support bombardment off the shores of Iwo Jima. In fact, Phil actually witnessed the event from a distance.

The parade included several fly-over demonstrations of military aircraft and parade units from as far away as North Dakota and Illinois.

There were also six Navajo Code Talkers and distinguished veterans of WWII and other conflicts, many of them greeted by Post 85 Commander Urban Giff and Gila River Indian Community Governor Stephen Roe Lewis.

Legion birthday party held at Coolidge Legion club

Approximately 96 years ago, in March of 1919, many of the American soldiers who had fought in World War I gathered in Paris and formed the American Legion. On March 12, 19 individuals from the American Legion in Arizona broke bread and had a meal in honor of that birthday at the Coolidge American Legion Post 54. Many of those attending were officers and members of

San Tan Valley Post 97.

After supper there was a video and personal presentations on Boys State and other Legion efforts by Tony Gunderson, adjutant of Post 97 and Jim Sylvester, commander of Post 8 in Casa Grande (Sylvester is also a Boys State counselor), District 4 Commander Roy White discussed several issues related to alignment proposals for the district that might include posts in 'copper country'.