



Upcoming Events Calendar

Please take time to review the calendar and if there are additions that are necessary, please contact the editor at editor@vfw8870.org

October 7th	Staff Meeting—American Legion Post 66 Hall (117 6th Ave. S., Edmonds) 0900
October 9th	50th Commemoration Ceremony at JBLM (see related article in Newsletter)
October 10th	Post Meeting— American Legion Post 66 Hall—Lunch at 1130-Meeting at 1230
October 17th	Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans—9:20 Kingston Ferry (see article for details).

Traci Williams Speaks about NMS



Traci William, Department and National Chair of the VFW's National Military Services (NMS) spoke to us about its four major programs; *Operation Uplink*, *Military Assistance Program*, *Unmet Needs*, and the VFW "*Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship*" program. All of these programs are designed to help our current military members or recently discharged veterans. Our Post gives generously to this fund and Traci was kind enough to travel from her home in Maple Valley to speak to us. If you would like further information, please go the www.VFW.org where you can get in depth information on each of the programs.

Post Changes Meeting Location

Just a gentle reminder that our Post meeting is now being held at the American Legion Hall at 117 6th Ave. South in Edmonds. Lunch is still being served. The Ladies Auxiliary will continue to meet at the Senior Center on the same day the Post meets.

Buddy Poppies—We Need Help

When I first became active in VFW, I was very hesitant to volunteer handing out Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day. I overcame my reluctance when the Poppy Chairman one year almost broke my arm to get me to sign up for a shift. Since then, I don't believe I've missed a single Poppy drive. Why? Because it isn't like having a root canal, in fact, it is a very satisfying experience. Folks are down right friendly to us and you end up meeting some very interesting folks. In the past, I've met a woman who served in the German Army in WWII as a radar operator and fled to the Americans at the end of the war. I've met veterans who have served in every war from WWII to the present and sons and daughters of veterans including one who survived the Bataan Death march. I've had a Korean couple thank us for saving their country and best of all, we have handed out hundreds of brochures, primarily to school children, explaining why the Poppy is a symbol of Veterans Day.

We work in teams so you're never alone and the shifts aren't that long—typically 4 hours. All the funds we raise are dedicated to our Relief Fund and aren't used to support the Post. So consider helping out because at the same time, you'll really be helping out the various places we spend our funds like the NMS, Fisher Houses, and active duty military folks who need Christmas gifts for their children and can't afford them.

We will be at several stores on November 7th and 8th. If you can help (and we no longer break arms like mine was), let us know. Call Bob Crawford at 206-909-4893 or email quartermaster@vfw8870.org.

Membership

I only have two questions for our continuous members—have you paid your dues for this year? If not, do you need financial assistance because we will help you if you're in a bind. Just let us know. Otherwise, please reach in your billfold and drop the \$35 dues to the Post. Thank you in advance.

VFW Trivia

A number of us will not attend anything more than our Post meetings during our entire tenure with VFW which in some cases can go on for 7 decades. So when Traci Williams spoke at our Post I noted that she had Silver piping on her cover. I was sitting next to Don Wischmann, Department I Commander, who had Red piping on his cover. The rest of us had Gold piping on our covers. Traci was a National Chairperson and National Officers and Chairs are entitled to Silver piping on their covers. Department officers and chairs are entitled to wear Red piping while everyone else (meaning the workers of VFW) wear Gold on their covers.

Veterans Day

Just a heads up for you folks who can't make the next meeting. We are planning on holding our first ever Veterans Day ceremony at our new Veterans Park at 5th Ave. North and Bell St. While in the early planning stages, the event will be held on November 11th at 1100hrs. Please bring your families and friends to this ceremony. We need to have a strong showing so folks in City Hall know that our veteran community is dedicated to our small park they have allotted us.

Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans

We just received an email from the organizer of this year's reunion of the Guadalcanal Veterans. During October 15th—19th, the reunion of the veterans will held in Lynnwood. On October 17th, they will take the 9:20AM ferry departing Edmonds and hold a memorial service on the crossing to Kingston. Upon arriving in Kingston, they will have lunch where you can join them. Finally, on Saturday between 2 and 4pm, the veterans will be in the Hampton Inn Suites and available to meet people in the community. These guys are real heroes so try to meet them on the ferry or in Lynnwood.

Post Members Visit School

Mrs. Sue Idso, a 5th grade teacher from Mukilteo Elementary, asked if some of our veterans would speak to her classes (yes—like high school she has 5 periods of classes). Fred Apgar, Jim Blossy (see "Commanders Column") and I volunteered. The following day Sue passed along comments that her students made after our presentations so I've included some of them here:

The sacrifices our veterans make are a great act of kindness.

I'm impressed by how a stranger would sacrifice his life for me.

I feel like I know a lot more about the military.

There are so many lives lost in a war. It's so sad.

I'm a Boy Scout and now I want to be a Scout even more.

I understand how much veterans care about America.

There's always a price for freedom.

We have the best system of government in the world. I feel appreciative of that.

I'm very proud of Mr. Apgar.

I have learned to respect the WWII veterans.

I'm so grateful that so many people serve.

Now I know more about how a soldier feels.

Mr. Traner's stories make me feel safe.

I can understand more about what my grandpa went through.

Veterans keep the Constitution alive.

I'm inspired to join the Army.

If we didn't have veterans, we wouldn't have freedom.

The military is more serious than I thought.

Soldiers put their lives on the line for our Constitution.

I learned how hard it was to make the sacrifices to go to war and to accept it.

It's really special to know someone who fought for our country.

As Veterans Day approaches, we will have a number of opportunities to speak to classes and entire assemblies. We will be passing a signup sheet for volunteers at the next meeting so have some fun and speak to a class.

50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War Welcome Home Celebration



50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War

Joint Base Lewis-McChord
Salutes Vietnam-era Veterans

October 9, 2014

1-5 pm

Welcome Home!

- Salute Ceremony to honor Vietnam-era Veterans and a Massing of the Colors at Watkins Field begins at 1 pm
- Ceremony keynote speaker is General (Retired) Barry McCaffrey
- Enter at DuPont Gate Exit 119, Interstate 5
- Parking opens at 11 am
- Events include interactive displays with service members and a Pinning Ceremony
- Families and friends are invited
- Vietnam-era Veterans are asked to pre-register at: <https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=210707&k=0060420E7B50>
- For more information, please call 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command at 253-967-5171 or 253-967-3570



I have posted below an invitation from the Army to all Vietnam Era Vets to attend the ceremony at JBLM on October 9th. There will be a “massing of the colors” where each veterans group/Post is asked to have one member carry the Post’s colors. Since we won’t be meeting until the following day, if you are interesting in going, let me know at editor@vfw8870.org and also RSVP no later than October 3rd by going to the link that is provided below. If we have enough interest, we will put together a car pool. I should note that even if you aren’t a Vietnam Vet, you are welcomed to attend this event. You can get additional information by going to:

http://www.ausafortlewis.com/drupal/sites/default/files/JBLM%20Vietnam%20Vet%20Salute%20w_Hyperlink.pdf

The following is a repost from the Army on this ceremony:

The Commanding General, I Corps, is having a ceremony and reception on 9 October to honor all veterans that served during the Vietnam War era. It is most important to note that this is all veterans and not just those that served in Vietnam and SE Asia. This includes Cold War veterans of that era such as SAC, Air Defense, Europe, Korea, at sea, CONUS, etc. In addition to veterans, the public is invited and encouraged to attend.

Veterans and the public are requested to enter Joint Base Lewis-McChord through the DuPont Gate at 15 Exit 119 starting at 11:00 am. All will be guided to parking.

The ceremony will be held on Watkins Field (Main Parade Field) starting at 1:00 PM. Included in the ceremony will be the entire 7th Infantry Division, 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command and other major units stationed on JBLM. The Washington Army National Guard and the civilian community will participate through the Massing of the Colors to honor the American Flag as the symbol of our Country.

Ceremony speakers will be General Barry McCaffrey, recipient of the two Army Distinguished Service Crosses in the Vietnam War, and Lieutenant General Stephen R. Lanza, Commanding General, I Corps.

Major JBLM Army and Air Force units will have displays for visitors located in the main part of the Army part of the installation.

There will be a reception with the Vietnam Era Veterans and their families and friends where Generals McCaffrey and Lanza will present each veteran with a commemorative pin.

Please RSVP by October 3rd if you plan on attending by following the link

<https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=210707&k=0060420E7B50>

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Commanders Column By Jim Blossey

A few days ago I had the privilege of speaking with a class of 5th graders at Mukilteo Elementary School. These 10-year-olds were some of the sharpest young people I have ever met.. They had been studying the U.S. Constitution and their teachers wanted them to meet some actual people who had put their lives on the line to protect the liberties that are so eloquently enumerated in that magnificent document. Past Commanders Fred Apgar and Jim Traner also spoke that day, at different times and—I presume—to different classes.

“If we didn’t have veterans, we wouldn’t have freedom.”

The next day their teachers sent us a few excerpts from the comments the students had written down. Clearly, they were listening. More importantly their words pointed to the content of our remarks, not to us as speakers. They recognized that service, particularly military service, is about real people and—in most cases—people that live right here among us.

“I learned that even 17- and 18-year-olds can make big sacrifices.”

The students identified with the idea that when we served we weren’t much older than them. They wanted to know how we felt at the time and what motivated us to become part of the military. We told the truth—that very few of us joined because we wanted to be patriots. But we also told how every one of us came to realize the importance of what we were doing and that we were fighting, not so much for the vague ideals of freedom and democracy, but for family and loved ones...and for future generations. In other words, for them.

“It’s really special to know someone who fought for our country.”

I’m glad they wrote those words on paper rather than saying them to me in person, because I’m not sure I could have retained my composure. What is important for all of us to know is that this is how most people feel about us. And what I want you to know is how special it is to be able to touch these young people’s hearts.