

## Upcoming Events Calendar

Please take time to review the calendar and if there are additions that are necessary, please contact the editor at [commander@vfwdistrict1.org](mailto:commander@vfwdistrict1.org)

September 7th	VSO/Forms Training, Post 91, Tacoma—9AM
September 10th	Staff Meeting—Traner’s Office 09:00 AM
September 13th	Post Meeting – Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch 11:30 AM—Meeting 12:30 PM
October 8th	Staff Meeting—Traner’s Office 09:00 AM
October 11th	Post Meeting – Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch 11:30 AM—Meeting 12:30 PM
November 1st	Essay Contest and Teacher of the Year entries due at Post
November 8th-9th	Buddy Poppy Distribution
November 15th	Youth essays and Teacher of the Year entries to District
November 15th	Post Meeting—Edmonds Senior Center—Change from Second Friday to Third Friday for this meeting only.
December 10th	Staff Meeting—Traner’s Office 09:00 AM
December 13th	Post Meeting– Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch at 11:30AM-Meeting at 12:30PM
January 4th	District Meeting—Alderwood Boys and Girls Club-12:00PM

## Veterans Remembered at Ceremony

There will be a ceremony at the Edmonds Cemetery on August 27th at 1000hrs to remember those veterans who have died in Snohomish county without an Honor Guard or Flag Ceremony.

## U.S. Army Recognizes Mike Reagan by Fred M. Appgar



On Friday, August 16, 2013, the Army’s 3D Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Battalion observed its return from Afghanistan with a traditional homecoming banquet. The mission of the Battalion, which is home based at Ft. Lewis, is to disarm conventional and unconventional (biological, chemical, and improvised) explosive devices. Obviously, this is extremely dangerous work, and the Battalion suffered numerous casualties during its most recent deployment. The banquet was hosted by Lt. Col. Frank Davis, Battalion Commander, and the keynote speaker for the event was Mike Reagan, a member of VFW Post #8870.

After Mike had concluded his remarks, Lt. Col. Davis presented him with a plaque to express the grateful appreciation of the Battalion for the numerous portraits Mike had drawn for its deceased members. In addition, Lt. Col. Davis surprised Mike when he read the following proclamation: “From the Department of the Army, Mr. Michael Reagan is presented with the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal for his meritorious volunteer service as the Fallen Heroes Project artist. His dedication to duty and commitment to the soldiers proved essential to honoring our Fallen Heroes. Mr. Reagan’s actions reflect great credit upon himself, the 3D Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion, the 71<sup>st</sup> Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group, and the United States Army.”

## Post Honors Coast Guard



At our August meeting, the Post honored the Coast Guard as it celebrated its 223<sup>rd</sup> birthday on August 4. The Coast Guard is unique among the uniformed services. It has a maritime and military mission and is charged with enforcing maritime law in both domestic and international waters. During peacetime, the Coast Guard is under control of Homeland Security and authority for the service is transferred to the Department of the Navy during time of war.

As has become Post tradition, we honor each military branch during the month of its birthday by singing its hymn. To lead us in singing the Coast Guard Hymn, "Semper Paratus" (Ever Faithful), a retired veteran of the Coast Guard, Ken Armstong, was invited to attend our meeting. Ken is the City Manager of the City of Mill Creek. His family has strong ties to military service. His father was a retired pilot in the Air Force pilot, and numerous other family members served in other branches.

### Burial at Sea

We often have folks contact us through our website, but last month we got a request that was a bit out of the ordinary. A lady contacted us asking if we could provide a bugler to play Taps while her Father's ashes were scattered in Puget Sound from a Washington State ferry. Her Father had been a Marine and one of the "Chosen Few". Chris Edwards, our Senior Vice, boarded the ferry and provided Taps. Interestingly, I was dining at Arnies on the deck when the Ferry stopped mid-channel and blew its horn 3 times. Everyone stopped eating thinking a disaster was unfolding until I told them it was ok, it was just a burial at sea.

## School of Instruction— District Commander Jim Traner

The District's School of Instruction was held on August 17th. All the Posts were represented while we went over the latest information from National and Department. Linda Fairbank, membership chairman for the west side of the State came and spoke about the latest changes regarding increased dues, length of memberships and the opportunities we have in signing up members and having continuous members pay their dues prior to January 1st. In essence, someone paying today is a paying through December 31, 2014 while someone paying in 2014 will have their membership expire on the same date in 2015. It's a great time to join VFW and get 16 months of membership for the price of one year. With memberships expiring throughout the year, our Quartermasters and membership chairs will have their work cut out for them over the next year or so until everyone is on the same page. This is also an excellent time to have members convert their continuous memberships to a Life membership.

We also covered a number of other VFW programs but let me point out that all this information is available at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org). Simply go the website and spend some time reviewing the information available there. Also, you will find resources for Commanders and Quartermasters. I was disappointed in not having any new members attend. The crusty old hands have heard most of it already but the newer members would have been exposed to a lot of programs conducted by the VFW that they might not be familiar or know that they even exist.

### Christmas Party

I know, it's 70 degrees outside and Christmas is 4 months away. However, mark your calendars for December 14th at 1PM when the American Legion Post 66 and VFW Post 8870 will have a combined Christmas party at the Senior Center. Since we bring toys (for the Holly House) and canned food (for the Food Bank), you can start squirreling away both in anticipation.

## Post Offers Assistance



Thanks to the untiring efforts of our Service Officer, Don Whedon, our Post continues to provide assistance to veterans who find themselves in a position where they need some assistance. In addition to providing financial assistance to veterans in need, Don provides assistance in the filing of claims for those eligible for benefits from the Veterans Association as well as claims for medals to which veterans have earned.

Recently, thanks to Dons' efforts, the Post provided a clothes dryer to the family of Joe Zahara. Joe is a decorated Marine who served in Vietnam and has plans to join our Post. The clothes dryer was provided at discount by Lowe's. In addition to a discounted price to veterans, Lowe's also assumes the cost of state tax.

If any member of our Post has a question regarding your benefits, or if you know of a veteran who needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Don (425-218-0034 or [donwhedonsrsr@hotmail.com](mailto:donwhedonsrsr@hotmail.com)).

## VFW Trivia

**Question:** Should members always wear their caps at Post meetings?

**Answer:** The National By-Laws requires that elected and appointed officers wear regulation caps in VFW meetings; it is optional for other Post members to do the same. However, the regulation cap is the only cap approved to wear at a Post meeting.

## Chaplain's Corner

I met with Erv Schmidt yesterday. That is always a pleasant experience. However, this time Erv wanted to discuss plans for his memorial service. Erv stated quite emphatically that although he feels fine, he tires easily. He misses his wife, June, and is looking forward to joining her in the not too distant future. Erv mentioned fondly his wonderful daughter Katie and son-in-law Bill; he is very thankful for all they do for him. He showed me his apartment including many pictures of family. Family has played and continues to play a very important role in Erv's life – that is how it should be for each of us. Hanging over his dining table is a wedding picture of a very happy, attractive, and very young couple, Erv in his Navy Blue Jumper and his beautiful wife, June, in a very lovely hat. The picture was taken in April 1944. Erv was home on leave – between ships. The couple glows with youth, excitement, and happiness. Oh that we could capture time returning to an earlier and happier day. Oh that we could, like a picture, remain young. Of course, it is not to be! Time marches on! What was once young fades with time – including us. We are, however, blessed with memories of days gone by. In those memories, we are forever young as are those we remember and love. Although Erv misses his wife, June, and longs to join her, he recognizes that life is precious and is a gift from God, meaning that life, all life, from conception to death, belongs to God. We live and die in accordance with God's plan, a plan not (normally) shared with us. Erv has – here on earth - a loving family, many loving VFW Comrades, and other friends too numerous to mention. For those of us blessed by having Erv as a friend, we want him around awhile longer and know he still has much to give. What I always find most rewarding in my discussions with Erv is his unconditional trust in his Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Erv knows that Jesus has personally told him, though the Bible, that "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you." There is no doubt in Erv's mind that when the Lord calls, he will 'return home; he will join his Lord and his beloved wife, June. We hope that Erv remains with us for a long time. We should each remember that every day is a gift – it is the 'present'. May God Bless you and may God Bless Our Troops

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## **The Last Word—Commander's Column by Fred Apgar**

Having served in the military is something we all have in common. Regardless of whether we volunteered to serve or were drafted, the fact we wore the uniform means we provided service to our nation. Of course there were many valuable lessons we learned along the way, lessons that have served us well over the years. We all learned the importance of unit cohesion and working together, as a team, to achieve a common goal or mission. The fact we all served in combat zones means we probably all witnessed, first hand, incredible acts of bravery, courage, and sacrifice. Some made the ultimate sacrifice and gave up their lives for their country.

As a child, my grandfather and father were always sharing great wisdom through the use of different proverbs. One that I always remember was "Many hands make light work". It took time for me to completely understand what they meant, but the message is an important one.

The strength of any organization is only as strong as the willingness of its members to get involved and serve others. This is especially applicable for our Post if we are going to continue to provide wonderful assistance to our fellow veterans in need and maintain the numerous programs in which we are involved. We are fortunate to have a core group of our members who through their willingness to serve maintains the vitality of VFW Post #8870.

For some of our members who are serving in leadership positions, it is time for them to move on. It is vitally important for those of you in our membership who have been blessed with abilities and talents and have not yet taken an active role in our Post to come forward and volunteer to serve. There are a variety of roles in which you can serve, and I look forward to your service.

Another maxim I learned from my father was, "There are some who are willing to work, and some willing to let them". Please, don't be one of those who are "willing to let them".

*The views expressed in this column are solely those of the Commander and do not represent those of VFW Post #8870, its membership, or VFW.*