



**VFW Post 8870 and
Ladies Auxiliary
Edmonds, WA
www.vfw8870.org**



October 2013
Vol. 9 Issue 10

Upcoming Events Calendar

Please take time to review the calendar and if there are additions that are necessary, please contact the

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
October 22nd	Veterans Memorial Service—Edmonds Memorial Cemetery—10:00AM
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

VFW Trivia

Whenever your cover is removed for a prayer, it should be held in the right hand over the heart with the Cross of Malta showing. Even though at times a Commander or Chaplain will forget to say it (myself included), you should be at parade rest with your left hand behind your back. It isn’t dogma, it is simply for everyone to show respect to the prayer being said.

Poppy Signup On Line

We need help Comrades. Our Veterans Day Buddy Poppy drive is on the 8th and 9th of November at five locations. We have place a signup sheet at our website www.vfw8870.org to allow you to go online and pick your date, time, and location where you can assist. We have some folks that pull all the shifts for both days to make up for the fact that others don’t help out. The proceeds raised are placed in our Relief Fund and used to support a variety of organizations. To date this fiscal year here are the organizations and amounts contributed:

Fisher Houses	\$2,000
National Home for the Children	\$1,000
National Military Services	\$1,000
Assisting Vets in Need	\$ 573
Special Olympics	\$ 500
USO	\$1,000
Wound Warriors Project	\$ 500
Fallen Heroes Project	\$ 50
Youth Essay Scholarships	\$ 300
Freedom Scholarships	\$4,000
Veterans Homes	\$2,000
Chaplain’s Offices (assist active duty)	\$2,000
Santa’s Castle (JBLM)	\$1,000
Summer Camp—Veterans’ Children	\$1,000

So you can see we can only do good if we raise funds to assist these worthy organizations. If you can’t sign up due to health or other issues, that’s ok. Our Post understands that many of you have given hours and hours of time when you were able. However, if you are able and simply chose not to volunteer, I would suggest you seriously consider a donation to our Relief Fund. Simply make the check payable to **VFW Post 8870** and indicate it is a donation to our Relief Fund. Since the average volunteer raises in the neighborhood of \$200-\$300 per shift I would suggest a \$100 donation. However, any thing you would like to give would be gladly accepted and, as you see, put to good use.

Military Funeral Honors by Chris Edwards

The rendering of Military Funeral Honors is a ceremony representing our Nation's deep gratitude to those who, in times of war and peace, have faithfully defended our country. It is the final demonstration of respect our nation can provide to the family members of our veterans. Every veteran who has worn the uniform of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard has earned the performance of Military Funeral Honors by uniformed members of the Armed Forces.

Upon request, Military Funeral Honors can be performed for active duty and Reserve personnel and former active duty veterans and Reservists who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. The preferred method for verifying eligibility is the DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty. If a DD Form 214 is not available, any discharge document, showing other than dishonorable service could be accepted. Photographs of veterans in uniform and official military documentation of service could be helpful in determining eligibility. A service member's DD Form 214 may be obtained by sending a request to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, MO.

Family members of deceased veterans may request Military Funeral Honors through their funeral director. For families not utilizing the services of funeral home, they should contact the appropriate Military Service Coordinator. Military units will provide, at a minimum, a two-person detail to present the core elements of the Military Honors ceremony. These elements include the playing of Taps, the folding of a burial flag, and the presentation of the flag to surviving family members. Under certain circumstances, a rifle detail and pall bearers may be provided.

The Army National Guard regularly provides Military Funeral Honors to all branches of service throughout the state of Washington. Frequently, the Guard details are accompanied by honor guard and rifle parties from local Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion Posts.

Contact information for the Washington Army National Guard Funeral Honors can be found at www.washingtonarmyguard.org/honorguard/. More information, as well as a list of Military Service Coordinators can be found at www.dmdc.osd.mil/mfh

ISG Chris Edwards is a member of Headquarters Staff, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion. He is the Senior Vice Commander of VFW Post # 8870.

Space Needed

The Post is in need of space to store its supplies that are used for our semi-annual Poppy distribution efforts. We are looking for a space approximately 6' x 6' in size and located in or close to Edmonds. Presently, we have been forced to rent space, and we need storage that is more conveniently located. If you have something suitable to our needs or know of someone from who we could rent a storage area, please contact Fred Apgar at 206-940-7502.

Fallen Heroes Project

The Fallen Heroes Project will be on display at the Lynnwood Library during the entire month of November. On November 9th at 2PM, Mike Reagan will make a presentation on the project. I am giving you a heads up 5 weeks in advance so you can put it on your calendar. I would suggest that you refer your friends to the exhibit even if they can't make it to the presentation.

Christmas Party

I know, it's 70 degrees (well, 60 now) outside and Christmas is 3 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 both away in anticipation.

Chaplain's Column—Rock Roth

Quang Nguyen, Creative Director/Founder Caddis Advertising, LLC, was asked to speak on his experience of coming to America and what it means. He spoke the following at Prescott Valley, AZ, Freedom Rally, in dedication to all Vietnam Veterans.

35 years ago, if you were to tell me that I am going to stand up here speaking to a couple thousand patriots, in English, I'd laugh at you. Man, every morning I wake up thanking God for putting me and my family in the greatest country on earth. I just want you all to know that the American dream does exist and I am living the American dream. I was asked to speak to you about my experience as a first generation Vietnamese-American, but I'd rather speak to you as an American. If you hadn't noticed, I am not white and I feel pretty comfortable with my people. I am a proud US citizen and here is my proof. It took me 8 years to get it, waiting in endless lines, but I got it, and I am very proud of it. I still remember the images of the Tet offensive in 1968, I was six years old. Now you might want to question how a 6-year-old boy could remember anything. Trust me, those images can never be erased. I can't even imagine what it was like for young American soldiers; 10,000 miles away from home, fighting on my behalf. 35 years ago, I left South Vietnam for political asylum. The war had ended. At the age of 13, I left with the understanding that I may or may not ever get to see my siblings or parents again. I was one of the first lucky 100,000 Vietnamese allowed to come to the US. Somehow, my family and I were reunited 5 months later, amazingly, in California. It was a miracle from God. If you haven't heard lately that this is the greatest country on earth, I am telling you that right now. It was the freedom and the opportunities presented to me that put me here with all of you tonight. I also remember the barriers that I had to overcome every step of the way. My high school counselor told me that I cannot make it to college due to my poor communication skills. I proved him wrong. I finished college. You see, all you have to do is to give this little boy an opportunity and encourage him to take and run with it. Well, I took the opportunity and here I am. This person standing tonight in front of you could not exist under a socialist/communist environment. By the way, if you think socialism is the way to go, I am sure many people here will chip in to get you a one-way ticket out of here. And if you didn't know, the only difference between socialism and communism is an AK-47 aimed at your head. That was my experience. In 1982, I stood with a thousand new immigrants, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and listening to the National Anthem for the first time as an American. To this day, I can't remember anything sweeter and more patriotic than that moment in my life. Fast forwarding, somehow I finished high school, finished college, and like any other goofball 21 year old kid, I was having a great time with my life. I had a nice job and a nice apartment in Southern California. In some way and somehow, I had forgotten how I got here and why I was here. One day I was at a gas station, I saw a veteran pumping gas on the other side of the island. I don't know what made me do it, but I walked over and asked if he had served in Vietnam. He smiled and said yes. I shook and held his hand. The grown man began to well up. I walked away as fast as I could and at that very moment, I was emotionally rocked. This was a profound moment in my life. I knew something had to change in my life. It was time for me to learn how to be a good citizen. It was time for me to give back. You see, America is not just a place on the map, it isn't just a physical location. It is an ideal, a concept. And if you are an American, you must understand the concept, you must accept this concept, and most importantly, you have to fight and defend this concept. This is about Freedom and not free stuff. And that is why I am standing up here. Brothers and sisters, to be a real American, the very least you must do is to learn English and understand it well. In my humble opinion, you cannot be a faithful patriotic citizen if you can't speak the language of the country you live in. Take this document of 46 pages - last I looked on the Internet, there wasn't a Vietnamese translation of the US Constitution. It took me a long time to get to the point of being able to converse and until this day, I still struggle to come up with the right words. It's not easy, but if it's too easy, it's not worth doing. Before I knew this 46-page document, I learned of the 500,000 Americans who fought for this little boy. I learned of the 58,000 names scribed on the black wall at the Vietnam Memorial. You are my heroes. You are my founders. At this time, I would like to ask all the Vietnam veterans to please stand. I thank you for my life. I thank you for your sacrifices, and I thank you for giving me the freedom and liberty I have today. I now ask all veterans, firefighters, and police officers, to please stand. On behalf of all first generation immigrants, I thank you for your services and may God bless you all.

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The Last Word—Commander's Column by Fred Apgar

Several months ago, the VFW Magazine had a lengthy article that discussed the children that fought in the Civil War. Incredibly, some boys, as young as 12 and 13 years of age, engaged in combat operations, many of whom were killed. Of course, we have all heard stories or perhaps had first-hand accounts of men who lied about their age to enlist in the Armed Forces during World War II. I wondered if the same may have true for the Vietnam War.

Depending on which search engine one uses, an inquiry will produced anywhere from 14 to 19 million references to "underage boys in Armed Forces". Several sources revealed some sobering statistics regarding the names that appear on The Wall.

Underage boys successfully entered the military during the Vietnam War, although the exact number of underage soldiers cannot be determined. However, the names of five soldiers who were 16 years of age appear on The Wall. The youngest American serviceman who was killed in action during the Vietnam War was Dan Bullock who was 15 years old. Dan was born in North Carolina but moved to Brooklyn, New York at the age of 13 when his mother died. A year later, he altered his birth certificate and enlisted in the Marine Corps. As a member of Platoon 3039, he graduated from boot camp in December 1968. Dan arrived in Vietnam in May 1969 and was assigned as a rifleman in 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He was stationed at An Hoa Combat Base. Just three weeks after arriving in Vietnam, during an NVA night attack on his base camp, 15 year old Dan Bullock was killed by small arms fire while making ammunition run to resupply his beleaguered unit.

Thankfully, a search for underage boys successfully joining the Armed Forces since the Vietnam War has not produced any results. We can only hope that procedures have been put into place that will preclude this from ever happening again.

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.