



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

VFW Post 8870
and Auxiliary
Edmonds, WA
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Events on the Horizon:

Staff Meetings: 9:00 AM, First Tues., American Legion Hall, 117 6th Ave. S., Edmonds
Post Meetings: Second Tues., American Legion Hall; Dinner at 5:00 PM (\$5) Meeting at 6:00 PM

August Post meeting takes place on Tuesday, August 9.

August 13 - VFW Night at the Ballpark with the Everett Aqual Sox

September 9 - Tour of USS Shoup - 0930 at Naval Station Everett.



Edmonds Veterans Lead the Way!

Members of VFW Post 8870 and American Legion Post 66 once again led the way as Edmonds celebrated it's annual "Edmonds Kind of 4th". Veteran members acted as color guard to begin the parade and a large contingent followed the color guard, on foot (including our senior member Col. Buck Weaver) or in vehicles.

Veterans participating were overwhelmed by the enthusiastic welcome and support expressed by the crowd. Edmonds, it seems, is very appreciative of its Veterans.



Above is our own Ron Clyborne and family, in his role as this year's parade Grand Marshal. Congratulations Ron!

More

Legion/ VFW Joint Picnic/Barbecue



Our Independence Day celebrations didn't stop at the end of the parade route. Immediately following the parade, VFW & Legion members and their families gathered at the Legion hall for our annual joint picnic/barbecue, where some great food, beverages and comaraderie were enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to our valiant cooks and other volunteers for providing us all with a great afternoon. Jim Traner, along with Carl Kurfess and Carl's brother manned the barbecue. Terry Traner, Jay Abel, Karen Peterson and Beckie Murdoch were our set up and cleaning crew. Jo Boyett and Valerie Ehlers took care of decorations. Great job folks!



Fred's Flag Wavers

At left are Post Chaplain Fred Apgar and six of his seven grandchildren, suitably attired in matching patriotic T-shirts. The kids came all the way from Long Island and Nashville to march in the Parade with Grandpa.

Also, many thanks to Fred for his ongoing support as the stalwart head photographer for our little publication.

Meet Terry Crabtree, our new Post Commander



Terry Joined the Post in Feb 2014. Originally from St Louis, MO, he was in the Army 1964-67 and served in Vietnam 1965-66. as part of the 864th Engineer Battalion, Military Assistance Command. Crabtree was an Engineer equipment operator/mechanic and Demolition Specialist/Port Construction at Cam Ranh Bay, Phan Rang, Tui Hoa and An Khe. Stateside included Ft Leonard Wood, MO, Ft Hood and Ft Wolters, TX. Terry completed the Executive Management Program at University of Washington. He was a Construction Manager for Bechtel Inc and has worked and lived on every continent except Antarctica. Terry met his wife Josephine in Kuwait where they were married. They reside in Mukilteo and have 2 children and 2 grandchildren. Ask him about his experience in charge of cleanup at ground zero in New York, after 9/11. It's quite a story.

District 1 Awards for 8870

District 1 Commander Don Wischman was in attendance at the July Post meeting to present Post 8870 with a number of awards recognizing our accomplishments during the 2015-16 VFW year. In these photos, Immediate Past Commander Jim Blossey is shown at far right, accepting awards from Wischman for, among other things, meeting membership goals.

Also shown is (above right) is Chaplain and Past Commander Fred Apgar, accepting certificates of recognition of his tireless efforts in coordinating so many of our Post projects, including our Relief Fund, Teacher of the Year, Freedom Scholarship and Youth Essay. In addition to his leadership of our Post, Fred performs many of those same functions at the district level.



July Post Meeting Speaker

Chris Szarek, Director of Veterans Affairs at Edmonds Community College, gave the post an update on the status of veterans programs at the College. At left, he is shown presenting Jim Blossey with a certificate recognizing the participation of the Post in the College's Memorial Day event and Blossey for his outstanding performance as the Master of Ceremonies for the event.

A more detailed report and photos of the event were published in the June issue of this newsletter.

Post Honors Bob Otto

In the July issue of this newsletter, we published the obituary of Post member Dr. Robert Otto, who passed away in December of 2015. At the July meeting, Otto's family and friends were present to receive the Portrait drawn by Mike Reagan in his honor.

Otto was tail gunner on a B-24 Liberator that went down near the village of Pollau, Austria, enroute to bomb an oil refinery near Vienna in June 1944. Six of the crew were captured, two were killed and one was missing. Survivors were taken to a hospital in Graz for treatment. Otto and the other enlisted men were then sent to Stalag Luft IV near the Baltic Sea.

"We were loaded on boxcars," Otto said. "Inside was a miserable, stinking mess."

In February 1945, they were marched out of the prison camp to keep them safe from the approaching Russian army. Emaciated POWs marched 500 miles over 70 days, sleeping in barns and open fields. Food was mostly occasional boiled potatoes, and the weather bitter cold. Many died of exposure, pneumonia, dysentery and starvation.

"Faith in the Lord and a desire to get home kept me plugging along," Bob said, until the men were rescued by British soldiers.

Otto's story is included in the book "The Last Escape," an account of Allied POWs in Nazi Germany, by John Nichol and Tony Rennell.

During his 2008 trip to Austria, Otto met people who were children at the time of his capture and who remember seeing Otto float down under a parachute, one of whom was Herr Adolf Heschl, who was 7 years old at the time. "He recalled the burns on Dad's face, which triggered Dad's memory of looking into mud puddles, trying to see his burns," his daughter said. Details of Bob's '08 trip were reported in the July issue of the Post newsletter.



Mike Reagan presented his portrait of Bob Otto to Bob's daughter Robyn Nordsven at the July Post Meeting



Bob, second from right, with the crew of the B-24 Liberator "Texarkana Hussy"

Veterans of Foreign Wars Night at the Ballpark *with the Everett AquaSox*

Saturday, August 13th, 2016
Gates open 6:00PM
First Pitch 7:05PM
Post Game Fireworks!

Raffle Winners Announced



As part of the Post contribution to the funding of the Edmonds Veterans Plaza, a raffle was conducted over the past two months with tickets sold by post members & friends of the post, for which Mike Reagan provided prizes in the form of two of his wonderful renderings of Seahawks scenes.

The drawing to determine the two winners was held at the Post picnic on July 4. At left is Reagan and incoming Post Commander Terry Crabtree, presenting the first prize to Jim McCann, center right and second prize to Rene Blumenfeld center left.

The raffle raised over \$2,600.00 for the Plaza project, which has now reached and exceeded the estimated project cost.

Congratulations to our winners and thank you to everyone who participated!

Tour of USS Shoup (DDG86) Slated

Thanks to a fortuitous contact by Post Member Phil Sacks, the post has been invited to tour USS Shoup (DDG86), one of the Navy's newer Arleigh Burke class destroyers by her commanding officer, Commander Jason Rodgers, USN. The tour is scheduled for Friday, September 9 at Naval Station Everett .

We must limit attendance to a maximum of 50 and advance registration is required for security reasons. An email will be going out to all members of the post with a form attached which attendees must fill out and return. Registrations will be accepted on a first come first served basis. We plan on an 0930 arrival in Everett and the tour takes about an hour and half.

For parking, the Alfa parking lot located next to the Main Gate is where everyone would park. We would be met there. It's about a 10 minute stroll to the ship from there. Car pools are recommended. If there are personnel that would require transport to the ship, it can be made available.

Access for disabled veterans is extremely limited. There are no access ramps and unless disabled persons are able to walk, the tour is almost impossible. That said, if their desire is simply to come aboard a US Navy Ship, we can figure out a way to accommodate that.



Some ship safety notes: close-toed shoes are required. The tour does transit up and down steep ladderwells and there will be a fair bit of walking.

USS Shoup is named for General David Shoup, UCMC, a World War II veteran who was awarded the Medal of Honor and whose final service was as Commandant of the Marine Corps. She is presently at sea for training exercise with the Pacific Fleet and allied navies and is expected home in Everett in mid August.