



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 8

Meeting nights change to the third Wednesday in September 2017

Post Recognized With Awards



District 1 Commander Don Wischman visited our July meeting to present the post with award certificates for accomplishments during the 2016-17year.

The Post earned awards at both District and National levels for:

- 100% Reporting of Community Service
- 100% Hospital Reporting
- Youth Essay Post Participation
- Participation in the Scouting Program of VFW
- Outstanding support of USO, Veterans & Military Support Programs
- Sponsorship and Promotion of local community activities.
- The Citizen Education Teacher of the year Program
- Patriots Pen
- Voice of Democracy.

Welcome New Member Paul Strenkert

Paul is a Marine veteran of Gulf 1, where he served as an Avionic Technician on Marine Corps F-18s

In his civilian life he continues to put his Avionics Technician skills to work for Delta Airlines but says his passion is in Culinary Arts.



Recruiting New Members



Recruiting new members is every member's responsibility and to that end Post Chaplain Dan Doyle and Commander Mike Denton spent a very productive Saturday at the Edmonds Farmers Market, spreading the word about VFW to unaffiliated veterans and the community at large.

Our newest member, Paul Strenkert found us there and was subsequently sworn in at the July Post meeting.

There are three other applications pending from that outing, plus a Life Member, recently arrived in Edmonds, who also stopped by our table, and plans to affiliate with Post 8870.

We are making plans for additional such events and will be looking for volunteers to help with that effort.

Overdue Recognition of Our Appointed Post Officers

We were recently reminded that the ritual of installation of officers does not allow for proper recognition of the members who fill some of our key offices. Post 8870 has been extremely fortunate to have our appointive offices filled by an extremely dedicated group of veterans, who we thank for their long service.

Al Boyett, Surgeon for the past eleven years has just this past meeting bowed out in favor of **Charlie Gaul**.

Jim Collins, Officer of the Day provides essential grease to the commander to keep the wheels moving at meetings. *(Jim will be on the sick list for the August and September meetings, while he gets his heart repaired. We all wish Jim a quick and complete recovery. Jim Traner has volunteered to act as OOD in Jim's absence)*

John Shelton, Guard (John prefers "Master at Arms" but, sorry John the Manual says "Guard") keeps outsiders away and keeps track of member and guest attendance, among his other chores. John is also a key member of our color guard.

Dick Simmons, Adjutant provides us with excellent & detailed minutes of all of our meetings, as well as leading our color guard. Jim Collins had been heading up our color guard for Memorial Day and the Parade, but has passed that role along to Dick in recent months.

Many thanks to all of you who provide such great service to our Post.



Al Boyett,
Past Surgeon



Jim Collins
Officer of the Day



Charlie Gaul
Surgeon



John Shelton
Guard



Dick Simmons
Adjutant

Relief Fund Budget

The Post veterans relief and community programs are funded entirely from donations received in conjunction with our semi annual distribution of “ Buddy Poppies” around the Veterans Day and Memorial Day observances.

Our Post Chaplain, Dan Doyle and the Relief Committee he chairs, which includes Jim Blossey, Carl Kurfuss, and Rose Gilliland, have prepared the following proposed budget for the current fiscal year, to be voted on at this month’s meeting.

VFW Post 8870 Relief Fund Budget (2017-2018)

Income	Balance	Notes:
Buddy Poppy	\$28,000	(Current available cash)
Administrative Expenses		
Poppies and Supplies	\$2,500	
Postage and supplies	-	
Service Officer	\$2,500	
Community Programs		
Freedom Scholarship	\$6,000	
(rolled over from last yr.)	(\$1,500)	
Youth Programs	\$500	
Teacher of the Year	\$500	
Student Essays (youth/VOD/PP)	\$750	
Fixed Contributions		
National Home	\$500	
National Military Services	\$1,000	
USO	\$1,000	
Special Olympics	\$500	
Discretionary		
Orting/Retsil Veterans Home	\$2,000	
Fallen Heroes (+Speaker)	\$2,250	
Fisher House (Two Homes)	\$2,000	
Santa’s Castle (JBLM)	\$1,000	
Chaplains’ Offices	\$1,500	
Semper Fi Fund	\$500	
Wounded Warrior Project	\$500	
CRISTA Camps	\$1,000	
Northwest Battle Buddies	\$250	
Rainier Therapeutic Riding	\$250	
Wreaths Across America	\$500	
Misc/Contingency	\$500	
Total budgeted expenditures	\$29,500	

Poppy Distribution 2016-2017 fiscal year: Veterans Day \$15,531, Memorial Day \$16,767
We expect similar results for this fiscal year 2017-2018.

Vietnam Veteran Elected VFW National Commander

Ending sequestration will remain a top priority



Nat'l Cdr Keith Harman

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States concluded its 118th National Convention with the election of Keith Harman of as its new national commander. Harman served in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1969, including service in Vietnam as a crew chief and door gunner on Huey helicopters.

Harman has been a member of the VFW for 34 years, belonging to VFW Post 3035 in Delphos, Ohio. He has served in elected and appointed positions at Post, District and Department (state) levels, and achieved All-American status during his year as commander of the VFW Department of Ohio in 2004.

Throughout his remarks, he stressed the importance of the VFW's work to those it serves, and praised today's service members' resolve and dedication. The national commander also discussed his recent fact-finding trip to Southeast Asia. It was his first return to Vietnam after ending his military service there 49 years prior.

With the demand, "Sequestration must end!", Keith made clear during his remarks that ending sequestration will again top the VFW legislative agenda for his term as national commander.

He will lead the organization under the theme "Service not Self". "Those three words represent the life I've led for more than four decades," he explained.

Also elected were Senior Vice Commander Vincent "B.J." Lawrence, of Alamogordo, N.M., and Junior Vice Commander William J. "Doc" Schmitz of Corning, N.Y.

Mystery Visitor at July Post Meeting

Jim Traner reports that we had a visiting WWII veteran show up late. Jim caught him after the meeting and learned that he was here from New Jersey visiting his son and dropped in to our meeting. His name was Earl and he said he couldn't have enjoyed an evening more than spending it with fellow veterans. He had a count of our attendance and said he really enjoyed our Post. Jim reports having a feeling he was probably someone who was more than just your average Post member.

Uniform Covers to be Worn

General Order #1, 2017- 18

10. Attention of commanders at all levels is directed to action of the National Council of Administration prohibiting the wearing of VFW sport caps and/or western style caps at VFW meetings in place of the regulation cap of the VFW official uniform as set forth in sections 803 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure. This prohibition is in accordance with previous directives of Commanders-in-Chief that it is held to be objectionable and contrary to accepted rules of order and proper decorum implicit in the ritual of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to permit the wearing of other than the official VFW cap at VFW meetings.

Dispatch from Berlin

by Pete Farmer

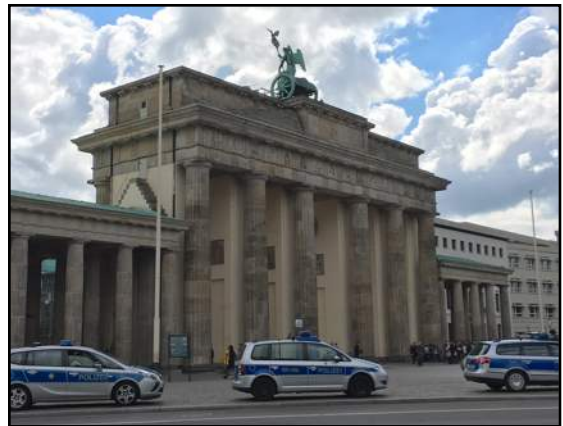
Pete is living in Rome, Italy this year and has been sending occasional dispatches to allow the Post to share his adventure.

In 1970-71, I was stationed with the 3rd Armored Division in what was then West Germany or the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). We were defending the “Frontiers of Freedom” during the Cold War against Soviet Bloc troops. I believe our job was to slow possible invaders as they overran us. My artillery battery of 155mm self-propelled howitzers actually had nuclear rounds in nearby secure storage; small but deadly. Scary, huh?



Because of my interest in WWII history, I took a week's leave to West Berlin. Since I had a Top Secret clearance, I had to obtain permission to take a commercial flight over East Germany. A railroad or highway (only 1 route) trip required additional permission and delay.

West Berlin was an island of freedom surrounded by a border secured by East German (DDR) forces with guard towers, concertina and a no-mans land. In 1961, the



Berlin Wall was erected overnight to divide the city and keep East Germans from fleeing to the West. Many of the WWII historical sites were on the East Berlin side of The Wall. I recall approaching The Wall at various vantage points to peer over and try to see these sights. The Brandenburg Gate, famous for Soviet troops raising their flag after defeating the Nazis in April 1945, was clearly visible but inaccessible. I could approach Checkpoint Charlie, the crossing point between West and East, but no farther.

I just completed a visit to a reunified Berlin. The Wall came down November 9, 1989, though street pavers outline its location throughout the city. East Berlin had been pretty shabby but has been rebuilt since the German capital relocated from Bonn to Berlin. Our hotel and many of the museums and sights were in the former East Berlin. Checkpoint Charlie was torn down, but a replica has been erected a block away with actors portraying border guards. In the photo, it is hard to miss McDonalds.

The former Gestapo SS headquarters was razed and replaced by a gravel field and a museum chronicling SS atrocities 1933-45. Adjacent is a section of The Wall and the former Luftwaffe headquarters (built of concrete, it survived the war). Germany does not hide from its Nazi past. There are additional memorials and museums in the city that document all the persecuted groups of WWII. Particularly if combined with a visit to the nearby Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, a visitor will be quite saddened by this chapter of history.



Of course the good news is the failure of Communism. A quirky museum dedicated to life in the former East Germany helps explain why and provides some comic relief to sadder times.