



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

VFW Post 8870
and Auxiliary
Edmonds, WA

www.vfw8870.org

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Events on the Horizon:

Staff Meetings: 1st Tues., 9:00 AM at American Legion Hall, 117 6th Ave. S., Edmonds
Post Meetings: Third Wed., American Legion Hall; Dinner at 5:00 PM (\$5) Meeting at 6:00 PM
Post Auxiliary Meeting: Second Thurs., Edmonds Senior Center at noon. No host lunch.
(Questions: Ruth Herren 425-337-1559)

Our next regular Post meeting will be on Wed. March 21, 2018



National Vietnam War Veterans Day on March 29 honors the men and women who served and sacrificed during the longest conflict in United States history. Involving five U.S. presidents, and over five million American service men & women, it left an indelible mark on the American psyche.

On March 29, 1973, combat and combat support units withdrew from South Vietnam. Generations later, Veterans of this time period are gaining the respect that was not so freely given upon their return.

There were 58,000 killed, never to return. National Vietnam War Veterans Day recognizes the military service of the men and women who answered the call to serve their country.

HOW TO OBSERVE

Around the country, commemorative events, speeches and luncheons are being held inviting Vietnam Veterans as honored guests. Thank a Vietnam Veteran. Buy them a drink or lunch. Send them a shout out using #VietnamWarVeteransDay on social media.

HISTORY

U.S. Sens. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., and Joe Donnelly, D-Ind., introduced legislation in 2017 to honor Vietnam Veterans with a day on the anniversary of the withdrawal of military units from South Vietnam.

Post Charter Draped at February Post Meeting

For the second time this year, the post draped its Charter at the February meeting. This time we honored the memory of three of our Post comrades:

Joseph Kuchinski, A Navy veteran of Korea and Vietnam, who died in December and was buried at Mt. Tahoma on Jan. 26.

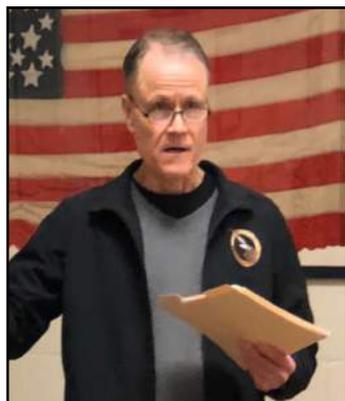
Richard Clyde, Life Member and WWII Veteran died January 24 at his home in Langley on Whidbey Island.

Earl Prebezac, Army Veteran of WWII died Feb 9 at the age of 94 and was buried at Mt. Tahoma on February 21.

Obituarites for Comrades Kuchinski and Clyde appeared in the Feb. Post newsletter. Comrade Prebezac's obituary can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

February Meeting Speakers

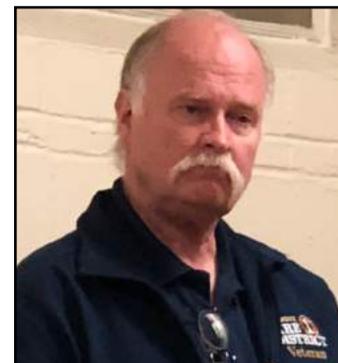
Multiple speakers presented at the Post meeting in February.



The evening began with Steve Swanson of Operation Military Family, who first spoke about "WAServes Greater Puget Sound" an organization which improves coordination and transparency in order to efficiently and effectively guide veterans and their families to the most appropriate services and resources available. For help with veterans services, visit their website: (www.waserves.org)

Swanson also spoke about a new program called REBOOT COMBAT RECOVERY, a new combat trauma healing course which will meet Mondays, 6:00-8:00 PM with a new session beginning in April. Visit www.rebootrecovery.com, or contact Shawn Schrader; shawnschrader@gmail.com, or 425-359-4856 for more information and to register. Dinner & childcare provided.

Our second speaker was Kim Sharpe from South Snohomish County Fire & Rescue, who told us about their Veterans In Prevention program, the purpose of which is team up with paramedics for in-home visits to provide clients with safety assessments and recommendations. Fire District 1 is accepting applications for Veterans Grant-funded Temporary Positions in the Emergency Medical Services Falls Program. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age and have served in the military. Grant funding is through 2018. To learn how to apply visit the Fire Dept web site: www.SouthSnoFire.org/employment. (While he was here, Membership Chair Traner signed him up as a new Post member.)



Rounding out the evening's speaker line up was Jose Rodriguez, Puget Sound District Executive for the Boy Scouts of America. Rodriguez spoke about some of the latest changes in the Scouting program, such as the recent expansion of opportunities for young girls. He also suggested volunteer opportunities that are available to our members, including acting as Unit Commissioners and the Post acting as a unit Charter Sponser. Rodriguez also spoke of the impact of scouting in his own life, presenting himself as an example of Scouting's ability to build character in youth.

Scouting is one of the major community service commitments of VFW, one in which Post 8870 has not participated much of late. Perhaps it's time we changed that.

In Memoriam

Earl Prebezac

VFW Post 8870 lost another of our World War II veteran members when Earl Prebezac passed way on February 9 at the age of 94. Earl was buried at Mt. Tahoma National Cemetary on February 21, with full military honors provided by or lcoal VFW Honor Guard/

Soldier, Teacher, and Actor

Earl was raised in St. Louis and dropped out of high school at the age of 16. With his parents' permission, Earl attempted to join the Navy, but was discouraged by the recruiter because of his small stature. His next stop was at the Army recruiting center where he was accepted for service.



Above left, Earl in the Army, at right actor Earl (at left in photo)

Because of his Slavic heritage and ability to speak Serbian and Croatian languages, Earl was selected for the Military Intelligence Service. Instead of utilizing Earl's Slavic language skills however, he was assigned to Photo Interpretation.

The war began for Earl on D-Day plus 21 when his unit landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy. During the year and a half that he served in Europe, Earl received four battle stars for participating in combat operations in Normandy, Northern France, the Ardennes, and the Rhineland. Six months after Germany's surrender, he returned to the United States on the hospital ship Larkspur, after contracting a heart infection.

Once he returned to the States, Earl took advantage of the G.I. Bill, completed a GED program, and started college at Oregon State University. He enrolled in an ROTC and while participating in a drama program at Oregon State, Earl met his future wife, Nann. They transferred to the University of Washington, where Nann became a Drama major and Earl majored in history.

Upon graduation, Earl was hired by the Seattle Public Schools to teach Civics and History at Roosevelt High School, a position he held for 33 years. Earl also served in the Army Reserves, retiring as a 1st Lieutenant, after 12 years of service. During his years at Roosevelt High School, Earl was also the manager of the historic Moore Theater in Seattle. Earl retired from teaching in 1986.

The Prebezac's moved to Edmonds in 1953 where they raised four boys. Throughout their life together, they both maintained their love for drama. They were founding members of an Edmonds drama group that would become the Driftwood Players and over the years, participated in numerous dramatic productions. Earl leaves his wife, Nann, their four sons, seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

The Gold Star Mother

Eric Levi Ward may be gone, but his legacy and spirit lives on with his mother, Monica McNeal. She is president of the Washington state chapter of American Gold Star Mothers, a nonprofit organization that no one would willingly want to be part of. Its members share one thing in common – the death of a son or daughter serving in the armed forces.



Monica McNeal holds Mike Reagan's portrait of her son, Eric Ward Reagan.

If you attended the Veterans Day ceremony at the Edmonds Veterans Plaza, you may have spotted the 57-year-old, who relocated to Edmonds recently. She was hard to miss, as she and other members, dressed head-to-toe in their traditional white uniforms, handed out commemorative pins to all Vietnam War veterans.

After Eric Ward graduated from Mount Si High School in Snoqualmie in 2008, he promised his mother he'd go to college.

But first, he told her, he felt he had to serve as a Marine grunt and work his way up to

officer. McNeal understood his motivation. After all, he would be a fourth-generation Marine, following in his father, grandfather and great-grandfather's footsteps. "I reminded him that we have a war going on, and he said, 'Mom, I know, that's why I have to go.' So he had that DNA to serve."

Since he lived west of the Mississippi, Eric was due to attend boot camp at Camp Pendleton in Southern California. But he insisted on training on the East Coast, as his father Steven did. "He was able to pull some strings and attend boot camp at Parris Island," McNeal said, referring to the Marine recruit depot in South Carolina.

Eric was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. His life ended Feb. 21, 2010, while supporting combat operations in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

"From the day he graduated from boot camp to the day he was killed, he was a Marine for 16 months," McNeal said.

Her eyes grow moist as she recalls that terrible day.

"He was on a convoy mission when one of the humvees broke down. Everyone had to get out of their vehicles and secure the area. But then a sandstorm came, and Eric and his friend Adam Peak went to a building to get away from the storm. At that point, Eric stepped on an IED."

An improvised explosive device.

Eric was 19. Peak was killed as well. He was 25.

(Photo and text courtesy Edmonds Beacon)

March Speaker: Lorraine Zimmerman, Wreaths Across America

Lorraine Zimmerman will speak to the Post at the March meeting to share the story of Wreaths Across America and particularly the recurring event at Evergreen Washelli.

Post 8870 has provided financial support to the program in the past and expects to continue our participation.

These wreaths represented each branch of the service, plus one for prisoners of war.

(photo courtesy MyEdmondsNews.com)



Memorial Day Poppy Distribution Sign up now!

Poppy distribution will be conducted on Friday May 25 and Saturday May 26 at all of our usual locations:

QFC Westgate, Edmonds
QFC Mukilteo,
Fred Myer, Lynnwood (Alderwood Mall Pkwy)
Central Market, Mill Creek.

We already have a number of you signed up for shifts on one or both days, at one or more locations. Please note that we will not be at Central Market on Sunday this year, but rather on Friday and Saturday.

We ask that all of our members consider devoting at least a full day to this event, our principal fund raising event and an excellent opportunity to expose VFW to the public. Some of you may find a full day taxing, but perhaps you would consider a half day shift on each day. It is a great service to our Post and our fellow veterans and a very pleasant experience. Family and friends are welcome as well.

Our Poppy Chair, Bob Crawford, will circulate sign up sheets at the Post meeting on Wednesday, March 21 and again at the April 18 meeting. If you find you can't make the meeting, email either Comrade Crawford, <bobcrawford33@hotmail.com>, or your Commander. <commander@vfw8870.org> and let us know your time and location preference.



In Flanders fields the poppies blow...

Moving day for Edmonds School District veterans memorial

The historical monument, a memorial to those young men of Edmonds School District No. 15 who lost their lives to war, is getting a new home. On Thursday morning, workers removed the monument from outside the Edmonds Historical Museum on 5th Avenue, to relocate it to the Edmonds Memorial Cemetery and Columbarium at 820 15th St. According to historian Betty Lou Gaeng, the monument will be rededicated during Edmonds' annual Memorial Day ceremony, which will be held at the cemetery.



In a followup email, Gaeng said: "Dale Hoggins and I worked hard for the past several years to have this piece of South Snohomish County history relocated to a new and permanent home. Back in 1948, the memorial to our school district's lost servicemen was first dedicated on Memorial Day of that year. Since that time the memorial has had several homes. This fourth home at Edmonds Memorial Cemetery should be its final one. It is especially fitting to have this bit of our history located at our historical cemetery—it is here that several of the young men whose names are etched into its stone face are buried. During this year's Memorial Day services at Edmonds

Memorial Cemetery, we will not only be honoring our fallen veterans, we will be rededicating this memorial to them." (Photos & Text courtesy Edmonds Historical Museum & MyEdmondsNews.com)

Nominations for 2018-19 Post Officers Slated

At the March Post meeting, nominations for next year's Post officers will be held.

As a reminder, the elective officers are: Commander, Sr. Vice Commander, Jr. Vice Commander, Quartermaster, Chaplain and Trustees. (All other officers are appointed by the commander)

At the March staff meeting, all currently serving elected officers present indicated a willingness to continue serving in their present office and those names will be placed in nomination.

If you have an interest in serving as an elected officer, or would like to nominate another comrade, be prepared to do so at the meeting when nominations from the floor are called.

Currently serving:

Commander	Michael Denton
Sr. Vice Commander	Carl Kurfess
Jr. Vice Commander	Rose Gilliland
Quartermaster	Dennis Peterson
Chaplain	Dan Doyle

We will need to elect a new First Year Trustee. Don Stapleton has indicated that he would accept that nomination. We anticipate that Daniel White and James McCann will continue in their Trustee role as Second and third Year Trustee respectively.