



Upcoming Events Calendar

Please take time to review the calendar and if there are additions that are necessary, please contact the Quartermaster at quartermaster@vfw8870.org or call Elizabeth Mather at 425-672-0279.

March 5th	Staff Meeting—Traner's Office 09:15 AM
March 8th	Post Meeting – Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch 11:30 AM—Meeting 12:30 PM
March 1st	Deadline—Scout of the Year Award
March 30th	District Meeting-Alderwood Boys & Girls Club (Memorial Service)
May 18th	District Convention—Alderwood Boys & Girls Club
June 6th—8th	Department Convention—Yakima
July 20th-24th	National Convention—Louisville, KY

Everett Post 2100 to Host Open House

Old Guard Post 2100 at 2711 Oaks Ave. in Everett will be hosting an open house on St. Paddy's day, Sunday, March 17th. Corned beef and cabbage will be served from 2 PM to 5 PM. A \$10 contribution is requested to cover their food costs. This is a good opportunity for those of you who haven't had a chance to visit another Post to do so. Also, Post 8870's Service Officer, Don Whedon, and Post's 2100 Service Officer will be available to assist any veterans with VA claims or questions.

District I Meeting

There will be a District meeting on March 30th at 12 with a memorial service to our comrades who have passed away during the year. We have some good comrades in our Post who are no longer with us. Please join us in remembering them.

Mike Reagan's Fallen Heroes Portrait Foundation Honored at Meeting



On Friday, Feb. 8, VFW Department of Washington line officers presented a \$25,000 check on behalf of the VFW Foundation to internationally-recognized artist Michael Reagan, who has drawn the portraits of over 3,200 service members who have died serving in Iraq and Afghanistan: L-R: Fred Green, VFW Department of Washington Junior Vice Commander; Ted Streete, VFW Department of Washington Senior Vice Commander; Krist Huseby, VFW Department of Washington Commander; Michael Reagan.

The above was on the homepage of the National VFW website. For all of you who attended the meeting (and we did have a crowd), it was a nice ceremony with Mike receiving a \$25,000 (the first of three annual grants) and Mike presenting Department Commander Krist a portrait that has become his trademark, an eagle with the body of an American flag (you can see an image over Mike's left shoulder). Also attending the meeting was Dave Earling, Edmonds Mayor, and Sally Hintz, the NW director of Senator Marie Cantwell's office who read a nice letter from the Senator congratulating Mike on the honor. Ms. Hintz also commented that a poster of Mike's fallen heroes is displayed in her Washington DC office and she rotates the posters monthly so all the fallen heroes can be recognized. Next time we have to get our Post 8870 on the wall behind them.

Veterans Park in the Planning Stage

Edmonds, who I believe considers itself the All American town of Washington state (and it almost is), is lacking one significant thing that pulls it down a notch; there is no park out of the 22 parks listed on the Edmonds Park Departments website that commemorates veterans. I grew up in a town that had war heroes on horses in downtown parks. My high school had a wall with the names of the alumni who were killed in WWII. Sure, there is a rock over at the Edmonds Historical Museum with some names on it but no real park. The last two parks dedicated in Edmonds were named after worthy people but did not recognize veterans. We are now in pursuit of a small patch of grass along Hwy. 104 to have a simple memorial to those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. If you are familiar with the ferry holding lanes, it is a small patch of grass adjacent to the public restrooms. The thought is a simple inverted rifle, boots, and helmet with a flag pole for the American and POW/MIA flags and a bench facing the memorial for those who wish to sit. Since hundreds of thousands of vehicles use the ferry each year, this would be the most viewed memorial south of the Peace Arch. American Legion Post 66 in Edmonds will also be assisting in the project (since the membership between the two Posts are virtually the same). Ron Clyborne who is a member of both Posts has agreed to chair the committee. Hopefully, we can get something done in the near future (two years) on this project.

Officer Nominations

We are getting ready to present a slate of officers at the next meeting. While anyone can make a nomination from the floor, feel free to contact our nominating committee comprised of Jim Traner, Buck Weaver, and Elizabeth Mather.

Hard of Hearing?

If you avoid Post meetings due to hearing, there is good news. The Post has purchased a speaker system and it works great. We put the speaker in the back of the room where everyone who is hard of hearing normally sits, and now everyone can hear what is going on. So come to the next meeting and check it out.

Poppy Signup

Bob Crawford, Buddy Poppy Chairman, will be passing out sign up lists at the March meeting. Our Post's Relief Fund is funded by Buddy Poppy donations and it is important to get out and raise money for that cause. In addition, it's also our PR and membership campaign rolled into one weekend. The dates for Memorial Day are May 24th and 25th so mark your calendars. Even though I say it every six months, it's not hard work and you end up meeting a lot of nice folks who are glad to see VFW out in the community. If a few more of you who don't participate (and you know who you are) would help out, the work load would be spread that much thinner making it easier on everyone involved. Like I said, it's just not that hard.



Erv Schmidt Celebrates 97th Birthday

A number of us attended Erv's 97th birthday party. As most of you know, Erv is a Pearl Harbor Survivor as well as surviving another ship being sunk and a third severely damaged. Fred Apgar brought the cake and Erv is cutting it. Erv has been a VFW Member for over 70 years which has to put him into rarified company in VFW. Erv hasn't been able to make the meetings so it was good to see him. I stopped by a couple of weeks ago and the receptionist said Erv is a popular guy so apparently a few of you are making it over there as well. If anyone wants his address, let me know. I don't feel particularly good about putting it on this newsletter which will be posted online. However, Erv will always welcome his "shipmates" (regardless of your actual service) so feel free to see him.

Chaplain's Column

It is hard to believe that we are a month into 2013. For many of us who lived through at least half of the 20th Century, the 21st Century with its high tech gadgets is hard to handle. Witnessing today's youth, their excitement, enthusiasm, and energy brings us to the reality that we are getting old and not just older! Time, however, is relative. We are reminded by Saint Peter, "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day." (2 Peter 3:8) The United States is still a young country – relatively speaking. God has been and is in control!

I am currently reading a book ***Lincoln: How Abraham Lincoln Ended Slavery*** by Harold Holzer. As one reads about Lincoln one is confronted with the enormous challenges Lincoln and our country faced over issues such as slavery vis-à-vis "All men are Created Equal, with certain Unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness"; States Rights vis-à-vis "In order to form a more Perfect Union", et al. As one learns more about Lincoln, he or she is confronted with an acute awareness that Lincoln was a devout Christian who strongly believed in a God Who is intimately involved in the lives and destiny of men. One of the major concerns expressed by Lincoln was not whether God was on his side but rather was he (and our country) on God's side? I would suggest that this is a very fundamental question we as American should be asking ourselves today. Let us pray:

Our Heavenly Father, make us truly grateful for the goodly heritage Thou hast bestowed upon this Nation, whereby we enjoy the greatest freedom on earth. Watch over our national, state, and community leaders, and our people. Protect us by Thy Mighty Arm. Keep us ever mindful of the sacrifices made for us by our fallen comrades, Founding Fathers, and those in our past such as Abraham Lincoln. Make us worthy of Thy Loving Kindness. This we ask in Thy Holy Name.

Amen

Don't Help the Post by Paying your Dues

Since requesting dues doesn't seem to work, I figured reverse psychology may turn the corner on our annual membership drive. Dues are \$25 for a year and while you are now officially delinquent (and no longer a VFW member), you could, just out of spite, make our Quartermaster Tom work if you would drop a check in the mail. He would then be forced to deposit your check, and file the appropriate paperwork with National so you can receive your new membership card and continue to receive your magazine. If you are unable to pay your dues due to financial difficulty, let the QM know and we will make allowances for your circumstances. Also, students and active duty members of the military are exempt from dues. All you have to do is drop an email to quartermaster@vfw8870.org and let us know your status. Also, if you really want to give Tom a workout, consider a Life Membership if you are a continuous member. He will be forced into filling out all sorts of forms in triplicate (you remember those forms from your military days) and probably have to do them twice or three times to correct errors. Like I said, make life rough on our Quartermaster by paying your dues.

You can mail your dues to:

VFW Post 8870

P.O. Box 701

Edmonds, WA 98020-701

P.S. Dues are going to be increasing and it's a great opportunity to support VFW and remove a burden from your Post's Quartermaster by choosing a Life Membership.

The Last Word—Commander's Column

Last month, John Kerry was appointed Secretary of State of the United States. Personally, I am appalled at this appointment, consider it to be an insult, and would like to share with you my reasons.

Kerry was a self-promoting naval officer with political ambitions who, under questionable circumstances, took advantage of a regulation to cut his tour of duty short. While still in uniform, he became a high profile spokesman for the radical organization, Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). He traveled to Paris on several occasions to meet with representatives of the North Vietnam Communist Party as well as the Viet Cong's People's Coalition for Peace and Justice. There is speculation that one or more of his visits occurred while he was still in uniform, an issue that might be clarified if he would release his military records, including all records pertaining to his discharge.

No one did more to create the image of the Vietnam veteran as a war criminal than John Kerry. It was the VFW and Kerry who conducted the infamous "Winter Soldier Investigation" that was a total sham. The perjuries "testimony" undermined the morale of the military and served to embolden the enemy and prolong the war, resulting, no doubt, in an increase in the number of KIA's.

As a decorated Vietnam veteran, Kerry's opposition to the war became the cornerstone of his political ambitions and career. In a cold and calculating manner, Kerry continued to slander Vietnam veterans by organizing "Dewey Canyon III", a "limited incursion into the country of Congress." As the chief spokesperson for VVAW, Kerry testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and "confessed" to having committed war crimes and continued to slander Vietnam veterans, accusing them of atrocities and abuses of civilians. In a candlelight march around the White House, Kerry threw his military medals over the fence, "disposing of them in the face of the government that had betrayed him". Years later, after his election to the Senate, Kerry's medals turned up on the wall of his Capitol Hill office, and he confessed that the medals he had thrown away were not his.

With hundreds of thousands of US military personnel still in Southeast Asia, Kerry and his followers continued to violently oppose the war and provide propaganda to the enemy. Some of Kerry's quotes from his Senate testimony were used by the North Vietnamese in their interrogation of POW's. Ho Chi Minh had said, on many occasions, the Vietnam War would be won by the North Vietnamese on the streets in the cities of America and not on any battlefield in Southeast Asia. History has proven that to have been spot on, and John Kerry was one of the leading proponents of that anti-war sentiment.

For his personal ambitions, John Kerry attempted to steal a vitally critical legacy of so many brave and honorable Vietnam Veterans, their valor. Surely, there are other more highly qualified and deserving Americans to represent the United States as our Secretary of State than the contemptible John Kerry.

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