



VFW Post 8870

Edmonds, WA
www.vfw8870.org
Jim Traner, Editor

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Flags for Sherwood Elementary

Thanks to Rock Roth, Sherwood Elementary has new American flags in every classroom. Rock was contacted by Katie Matesky, a teacher at the school, about the deplorable condition of the flags in the classroom. Rock brought it before the Post membership who approved an expenditure to purchase the flags. Rock, together with several members of the Post, presented the flags to the school during an assembly for Memorial Day.

Post Welcomes New Members

The Post welcomed two new members in the June meeting, Fred Apgar and Arne Roe. Arne, who's from Everett, transferred in from Post 9399. Fred has found his way to the Post via Centerport, NY to Mill Creek, WA. Make sure you introduce yourself to the new members and to any visitors who attend the meeting. Welcome aboard guys.

The Post Raises Money via EBAY

Earl Prebezac is seeking items to put on EBAY to help the Post raise funds for general operations. Earl can be reached at 425-778-4925 if you have any questions or need to drop items off with him. Without going into a laundry list, items that sell are vintage costume jewelry (tell your wife you're swiping it first), pottery, china, art, military souvenirs, hunting and fishing equipment (now I have to watch my wife to make sure my gear doesn't disappear), Playboy and girly mags (Phil—take note), etc. I think the saying that one man's junk is another man's gold doesn't work here. Earl is looking for good stuff. So if you have any questions, give him a call.

Need A Lift?

If you need a lift to the meeting, just give Liz Mather, the quartermaster, a call or drop her an email. We can't promise we can get everyone, but we sure will give it a good try. A lot of guys are getting grounded, so to speak, but that isn't a good reason to miss a meeting. On the other hand, if you are interested in providing transportation to a fellow member, let Liz know and she can match riders with drivers.

July 4th Parade

Remember that the Post is marching (or driving) in the parade. The parade starts at noon with check-in at 7th Ave. and Glen beginning at 9:00Am for the autos and 11:15 to 11:30AM for the walkers and riders. For you fellows who haven't attended the parade in the past, it is an amazing event in that literally hundreds, if not several thousand people line up along the 9/10 mile parade route. Rock is in charge and has three autos lined up for those vets unable to walk the route. If you have any questions, please contact the quartermaster or Rock. See you on the 4th. We are still looking for a few good men.

Arlington Airshow invites Veterans

The Arlington Fly-In is saluting veterans—past and present, on July 13th. Admission to veterans is FREE. It doesn't get much better than that. The airshow is a tribute to those who protect America. The special airshow starts at 1PM (1300 hours to Rock), and will feature fly-by formations by the Cascade Warbirds Squadron. In addition, members of the Military Vehicle Collectors Club will feature the largest display of military vehicles in the northwest. For you who miss your duce and half days, this will be an opportunity to remember the lack of suspension in these trucks. Why, because veterans will be invited to ride in the parade of military vehicles. If you haven't attended this airshow in the past, it is a heck of a lot of fun. With the warbirds and the salute to veterans, it should be a blast. Plan on showing up early to get a parking space that's close to the gate.

Final Tally on Poppies

Phil Sacks and Bob Crawford managed to co-ordinate the Poppy Volunteers during the Memorial Day weekend who in turn raised \$3,675 for the relief fund. This is very needed money to assist our veterans out there who have fallen on hard times or are in the Soldiers Homes in Orting & Retsil. So a big hand of thanks to everyone who volunteered their time during a holiday weekend.

Meeting Place & Time

VFW Post 8870 meets the second Friday of each month (except November which is the third Friday) at the Senior Center located at 220 Railroad Ave. Edmonds, WA 98020. We welcome all veterans of foreign wars to attend our meetings. If you need any additional information, please contact our Quartermaster.



New 21st Century GI Bill Passed!

I have decided to print in its entirety, this news item from the VFW National website. I know most of you are not affected directly by this, but our younger members certainly are as are those who may have children or grandchildren serving in the military.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., June 27, 2008 – The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is saluting Congress for the overwhelming passage of a new GI Bill for the 21st Century. The bill, S. 22, the "Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act," was attached to the war funding supplemental that the House passed June 19 by a vote of 416-12, and the Senate passed last night 92-6. President Bush is expected to quickly sign it into law.

"This is a tremendous victory for America's veterans, military, and their families," exclaimed VFW national commander George Lisicki, a Vietnam combat veteran from Carteret, N.J., "and we have Sen. Jim Webb of Virginia to thank for his rock-steady determination to get this bill passed."

S. 22 captured the VFW's immediate attention when Webb introduced it on his first day in office, Jan. 4, 2007. His bill – which increases college assistance for veterans – was overshadowed last year by increased calls to end the war in Iraq and the administration's sudden announcement to surge 30,000 additional troops into Iraq. But Webb, the former Secretary of the Navy under the Reagan Administration and a Marine Corps infantry officer who received the Navy Cross for heroism during the Vietnam War, pressed on, fortified by the challenge to get his bill heard.

He worked for more than a year to build a coalition of allies, not only within his own Democratic Party, but from across the aisle and within the House. These allies include 57 other Senate cosponsors, to include five fellow GI Bill beneficiaries: Vietnam veteran Chuck Hagel (R-NE), World War II and Korean War veteran John Warner (R-VA), and World War II veterans Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and Daniel Inouye (D-HI).

S. 22's companion bill in the House, H.R. 5740, was introduced by Harry Mitchell (D-AZ) and Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL), and it garnered 302 bipartisan cosponsors, to include Korean War veteran Charles Rangel (D-NY) and Sam Johnson (R-TX), a veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, who was held as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam for nearly seven years.

Webb intended S. 22 to mirror the original World War II GI Bill, which is widely regarded as one of the most significant pieces of legislation enacted in the last century, and one the VFW played a leading role to shape and bring to fruition in 1944. Almost half of the 16 million men and women who served in World War II took advantage of the education benefit. They became the scientists, scholars, politicians and captains of industry who were directly responsible for the tremendous era of growth and prosperity the nation enjoyed during the latter half of the 20th century. Those GI Bill recipients also returned to federal coffers \$7 for every \$1 dollar spent on their education in the form of higher taxes paid on the higher wages earned.

In 2002, the VFW was at the forefront to work with then-House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Chris Smith (R-NJ) to increase Montgomery GI Bill benefits by 49 percent. And now, 64 years after the original World War II GI Bill was signed, the VFW is again leading all veterans' service organizations to ensure that America's newest Greatest Generation is rewarded with a new GI Bill for the 21st Century.

S. 22 will pay the highest in-state public tuition rate, and provide for books, fees, and a living stipend. It eliminates the \$1,200 enrollment fee, extends the use-or-lose benefit requirement from 10 to 15 years, and greatly enhances the amount paid to Guard and Reserve members. The new GI Bill automatically adjusts itself as tuitions increase, and provides a dollar-for-dollar tuition match for private colleges and universities who choose to participate in the program. A new provision added to the bill allows re-enlisting servicemembers to transfer their educational benefit to their spouse and/or children. The transferability provision – which is endorsed by the Defense Department – was proposed by Sens. Richard Burr (R-NC), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), an Air Force Reserve colonel, and John McCain (R-AZ), a Vietnam veteran who was held as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam for five and a half years.

Since 1997, the VFW has been lobbying Congress to update the 20-year-old peacetime Montgomery GI Bill with 21st century tuition realities. The VFW did this by testifying at more than 40 congressional committee hearings, through hundreds of VFW Legislative Committee member visits to every House and Senate office in Washington and within their home states, and through the grassroots lobbying effort of 2.3 million VFW and Auxiliary members at 8,300 VFW Posts nationwide.



"The Montgomery GI Bill was good, peacetime legislation, but it only paid about 70 percent of the average cost of today's public tuitions, and barely 30 percent at private schools," said the VFW's national commander. "That's just not a good enough incentive for someone to join a military that's been at war for almost seven years, and it definitely wasn't good enough to compete against public and private employers who also want to recruit America's best and brightest."

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, almost 400,000 veterans have received secondary education degrees since Sept. 11, 2001. Lisicki said more degrees would have been earned if veterans were not forced to choose between college – and risking financial debt – or getting a job to support their families.

"The passage of S. 22 will go far to eliminate that difficult decision," stressed Lisicki, who said the new GI Bill will benefit 2.2 million men and women serving in uniform today, and 1.6 million more who have separated or retired since 9/11.

"The VFW salutes Senator Webb and every cosponsor in the Senate and House for sticking to their principles to do what's right for a military that has done everything asked of them, and we thank President Bush for his impending signature to reward our military for their faithful service," said Lisicki. "The VFW is proud to once again play a key role in the development and passage of a new GI Bill, because this is a win-win for America."

Voice of Democracy & The Edmonds Night Out

The Edmonds Police Foundation is presenting its 5th Annual Edmonds Night Out to be held Tuesday, July 29th from 5PM to 8PM. The Post has supported this event in the past, but for the first time will be a participant. A table and chairs are being made available for our use. Applications and information on the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay contests will be available, as well as pamphlets telling the history of the poppy and how it originated during WWI. The poem, "In Flanders Field" is featured in the pamphlet. The Post is also allowed to pass out "Join the Elite" pamphlets in an effort to encourage applications in the post.

The Post is looking for any volunteers who may be interested in learning about the VFW essay contests in order to pass out applications and explain the requirements to the public. This is also an ideal time to interest veterans who may be eligible to join the VFW. The "Join the Elite" pamphlets are self-explanatory but I have included below the eligibility requirements for VFW. Business cards giving information on the post meetings and place will be available. This an opportunity to be involved in the community in yet another way, and to begin an annual project for the Post. I understand that Rock has volunteered to fill one chair. Anyone interested should contact Liz or Rock.

The Purpose and Eligibility Requirements for VFW

The Purpose of the Veterans of Foreign Wars shall be fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational; to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies, whomsoever."

A person may not be a member of the VFW unless that person –

1. Served honorably as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States in a foreign war, insurrection, or expedition, which service has been recognized as campaign-medal service and is governed by the authorization of the award of a campaign badge by the Government of the United States; or
2. While a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, served honorably on the Korean peninsula or in its territorial waters for not less than 30 consecutive days, or a total of 60 days, after June 30, 1949, or
3. While a member of the armed forces serving in an area which entitled the individual to receive special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger.



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The Last Word

I had a conversation with a young veteran recently telling me that veterans were reluctant to join organizations such as the VFW. He didn't seem to realize that no group of veterans were least likely to join organizations than Vietnam Veterans (of which I am one). But those reluctant Vietnam Veterans, particularly Senators Jim Webb and Chuck Hagel, were one of the primary forces behind the new GI Bill. This isn't a bill that directly affects any of the older veterans for the most part, but the VFW which is made up of older vets (guess I'm one of them now), was also a primary driving force in achieving this accomplishment. For you who think this bill will just benefit the individual vet, I recall a study that was done in measuring the increase in tax revenue via larger income taxes derived from veterans who went to college on the GI Bill following WWII. The payback to the government for investing in those veterans was many times the expenditure in educating them not counting the jobs those veterans created by becoming business leaders and employers themselves. I suspect the payback to this country will again be a multiple of what the outlay in assistance to the young veterans will cost the taxpayer. So that young veteran who is reluctant to join a veteran's organization is missing an opportunity to benefit his fellow veterans. The military experience, if nothing else, is watching out for the guys around you. I don't think taking the uniform off should change that attitude.



VFW POST 8870 MEETING June 13, 2008

Prior to the meeting, Dr. Bill Gould, a decorated combat veteran of Viet Nam (11th Armored Cavalry), a POW for a short time before escaping, and a physician who has practiced medicine in the Seattle area for 27 years, gave a talk on his unique experiences while in Ranger training.

The meeting then opened in proper order at 1315. There were 25 members in attendance including Peter Sessum, a new member of Post 8870, and resident guest Charlie Estes. Also present were former Martine Kyle Berns, a potential member, Fred Apgar, a transferee from Post 14000 in upstate New York and Charles Roe, a transferee from Post 9399. Chaplain Ed Gray led the post in the opening prayer. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of "God Bless America" led by Buck Weaver. The roll call of officers found the Junior Vice Commander, Service Officer and 3rd Year Trustee absent.

The minutes of the May meeting were approved as published. The Quartermaster's report was approved as read. A motion to purchase 4 additional Scout certificates and belt buckles in addition to the 3 already purchased was made, seconded and approved by voice vote.

Commander Duane Pounds and American Legion Commander Les Abel attended an Eagle Court of Honor ceremony at Gloria Dei Church in Lynnwood and presented Eagle Scout Samuel Mullins with an Eagle Scout belt buckle and a certificate of recognition from Post 8870.

4th of July parade Chairman Rock Roth stated that 3 vehicles were requested for those who prefer to ride in the parade. A sign in sheet was passed around for walkers and riders to signify their preference. The route is .9 miles and mostly down hill. Starting point is at Glen and 7th and participants should be there at between 1115 – 1130. Erv Schmidt once again offered his daughter's convertible for the parade. 8870 member and local artist Michael Reagan who has been drawing portraits of deceased veterans on a non-profit basis for distribution to survivors will be the Parade Marshall.

Rock Roth also reported that he attended the Edmonds-Woodway High School Awards Night and re-presented the Voice of Democracy Award to Stefan Marmion. In addition, he, Les Abel, Bob Crawford and Phil Sacks attended a flag ceremony at Sherwood Elementary School and presented a check for the purchase of new flags for the school. The students submitted their questions to veterans as part of the program, and their cute, written questions were passed around at the post meeting for all to see.

Surgeon Al Boyett presented the Community Service and Hospital reports.

Poppy Chairman Phil Sacks thanked everyone who participated in the poppy drive and stated that a total of \$3675 was collected over the Memorial Day weekend, and that he hopes the younger members now joining the post will be available for shifts on the Veterans Day Poppy collection in November. Duane Pounds reported that the Ladies Auxiliary collected \$920.

Ebay Chairman Earl Prebesac passed around information on what items would be saleable on Ebay, suggested that members gather these items not only from their attics and basements, but also contact relatives and neighbors who are downsizing, in order to provide an ongoing income for the post. Logistics for delivery to Earl is still in the planning stage, but might include drop off at monthly meetings, or perhaps a twice monthly delivery date where items could be taken to Earl's house. Buck Weaver and John Nutting volunteered to join Earl's committee. The Quartermaster offered the meeting room in her condo association for meetings, not only for the Ebay project, but for all committee meetings, based on advance notice. A motion was made that given the cost of storing items, the time involved in researching, evaluating, composing appealing descriptions, photographing and listing on ebay that the Ebay Chairman Earl Prebesac be given 35% on all successful sales. The motion was seconded and carried.

John Casapiedra reported that the Smokey Point rest stop is available on August 13, 14th and 15th (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) for giving out free coffee to motorists. Commander Duane Pounds volunteered his motor home for rest during the required 24 hour periods. Volunteers were solicited by a show of hands and John Casapiedra was empowered to sign up Post 8870 if those dates were still available.

A motion was made to donate \$250 to the Edmonds Police Foundation for Edmonds Night Out, with another \$250 being donated by the Ladies Auxiliary. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

Charlie Estes won the raffle drawing and returned \$10 to the post.

Chaplain Ed Gray led the post in the closing prayer, which was followed by a flag salute. The meeting adjourned at 2:20.