



# VFW Post 8870

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

VFW Post 8870

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## An Explanation for the Last Meeting

With the move upstairs by the Senior Center for lunch on no less than the Thanksgiving luncheon, we were limited to 30 meal tickets. Unfortunately, with 3 airman (the speaker and staff), 6 new members showing up for the first time, 2 members being inducted, 3 persons from State & District auditing us, and the women's auxiliary taking another 8 tickets, there was not room for everyone to eat. The Post members designated to eat upstairs were those with guests or speakers. Our apologies to those who had to eat in the library and mea culpa to anyone who was offended.

## Buddy Poppies Raises over \$6,000

Wow—\$6,203 was raised during the Veterans Day fund raiser. Why? First of all, Phil Sacks and Bob Crawford who honchoed the event, did a heck of a job organizing "volunteers" for the various stores. Phil added PCC and Fred Apgar took it upon himself to add Whole Foods in the Mill Creek Town Center where he and Jim Adams raised over a \$1,000 bucks in one day. The total raised was what we originally budgeted for both Veterans Day and Memorial Day. As a result, we will need to revise our budget on expenditures (upward for a change). Special thanks to the spouses who helped out, the Sea Scouts, to our new members who volunteered, and a special thanks to Timm Lovitt's son and Peter Sessum's daughter who helped out and, according to Phil, contributed immensely to our success.

## Speaker Schedule

Speakers for the next several months are:

December—Capt. Fitz—Army—Iraq War Veteran

January—Elder Law & Estate Planning

February—Elaine Bott—Medicare Advantage and Part D

Fred Apgar is doing a great job in arranging speakers for our monthly meetings. If you have anyone who you think would make an interesting speaker for our meetings, pass the word along to Fred.

## 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.

## Veterans Day Speakers

We had quite a number of our members volunteering to attend Veterans Day ceremonies. Rock Roth lead the organization of getting the correct people to the correct school so we need to give him a great deal of credit for making our presence known in so many schools. Volunteers, in no particular order, were Rock, Ervin Schmidt, Phil Sacks, Fred Apgar, Timm Lovitt, Peter Sussem, Archie Whisman, John Casapiedra, Buck Weaver, Les Abel, Bob Crawford, and Jim Traner. The schools attended were Lynnwood High School, Westgate Elementary, Edmonds Woodway High School, Brier Elementary, College Place Elementary, Terrace Park School, Sherwood Elementary, and Serene Lake Elementary. Again, a big thanks for everyone who took time to visit these schools.

## Members of Post 8870 Present Service Flags at the Concert for America at the Performing Arts Center in Edmonds



John Casapiedra is masked by the Marine Corp flag with only his whites showing. Meanwhile, Fred Apgar, Julie Pounds and Duane Pounds presents the Service Flags at the Concert for America. The performance that night was well worth attending. Phil Sacks and Rock Roth also attended to raise donations for our Buddy Poppy program. The report from Rock indicated that donations were a bit sparse which was surprising since every person in attendance seemed to fit the profile of someone who would support our program. However, giving the folks the benefit of the doubt, perhaps they already had participated on one of the locations we or Post 1040 had manned over the weekend. Since this is an annual event, it would be nice for the Post to have a large contingent attending. This year conflicted a bit with Michael Reagan's Elvis fundraiser.



**Buddy Poppy Volunteers—and counting the Donations**





Here are a couple of pictures that Leroy dropped off. Buck and Leroy on the left and Buck and Phil on the right. Note the nifty wood sign holder with our VFW Post Sign hanging. Phil Sacks made this and a couple of others for the Post. Of course, I noticed the collection cans that my wife Terry made so I'd better mention that fact as well.



## Store Managers are Recognized for Supporting Buddy Poppy Program

Duane & Julie Pounds and Phil Sacks presented plaques to store managers who provide space for the Post's Buddy Poppy efforts. All the stores, pictured here or not, are great to work with and we appreciate their support. Below, left to right and down, are Central Market, QFC, Tops Market, and Safeway. If you're out and about and see these folks—thank them.





**Voice of Democracy Essay by Christine Perkins (Post Winner)**



Our Voice of Democracy Post 8870 winner is a senior at Mariner High School, Christine Perkins. Christine's essay is reproduced below and you will see she is a talented young writer. In fact, in addition to music (a member of the marching band, orchestra, and jazz band), creative writing is one of her passions. She is also a ASB representative. Just as an aside, her father is a veteran who served in Iraq. Christine attended our November meeting where she presented her essay to the Post. We wish her well in District competition.

Service and Sacrifice by America's Veterans benefits today's youth by protecting our rights and giving us someone to look up to. Let's face it; there aren't a lot of modern day heroes. In fact, the term 'hero' is over used and thoroughly misunderstood in today's society. It's thrown around and loosely granted to those who don't truly deserve the title. The sacrifice of America's veterans gives everyday Americans a standard of heroism not often found today. Celebrities, bands and actors are beneath the proud few. Veterans fought for our rights, not for pride and status, but purely for the greater good and protection of our freedom. They fought for future generations so that our liberties would be secure. To say they benefit today's youth is an understatement; America's veterans are a blessing. They are everyday people, like you and me, which volunteered their lives and their services to our country and its people selflessly. Who else puts their life on the line for millions of strangers? Who else venture to foreign territory to accomplish dangerous missions all for the sake of their nation? Who else is brave and determined enough to look death in the face and think of nothing but the American citizens back home? My father is one of these amazing veterans. I remember being very upset the day he left for Iraq. I was young and all I could say was "Why?" I was devastated; why should my dad go to the Middle East? "It's my job." He'd say. That wasn't what a child wanted to hear.

Even though I feared for my father's life every single day he was gone, his words echoed meaningfully in my head. "It's my job." He had said it so proudly, so bravely, that it had given me hope, even if they weren't the words I wanted to hear. I learned so much from this experience. Yes, my father put his life in danger for this country, but that's what he signed up for. My father went brave and returned brave. He and other veterans have sacrificed so much for us, America's citizens, and I am so thankful for them.

We take for granted all those who have fought for our freedom. We take for granted all those that fight with us in mind. The service and sacrifice of America's veterans benefits today's youth in so many ways we don't even realize it. They are my heroes.



### **Orting and Retsil Christmas Gifts**

When the board recommended the Relief Fund Budget to the Post for approval, \$1,000 was approved for each of the veterans' homes. A discussion has been going on regarding whether to simply write checks to each facility or to give something tangible to each veteran. Fred Apgar took the lead on contacting the facilities and making inquiries as to what the veterans needed. He learned that one thing the guys (and gals) lacked were socks. Fred then made the rounds of various retailers and brought a report back for the board to consider at its November meeting. Summarized, there are 475 veterans between Orting and Retsil. If we provide them 3 pairs of socks apiece, the total bill would be \$2,071 including sales tax. Target seems to have the combination of best price and quality. In addition, they are willing to make a \$100 donation to the Post to help offset our costs. We are arranging a work party (or rather "fun party") to tie the socks up with ribbons and attach a sticker to each bundle wishing the veteran Merry Christmas from VFW Post 8870. After the socks are bundled up, Fred will see that they get to each facility where the staff will include them in a bag that they are preparing for each veteran. If you would like to participate, let Fred know.

### **Boy Scouts**

Les Abel is taking the lead on having the Post sponsor a Boy Scout troop and to secure a nomination for Scout of the Year. Forms have been prepared which will go into every proposed Eagle Scout package in the area. Hopefully, our exposure will also assist in the sponsoring a Troop as well. According to Les, the Scout growth has been limited but he will continue to pursue this in the future.

### **Post Passes State Audit**

Our Quartermaster, Elizabeth Mather, has once again impressed the higher ups with her books and records. Everything was ship shape and she received high marks and praise from the VFW State Audit committee. Give her a high five the next time you see her.

### **Extending a Friendly Hand**

When new or potential members show up for lunch and a meeting, take the lead and extend them our hospitality. Our lunch setting does not easily lend itself to conversation. However, show them around, introduce them to other members, sit with them in the meeting, and make them welcome to our Post. Generally, we are very good at doing this but as we grow we need to make an extra effort in this area.

### **Monthly Officer Meetings**

Over the last few months, we have implemented monthly officer meetings. They are at Jim Traner's conference room (110 James St. in Edmonds) at 9am on the Tuesday before the Post meeting. Anyone can attend these meetings (just let Liz know so we have enough chairs). Or, if you have an issue you wish to have discussed and can't attend, let Liz know and she will add it to the agenda.



Master Sgt. Mike Hammach spoke about his tour in Iraq as a security force in charge of one of the largest detainee camps in Iraq and how we are winning the hearts and minds of the prisoners. As usual, the press ignores the successes of our armed forces. He was accompanied by Airman Johnny Williams and Senior Airman Christine Condoleon.

### **Event Calendar**

- March 1—Scout of the Year Award Due
- May 22-23—Poppy Fundraiser
- June 1— Outstanding Community Service Post Award

### **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.



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**The Last Word**

We had a number of people participating at school events for Veterans Day. Personally, I attended two school assemblies and talked to two classes of students at another school. While all the schools were good, an assembly I attended at Brier Elementary was particularly excellent. I think by the time the program was completed, every student attending the school had participated in honoring veterans. It was apparent by the amount of effort displayed by the students and staff, that this wasn't something thrown together at the last minute. On the contrary, the power-point presentation, dance routines, singing, and the recital of the Gettysburg Address had taken a great deal of effort by both the staff and the students. Prior to the assembly three young ladies, the student president, vice president, and secretary personally introduced themselves to each veteran in attendance. Pretty darn classy. The assembly ended with the entire student body reciting these words entitled The Freedom Pledge:

**I am an American. A free American**  
**Free to speak without fear.**  
**Free to worship in my own way**  
**Free to stand for what I think is right**  
**Free to oppose what I believe is wrong**  
**Free to choose those who govern our county.**  
**These freedoms, I promise to uphold**  
**For myself and all mankind.**

So the next time you hear someone on talk radio slamming the public schools for not teaching patriotism, send them a little mental B.S. thought-wave. For those of us who live in Edmonds, WA, we know that patriotism is alive and well in our schools.

**VFW Post 8870 Minutes from November 21, 2008 Meeting**

Prior to the meeting, Voice of Democracy Chairman Rock Roth introduced 1<sup>st</sup> place winner Christine Perkins who then read her winning essay to a very approving audience. Christine was accompanied by her advisor April Bowman.

The POW/MIA cover was then placed on its designated vacant chair. Chaplain Ed Grey said a prayer for continuing assistance in bringing home those still missing in action and those still prisoners of war. The meeting was then opened in proper order with the chaplain delivering the opening prayer, the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance and with Buck Weaver leading the assembly in the singing of "America."

Fred Apgar introduced speaker Senior Master Sergeant Mike Hammach who told of his recent experiences in Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Mike was accompanied by Airman Johnny Williams and Senior Airman Christine Condoleon, both load masters attached to 10AS, McChord Air Force Base.

Commander Duane Pounds introduced visitors District One Commander Don Williams, District One Inspector Ed Sherman, District One Quartermaster Ron Haley and Post 921 Commander Elmer Johnson.

Jim Harkness introduced his guest Arnie Wheeler who is transferring to Post 8870 from Post 1040.

Senior Vice Commander Jim Traner introduced new applicants Eric Gouge, Joe Flanik and Tom Hallums.

Jim also submitted applications he had obtained from Murray Lancaster and Michael Thom.

Jim Wassall, a Vietnam War veteran, gave his application to Commander Duane Pounds.

Fred Apgar formally introduced Mike Reagan, a Vietnam War veteran, and spoke of his work as the artist and founder of the Michael G. Reagan Portrait Foundation, and Timm Lovitt, a veteran of Afghanistan and Iraq, who is a student at Edmonds Community College. Vice Commander Jim Traner presented each of them with a Cross of Malta lapel pin in recognition of their indoctrination to Post 8870. Mike spoke briefly about his work in the Michael G. Portrait Reagan Foundation.

The roll call of officers found the Service Officer and 1<sup>st</sup> Year Trustee absent. There were 38 in attendance at the meeting including guests and new recruits. The minutes of the October meeting were accepted as published. The Quartermaster's Report was accepted as read.

Poppy Chairman Phil Sacks expressed his thanks to everyone who participated in the Veterans Day Buddy Poppy Program. Total received from all markets was \$6,072.79. There also was a donation of \$10.00 and an additional \$132.00 for a grand total of \$6,214.79.

Surgeon Al Boyett gave the Community Service and Hospital reports.

Rock Roth reported on the Veterans Day School Assemblies. Sixteen schools were visited by twelve members of the post. Rock found that patriotism is alive and well in our schools. He thanked those who participated in the program and encouraged more involvement in the program next year.

Fred Apgar reported that in lieu of a cash donation to Orting and Retsil this year, the Post will be donating a personalized gift for each of the residents in the form of 3pairs of socks. This gift was suggested by the Activities Director at the nursing homes. The packets of socks, together with a gift card, will need to be assembled. A work party sign up sheet was passed around. The project will cost approximately \$2,000.

Commander Duane Pounds reminded the post that the flag is to be flown at half staff on Pearl Harbor Day, Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Senior Commander Jim Traner reported that because of the large amount of income from the Veterans Day Buddy Poppy Program, that increases will be made in the amounts previously budgeted from the Relief Fund. Operation Uplink is increased to \$400; VFW National Home - \$200; Miscellaneous relief money was added in the amount of \$500; Individual veterans assistance \$4,250, which represents not only money requested by our Service Officer, but to fund an outreach program for veterans in the local community in need of assistance.

Historian Leroy Middleton quizzed the assembly – What president was a preacher? Garfield. What president never attended a day of school? Andrew Jackson. Buck Weaver drew the winning lottery ticket.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with a prayer delivered by Chaplain Ed Gray and a flag salute.