



**VFW Post 8870 and
Ladies Auxiliary
Edmonds, WA
www.vfw8870.org**



Upcoming Events Calendar

Please take time to review the calendar and if there are additions that are necessary, please contact the editor at commander@vfwdistrict1.org

December 6th	Pearl Harbor Remembrance-Naval Station Everett—0930
December 10th	Staff Meeting—Traner’s Office at 0900
December 13th	Post Meeting—Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch at 1130—meeting at 1230
December 14th	Post & American Legion Christmas party—1200 2nd floor of the Senior Center
December 24th	Veterans Memorial Service—Edmonds Cemetery 1000
January 4th	District Meeting—Alderwood Boys and Girls Club-1200
January 7th	Staff Meeting—Traner’s Office 0900
January 10th	Post Meeting—Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch at 1130-Meeting at 1230
January 18th	Midwinter Conference-Yakima

Record Veterans Day Poppy Drive

I think most of you are aware that we set a record for a Veterans Day Poppy drive by raising \$11,324 bringing the total for the year to \$24,663. Bob Crawford has been heading this up for the last couple of years and has done a great job, but don't forget Phil Sacks who took over some years ago and began the organization and outreach to the area stores. The funds raised are placed into our Relief Fund and used to support veterans and educational programs such as Voice of Democracy, Teacher of the Year awards, and our Scholarship awards. If you can lend a hand for our next fund raiser at Memorial Day, it sure would be appreciated.

Joint AL VFW Christmas Party

All members of VFW Post #8870 and its Ladies Auxiliary together with American Legion Post 66 and their guests are invited to attend our Annual Christmas Party. The luncheon will be held at the Edmonds Senior Center on Saturday, December 14. The meal will be served at 1:00 PM, but you should plan on arriving at Noon. A raffle has been added to this year's event in which winning ticket holders will be choosing from among a variety of donated items. The more tickets you purchase, the greater your chances of success.

We are asking members and guests to bring along a non-perishable food item for a local Food Bank and a new, unwrapped toy or a clothing item suitable for teenagers, all of which will be donated to Holly House.

The family of John Bustard will donate and cook a turkey and the Post will donate a ham. Guests are asked to bring a dish to be shared. The food item categories are:

- | | |
|-------------|---------|
| Side dish | Salad |
| Rolls/bread | Dessert |

Please RSVP to Fred Apgar (udorn7@gmail.com or 206-940-7502), indicating the number of guests who will attend and the category of dish you will provide.

District I Meeting

This is a month early, but please mark your calendars for the January 4th District meeting where we honor our student essay winners and the Teacher of the Years for elementary, middle, and high school. This is an important event for the kids and their families and sitting with veterans is a special treat for them. If you can make some time in your day, your attendance would certainly be welcomed. Please note that our Post along with Post 1040 are the hosts. That translates into we will need some volunteers to help setup and takedown the meeting room.

Post Drapes Charter for William “Jim” Etheridge



At last month's meeting, we learned the sad news that long-time Post member William “Jim” Etheridge passed away. He was buried at Washili Cemetery on October 19th. Jim was born in Arkansas but grew up in Nashville, Tennessee. Since he was too young to join the Navy at the age of 17, he joined the Merchant Marines instead. When he reached his 18th birthday he fulfilled a life-long dream and joined the Navy. During the five years Jim was in the Navy, he served aboard two aircraft carriers; the Valley Forge and Kiersage both of which were involved in operations during the Korean War. Jim is survived by his wife, Louise, and three children.

Ken Chaplin—Past Cmdr.

The Post has received news from the family of our former Post Commander, Ken Chaplin, that he now resides at the Rosewood Courte Memory Care Community, which is located at 728 Edmonds Way in Edmonds. The facility specializes in the care and treatment of patients suffering from Alzheimer's Disease. The phone number of the facility is 425-673-2875 and friends and comrades of Ken are encouraged to visit him.

State VA Director Visits Post



Alfie with Post's Korean War Veterans

Our Post was honored to have Alfie Avarado-Ramos attend our November meeting. She is the Director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, and provided us with an overview of state initiatives regarding benefits for veterans and pending legislation. Like her predecessor, John Lee, Alfie is passionate about serving veterans and making services which they have earned, available to them. Alfie served on active duty for 22 years, retiring in 1993 as the Command Sgt. Major at Madigan Army Medical Center at Ft. Lewis. Prior to being named Assistant Director at the state Department of Veterans Affairs, Alfie served as Superintendent at the Washington Veterans Home in Orting. After finishing her prepared remarks, Alfie honored our Post members who have served in Korea. She presented them with a gift from the Republic of Korea, a book titled, Korea Reborn: A Grateful Nation Honors War Veterans for 60 Years of Growth.

Student Veterans

Edmonds Community College has over 200 student veterans. ECC is possibly the most friendly school to vets that exists. If you get a chance, drop by the new veteran resource center on campus where you will get a warm welcome just by mentioning you are with VFW. It is located at Lynnwood Hall, Room 215.

Chaplain's Column—Rock Roth

This month we celebrate Thanksgiving, a **Holiday (or better a Holy Day)**. Thanksgiving is not an original American idea. **Prayers of thanks** and special thanksgiving ceremonies are common among almost all religions after harvests and at other times. The Thanksgiving holiday's history in North America is rooted in English traditions dating from the Protestant Reformation. It also has aspects of a harvest festival, even though the harvest in New England occurs well before the late-November date on which the modern Thanksgiving holiday is celebrated. In the United States, the modern Thanksgiving holiday tradition is commonly, but not universally, traced to a poorly documented 1621 celebration at Plymouth in present-day Massachusetts. The 1621 Plymouth feast and thanksgiving was prompted by a good harvest. Pilgrims and Puritans who began emigrating from England in the 1620s and 1630s carried the tradition of Days of Fasting and Days of Thanksgiving with them to New England. Several days of Thanksgiving were held in early New England history that have been identified as the "First Thanksgiving", including Pilgrim holidays in Plymouth in 1621 and 1623, and a Puritan holiday in Boston. The practice of holding an annual harvest festival did not become a regular affair in New England until the late 1660s.

Thanksgiving proclamations were made mostly by church leaders in New England up until 1682, and then by both state and church leaders until after the American Revolution. During the revolutionary period, political influences affected the issuance of Thanksgiving proclamations. Various proclamations were made by royal governors, John Hancock, General George Washington, and the Continental Congress, each **giving thanks to God** for events favorable to their causes. As President of the United States, George Washington proclaimed the first nation-wide thanksgiving celebration in America marking November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of **Almighty God**".

That is your history lesson for the month. I would suggest, however, that each and every day should be Thanksgiving. We are "**...endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness**" as clearly stated in our wonderful (and I strongly believe) **God Inspired Declaration of Independence**. During the upcoming Holy Day Season, please remember just how much you are blessed to live in the greatest nation on God's earth. Please remember to thank God for his personal gift to you – the gift of freedom. God Bless our troops and God Bless America.

Gift Cards Delivered to Bases

In an effort to bring some Christmas spirit to local veterans residing in nursing homes and to active duty personnel in need, VFW Post #8870 recently delivered \$3500 in gift cards to these deserving comrades. The Washington Veterans Home in Retsil and the Washington Soldier's Home and Colony in Orting each received \$1000 in gift cards for distribution to veterans and spouses. Our Post also gave \$500 in gift cards to the Chaplains' officers at Everett Naval Station, Joint Base Lewis McChord, and District 13 United State Coast Guard. At the Chaplains' discretion, these gift cards will be distrusted to those active duty personnel who are struggling to make ends meet. In fairness to all branches of our military services, the Post made a \$500 donation to the Semper Fi fund last month.

Dues Increase Effective 1/1/14

It's time to get serious about paying your dues. If your dues are received before the end of the year, they are \$25. Effective January 1st, there is a dues increase to \$35. The Post doesn't net any more, however, as the increase stays with National who, in turn, remits a majority of the funds back to the Departments to support their Service Officers. So if you haven't paid your dues, please drop a check in the mail to:

VFW Post 8870

P.O. Box 701

Edmonds, WA 98020

Your continued support helps us to do what we do in the community for our fellow veterans and their families.

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The Last Word—Commander's Column by Fred Apgar

I have always loved this time of year because of the two wonderful holidays we celebrate. To me, Thanksgiving and Christmas are synonymous with family and having the opportunity to enjoy being with members of my family. As a kid, I can recall hearing the song "There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays" being played on the radio. Another song that captured the essence of this holiday season was the Bing Crosby song, "I'll Be Home for Christmas".

One by one, as my older siblings moved away and started their own families, they were not able to get home to celebrate the holidays with Mom and Dad. I sensed the sadness my parents felt. In time, it would be me who wouldn't be able to be home for Thanksgiving or Christmas. This was an experience that each one of us has in common and all for the same reason; our military service took us away to serve in another part of the world. That was when we could all understand the last line in the Bing Crosby song, "I'll be home for Christmas if only in my dreams".

Fortunately for today's soldier they have cell phones and the miracle of Internet technology provides them with e-mail and Skype. For them, at least, they have more than dreams to reconnect with members of their family.

I hope you will be able to join your VFW Post #8870 family in celebrating Christmas by attending our Annual Christmas Party on December 14. Details regarding the party are contained in this newsletter. The working members of our Post find it a challenge to attend our monthly meetings because of the hour at which we meet. The Christmas Party provides you with a great opportunity to participate in Post activities. I look forward to greeting you all on the 14th. I trust you will make every effort to attend.

Holiday Blessings to you and the members of your family.

The views expressed in this column are solely those of the Commander and do not represent those of VFW Post #8870, its membership, or VFW