



**VFW Post 8870 and  
Ladies Auxiliary  
Edmonds, WA  
[www.vfw8870.org](http://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](mailto:commander@vfwdistrict1.org)

July 4th	Parade and Picnic
June 9th	Staff Meeting—Traner's Office 09:00 AM
June 12th	Post Meeting – Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch 11:30 AM—Meeting 12:30 PM
July 20th-24th	National Convention—Louisville, KY
July 30th	Edmonds Night Out, 5:00 to 8:00PM, Frances Anderson Playfield, 7th and Main
August 17th	District School of Instruction 12:00PM to 3PM VFW Night at the Aquasox game—7PM

### July 4th Program

We will be lining up for the parade at 6th and Main at 11:30AM and stepping off at 12:00. For those of you who have never participated, you should. I have never heard one complaint about having 10 or 15,000 bystanders cheer as we go by. I think it is also important to know it isn't an ego trip for the VFW, but it is our responsibility to lead the parade with the colors of our Country. Hopefully, we will have enough vehicles for those unable to walk, and if not, we will be able to ride on the Chamber of Commerce's float. Be forewarned, the parking is limited and you may want to arrive early. Better yet, park at the City Park at Third and Pine and walk to the parade if you are able. Our own Erv Schmidt will be the Grand Marshall of the parade,

We will be having our annual picnic at the Park immediately following the parade. All VFW and American Legion members and their Auxiliary members are encouraged to attend as well as children and grandchildren.

### Edmonds Planning Board Refuses to Name Park "Veterans Memorial Park"

It was a long night at the hearing held on June 26th to consider the naming of a small park adjacent to Highway 104. VFW and American Legion had urged the Planning Board to recommend to the City Council that the park be named Veterans Memorial Park or, alternatively, Veterans Park. A number of our members attended the meeting wearing their covers. We had organized a petition drive to have Edmonds residents support our endeavor, and I believe we were successful in that effort. However, there was no accounting for the number of letters submitted to the Parks Department. To our amazement and disappointment, the Board chose an alternative name, an individual who recently passed away. Like Harry Potter's nemesis, Lord Voldemort, his name will never be mentioned or written in this newsletter. Had there been good justifications on the part of the Commission, their refusal to honor our request would have been somewhat palatable. They felt the veterans deserved a "grander park" - we simply wanted our patch in Edmonds. They said there was no parking—there is parking within 100 feet on the street. They said it was too noisy—I've got news for the Planning Board that every veteran has dealt with noise and if I want silence while I'm in the park, I'll turn off the hearing aids. They said we already had two parks in Edmonds; the stone tablet in front of the Museum (soon to be moved to storage), and Memorial Park which is the island outside City Hall dedicated to our sister city Hekinan, Japan. Great parks for recognizing veterans. They said ferry traffic folks use the park for a dog run; nope—there is an area on the north end completely separate from where our memorial would be placed. Finally, not one single member had taken the opportunity to view the park and the director of the Parks Department scrambled to find it on Google Earth. So guess what folks, we now get to wait and see what "grander park" is in our future. Edmonds is already 124 years old without a veterans park so don't hold your breath.

## Post Donates Flags to the Edmonds Senior Center



At our June 14 Post meeting, which happened to fall on Flag Day, Post # 8870 donated two flags to the Edmonds Senior Center. Farrell Fleming, the Director of the Senior Center, accepted an American flag and a POW/MIA flag to replace the Center's two tattered flags. In addition to celebrating Flag Day, the gift was an expression of thanks to the Edmonds Senior Center for allowing us to use the facility as our "home" for the past several years.

Flag Day celebrates the official symbol of the United States; our Stars and Stripes. Our nation's flag was first celebrated by Congress on June 14, 1777, and from that day forward, June 14 has become known as Flag Day. Interestingly, the American flag is older than the Union Jack of Great Britain and the tricolor flag of France.

## Edmonds Night Out

As we have the past several years, the Post will be hosting a booth at the Edmonds Night Out on July 30th. If you don't know what it entails, it is sponsored by the Police Guild and promotes safety for children in our community. The Police, Fire Department, and EMT's will all have vehicles there along with a number of organizations promoting youth safety. We will present the colors to open the festivities and we will be handing out flags and brochures on flag etiquette. In addition, the Police Guild needs help at the various rides and games they have for the children and can always use an extra hand. It's a great evening for the kids so if you have some time, try and make it. Not only does it help the youth of Edmonds, it gives us the opportunity to let the community know the VFW is alive and well in Edmonds.

## Chaplain's Corner—Rock Roth

Can any of us who lived during WWII forget Kate Smith singing **God Bless America**? Did you know that **God Bless America** was written by Erving Berlin in 1918 during WWI and revised in 1938 three years before we entered WWII? Did you also know that Irving Berlin was Jewish? The God in whom he believed was the Jewish God of the Torah or Old Testament. Christians believe in the same God as revealed in the New Testament – the Judeo Christian God.

"While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,  
Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free,  
Let us all be grateful for a land so fair,  
As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer.

God bless America, land that I love  
Stand beside her and guide her  
Through the night with the light from above  
From the mountains To the prairies,  
To the ocean white with foam

God bless America, My home sweet home."

I would suggest that as a nation we need to rededicate ourselves to being "One nation under God, indivisible....." I would further suggest that we are **not** African American, Chinese American, Vietnamese American, German American, et al. We are one and all **Americans**. I, as your Chaplain, pray for God's Blessing on this land, the United States of America. I pray that **He stand beside us and guide us, through the night with the light from above.**

Happy Birthday, America!! May you remain one Nation Under God

## Post Website

Just a reminder that you can find this newsletter along with a ton of information at our website [www.vfw8870.org](http://www.vfw8870.org). We post our Minutes from the last meeting and password protect them from unauthorized folks looking at them. If you have forgotten the password, contact the quartermaster at [quartermaster@vfw8870.org](mailto:quartermaster@vfw8870.org) and he will get it to you. Along with the minutes, you'll find contact information for the Post's officers, membership applications should you run into a prospective candidate and don't have one with you. There is also a link to order a copy of your DD-214. Finally, you'll find links for the Post's scholarship, Student Essays, and Teacher of the Year applications. So spend a few minutes on the site to see what is there.

## **Post Welcomes Student Veterans by Fred Apgar**



At our June meeting, Post # 8870 welcomed three veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars who are students at Seattle Central Community College. These three students have assumed leadership positions for the newly organized Student Veterans Association on campus. The mission of the Veterans Organization is to ensure academic success of student veterans by assisting them with the financial burdens of higher education. The organization has organized several initiatives to establish a Student Veterans Scholarship Fund.

VFW Post #8870 has established working relationships with similar student veterans groups at several other area colleges, and we look forward to supporting the Student Veterans Association at Seattle Central Community College. The Post membership approved a donation of \$500 to the group's scholarship fund, and we look forward to working with the organization in the future.

## **Korean War Armistice 60th Anniversary**

There will be an annual wreath laying ceremony on July 27th at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Capital Campus in Olympia. This will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the armistice and the public is encouraged to attend. I know we have a number of members who are veterans of the Korean War and I suggest that you may wish to form a car pool and attend the ceremony. The service is to begin at 11:00AM so utilizing the car pool lanes will be beneficial to ensure you get there in a timely fashion. If you have any specific questions regarding the event, you can contact the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs at 1-800-562-0132 option 1 or email them at [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov).



## New Members



### Edgar R Shepherd

Edgar is a Life Member transferring from Post 2100. He is a native of Trafton City, PA. He served with the Navy 1942-45 in the South and Northwest Pacific. He worked in Fire Control aboard the USS Helena CL-50, a light cruiser and USS Louisville, a heavy cruiser. The Helena was sunk by a Japanese torpedo July, 1943, in the Battle of Kula Gulf. Edgar is an Edmonds resident.



### John E Rogalski

John is a Life Member transferring from Post 15040, Pennsylvania. A Philadelphia native, he served with the Army 1966-68. He served in Vietnam with the 69<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion at Can Tho 1967-68. He is retired and resides in Everett with wife Maxine.



### Don Stapleton

Don, a native of Yakima, WA, served with the Marine Corps Reserve 1955-57. He switched to the Air Force in 1957 and retired as a Master Sergeant in 1978. He served in Vietnam 1971-72 at Tan Son Nhut Airfield where he assisted with direction and control of tactical airstrikes, search and rescue operations and command briefings. He also served in the United Kingdom and at various stateside bases. Awards include the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star. Don is a retired Boeing employee. He resides in Edmonds.

## **VFW Night at the Aquasox**

Ok Comrades—bring your check books or cash to the next meeting if you intend to go to the Aquasox game on August 17th. This is VFW day at the park and your family is invited to attend. Tickets are \$10. I realize it is a couple of months off but we are trying to get head counts and arrange for some special events at the game and I have found that when there is some skin in the game, the counts become more accurate.

## **Join the American Legion**

I suspect a lot of us are already American Legion members. For those of you who are not, please consider it. In our small community, the VFW and American Legion team up in virtually all the community events from Edmonds Night Out to the 4th of July Parade. For the American Legion to thrive, it needs new blood. Their meeting takes place on the third Monday of the month at 6PM in the Senior Center's library room. Come by on June 17th and consider a membership.

## **The Last Word—Commander's Column by Fred Apgar**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, our Post will participate in the annual Edmonds July 4<sup>th</sup> parade. This parade has been recognized as one of the ten best July 4<sup>th</sup> parades in America, and the City deserves our thanks and appreciation for honoring America in such fine fashion. I urge all members of the Post to march with us in the parade and join us afterwards for what will be another terrific picnic in Edmonds City Park.

I have wonderful memories of the first time I marched in this parade. It was in 2008, after I had moved to Washington the previous summer. I was not prepared for the heartfelt reception we received as we stepped off to begin the mile long march through town. As we marched, people stood up, applauded, and shouted out “thanks”. This was the first time since I had returned home from Southeast Asia that I had ever felt this wonderful sense of love, gratitude, and approval. If you have not participated in this great celebration, I urge you to make every effort to do so. You will be glad you did.

July 4<sup>th</sup>, of course, commemorates the birth of our nation, honors our founding documents, and celebrates the freedom and liberty that all Americans enjoy. You have all made significant sacrifices during your years in the Armed Forces, and all of our lives have been touched by the ultimate sacrifices made by so many of our comrades. It is ironic that while we celebrate the 241<sup>st</sup> birthday of our great nation, we have unfolding before us a scandal in which rights, granted to us all by our Constitution, have been violated by agencies of the United States. I am, of course, referring to the tapping of phones of members of the free press and the IRS actions that violated First Amendment free speech rights. In our younger years, such actions occurred regularly behind the Iron Curtain, in Banana Republics, and by dictators.

Personally, I am outraged by such actions taken by public employees working in agencies of our government; “a government of the people, for the people and by the people”. However, I am even more outraged by apathy among our citizens. These are freedoms guaranteed to us by our Constitution and Bill of Rights, and as they are being systematically stripped away, and our response seems to be “good people doing nothing”. Ronald Reagan reminded us that “freedom is just one generation away from extinction”.

As loyal Americans it is our responsibility to preserve our freedoms, which so many of our comrades fought for and for which you fought. Our job is to ensure that those elected officials who have permitted these egregious threats to our freedoms are never returned to office again and we elect representatives who will protect and defend our Constitution.

*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.*

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