

## Record Poppy Collections



**Erv Schmidt and  
Mill Creek's Fire Dep't.**

Erv, a young 97, is shown with 3 members of the Mill Creek Fire Department. Erv was part of a team of members who made this year the most successful on record. Hopefully, we can all be pulling a Poppy shift when we are 97.

### 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)

June 6th—8th	Department Convention— Yakima
June 11th	Staff Meeting—Traner's Office 09:00 AM
June 14th	Post Meeting – Edmonds Senior Center—Lunch 11:30 AM—Meeting 12:30 PM
July 20th-24th	National Convention— Louisville, KY
August 17th	District School of Instruction 12:00PM to 3PM VFW Night at the Aquasox game—7PM

The Post set a new record in Buddy Poppy donations. The total as of May 28th (some funds are still trickling in) is \$13,430. As you know, this money is used exclusively for our Relief Fund. We have been able to be generous because our community is generous in their support of VFW. I want to thank everyone who did "Poppy Duty". Duty is a poor word to use. I should restate it to "Opportunity" since it is an opportunity to hear folks thank you for your service, share stories of their service or that of their father, mother, sister or brother. For the first time, we experimented with the use of a credit card reader which was attached to our iPhone or iPad. It was only used at one location, and while it didn't raise significant funds, we did collect \$150 that we wouldn't otherwise would have collected. Since there is no charge for the equipment and only a nominal service charge for the transaction, we will probably expand their use in the future. I want to thank Bob Crawford who organized the event. He did a great job in seeing everyone was in the right place and at the right time. Elizabeth Mather and Tom Hallums counted the cash and prepared the deposit slips for the bank.

In addition to raising funds, we all had the opportunity to recruit new members to our Post. I suspect we will need to replenish our supply of applications (I know I emptied my car of the half-dozen that I carry).

Finally, I am not sure how many folks that came by and said they were so glad to see Poppies again for Memorial Day. I notice that Prince Harry was wearing a Poppy on his recent visit to the States, but I don't recall seeing a single politician with one in his or her lapel while watching the news on Memorial Day. Perhaps VFW can bring back a tradition that has faded from the American landscape over the past few generations. I know that Post 8870 purchased 20,000 Poppies so at least that many folks were wearing them on their lapel on Memorial Day.

## General Rules of VFW

This is a reprint of an article I did a couple of years ago. Since we've added a number of new members in the recent months, I thought it would be a good idea to pass along some of the protocol that will make those of you unfamiliar with VFW feel a tad more comfortable while attending meetings. Hopefully, this doesn't come across as being dogmatic, but only as observing the traditions of those veterans who have come before us. As VFW is an organization comprised of veterans, its structure is loosely based on military protocol. First, during meals, caps will not be worn. As far as gavel code is concerned, two raps means stand and one rap means sit. Pretty straight forward. During prayers by the chaplain, members will remove their caps only if the chaplain removes his. If the chaplain remains covered, so should the members. If uncovered during a prayer, the hat should be placed on the extended closed fingers of the right hand in such a way that the Cross of Malta is exposed and over the heart. Only official hats may be worn in a meeting. If you forget your VFW cap, the Quartermaster may have a spare you can borrow, or you may simply remain uncovered for the meeting. The military salute shall be given in all ceremonies or meetings when a member wishes to address the commander or presiding officer. I hope that this quick lesson in protocol is taken in the correct vein, to make new members feel more comfortable and integrate more quickly into the VFW.

## Naming the Park

We have a full court press underway in Edmonds as we try to get as many folks as possible to send in Veterans Memorial Park as the name for the small park on HWY. 104. By the time you receive this newsletter the deadline will be passed and we won't know the outcome for sometime. However, Ron Clyborne has done a terrific job in getting the word out to the community. The top three names submitted to the city will be forwarded to the city council who will make the final decision on the name. Should Veterans Memorial Park be chosen, the American Legion and VFW will raise the funds for a suitable memorial, flag pole, and bench.

## Chaplain's Corner—Rock Roth

How well do we know others including our family, friends, and/or acquaintances? I suspect that we know family members reasonably well, friends, or at least some friends, fairly well, and acquaintances with some degree for familiarity. But how well do we really know them and why would I ask this question?

John Bustard, fellow VFW member and Commander of American Legion Post 66 of which many of us are members, 'crossed the bar' on 16 May. His memorial service was held on Tuesday, 21 May, with many of us in attendance. How well did we know John? During his eulogy presented by family members and friends, I heard about John the father, John the husband, John from Grosse Pointe Michigan, John the fisherman, John the hunter, John the Navy corpsman, John the Boeing employee, John the shooter, John the grandfather, et al. From these 'snapshots', one gets a glimpse – a picture - of the real John. It became readily apparent, people knew John at different times in his life and, therefore, in different situations. However, there seemed to be a visible and common thread – a theme – that ran through John's life. John strongly believed in serving others. John served his God, his family, his country, his friends, and youth.

I found all who eulogized John truthful, thoughtful, insightful, and inspiring. However, I was left with the impression that no one really knew the whole or real John – his heart, soul, and mind; his desires, dreams, and beliefs; his loves, passions, and goals. His wife, Anna, probably came closest. This is not intended as a criticism; it is just a fact of life. The only One who really knows and understands a person is Our Lord. He knew each person before he or she was born; knows everything about a person throughout life – his or her heart, soul, and mind; his or her desires, dreams, and beliefs, and his or her loves, passions, and goals. Additionally, Our Lord will be with each of us when called upon to 'cross the bar'. On the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is written, "...Known but to God." I would suggest that each of us in life and in death is "Known but to God." Trusting that the Lord knew (and knows) John – body, soul, and spirit - I strongly believe that He has said unto him, "Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant....." (Matthew 25:21).

On this Memorial Day, please remember John and your other comrades who have 'crossed the bar'! Also, please pray for our troops and their families

## Memorial Day 2013



Presenting the Colors



Olivia Olson—Patriot Pen Winner



Tom Hallums, Silver Star Recipient  
Keynote Speaker



Phil Sacks, Korean War Veteran and Purple  
Heart Recipient ringing the Ship's bell



Owen Mather, Tom's grandson who read an  
oral history of Tom in Korea



Korean War Veterans

## **Post Awards Freedom Scholarships by Fred Apgar**

VFW Post #8870 recently announced the four winners of its Freedom Scholarship program. This marks the second year that these scholarships have been awarded. The scholarship was established to identify and reward deserving graduating seniors who have achieved an outstanding record of academic achievement, leadership, and community service and understand and value the freedom and rights guaranteed to us all by our Constitution. The scholarships, each in the amount of \$1000, were awarded to two students residing within the Edmonds Public School District and two deserving seniors residing within the Mukilteo Public School District. In addition to their transcript and a resume, students were asked to write a 500-750 word essay in which they explained the meaning of freedom to them and how our Constitution establishes and maintains a culture of freedom in our country.

Representing the Edmonds School District are Soren Steelquist and Stephanie Lam. During her four years at Edmonds-Woodway High School, Stephanie maintained a 3.8 GPA and established an impressive record of involvement in school activities and community service. She has held leadership positions in the Key Club, Yearbook, Science Club, and German Club. Stephanie has also been a member of the Band for four years and was admitted to the National Honor Society in her sophomore year. She has devoted countless hours of her time in the Edmonds community by volunteering for a variety of Key Club sponsored activities. Stephanie plans on attending the University of Washington in the fall.

Soren has received numerous awards while participating in Lynnwood High School's basketball and soccer programs. He played varsity soccer for four years and has served as team Captain for three years. In his senior year, he was elected captain of the varsity basketball team. Soren has been elected to class leadership positions during all four high school years, and has been a member of the National Honor Society since his junior year. He has volunteered considerable time to several Lynnwood High School community programs and has served as a soccer referee for the Alderwood Boys and Girls Club. Soren plans to attend the University of San Francisco.

The Mukilteo School District recipients, both of whom attended Kamiak High School, are Brent Haub and Jack Anderson. Brent maintained a 3.76 GPA while participating in varsity sports and playing in the school orchestra. He played varsity baseball and ran varsity cross country. Among the organizations to which he devoted many hours as a volunteer are Hugs for Ghana, St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank, and Pitch in for Cuba. Brent has also been a member of the Chess Club and worked behind the scenes for the school's drama productions, working on stage craft and set building. Brent has been awarded a Chapman University Chancellor Scholarship, the California school at which he will attend.

While pursuing a rigorous academic program, Jack Anderson was also a participant in Kamiak's athletic program. He ran on the varsity cross country team and played varsity lacrosse. During his high school years, Jack was also a member of the school's Chess and Spanish clubs. He will attend the University of Arizona in the fall.

In addition to being recognized at their school's academic recognition programs, the four scholarship winners will be publicly recognized at the Post's July meeting and will be reading their Freedom Scholarship essays to our members.

## **VFW Night at the Aquasox**

Ok Comrades—bring your check books or cash to the next meeting if you attend 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.

## **June Schmidt Memorial Service**

There will be a memorial service for June Schmidt, Erv Schmidt's wife, who recently passed away. It will be held at 1:00PM on June 8th at the First Baptist Church located at 22800 56th Avenue West in Mount Lake Terrace. I know that Erv would appreciate as many "shipmates" that can make it to the service.

## **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.

## **So Close , Yet So Far**

Our Post failed to achieve 100% membership by 1 member. This is the first year in many years we failed to achieve the 100% goal. We don't "buy" 100% in this Post, we earn it. So if you are one of the delinquent members, please consider renewing your membership next year. Your membership is important to the strength of our Post.

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

I would like to extend my personal thanks to the members of VFW Post #8870 for your confidence by electing me to a second term as Post Commander. Early in my life, I was taught the importance of "serving" others. The lessons I learned from my parents and at Sunday School and Church were reinforced by President Kennedy's challenge to "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country". There was never any doubt in my mind, that, one day, I would serve in the military, and it was a privilege to do so. Similarly, it has been a privilege to serve as your Commander.

Incredibly, my first year as Commander is over. Thanks to the dedication, hard work, and sacrifices made by many of our members, we can look back, with satisfaction, for many wonderful accomplishments.

Record breaking collections for our Relief Fund through Poppy distribution

Record number of new members

Establishment of the Freedom Scholarship

A second Teacher of the Year nominee to earn State recognition

Organizing a public forum to honor and recognize Mike Reagan and his wonderful work with the Fallen Heroes Foundation

Working with the City of Edmonds to establish a Veterans Park

None of these achievements would have been possible without the active participation and involvement of so many of you. Some of you stepped forward to accept leadership positions in our Post, for which we are most grateful. Words alone cannot express my sincerest appreciation for your willingness to be "Givers" and being "Part of the Solution".

With your continued support, we can look forward to another successful year in serving the needs of our members and all veterans.

*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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