



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

VFW Post 8870  
and Auxiliary  
Edmonds, WA  
[www.vfw8870.org](http://www.vfw8870.org)  
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### Events on the Horizon:

Staff Meetings: 9:00 AM, First Tues., American Legion Hall, 117 6th Ave. S., Edmonds  
Post Meetings: Third Wednesday., American Legion Hall; Dinner at 5:00 PM (\$5) Meeting at 6:00 PM  
Sept 11, 9:30AM: **9/11 Observance** at Edmonds Fire Dept, .275 6th Ave N, Edmonds, WA 98020.  
Sept 15: **National POW/MIA Day** 6:30 PM, Edmonds Veterans Plaza

**September Post meeting takes place on Wednesday, Sept.20**

### National POW/MIA Day Observance

Mark your calendar!

**VIETNAM WAR  
COMMEMORATIVE EVENT**

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 15, 2017  
POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY  
VIETNAM VETERANS PINNING CEREMONY**

**EDMONDS VETERANS PLAZA  
250 5TH AVE N EDMONDS, WA  
6:30 PM**

Friday, 15 September is National POW/MIA day. Edmonds VFW Post 8870 & American Legion Post 66 will present a program commemorating this day and honoring all those who were POWs and those who served but never came home.

The tribute begins at 6:30 pm at the newly dedicated Edmonds Veterans Plaza located adjacent to the Edmonds Public Safety Building.

Guest speakers will be Joe Crecca, a former POW in the "Hanoi Hilton"; Dan Doyle, Navy Corpsman at Khe Sanh, Vietnam; and a special presentation of a portrait by Mike Reagan of the Fallen Heroes Project to the family of an Army MIA, Vietnam War, whose remains were recently recovered.

Following those presentations, the VFW will be presenting 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pins to all Vietnam veterans attending the program.

Be there and wear your VFW cover!

## Veteran Designation On Washington Driver's License

“You can get a Veteran designation on your driver licenses or ID card. It's free if you're only changing your Veterans status.

Bring your DD Form 214 that shows "honorable" or "general under honorable conditions" status to a driver licensing office. If you don't have your DD Form 214 you can request your military service records online, by mail, or by fax (archives.gov).”

## September Concert in the Edmonds Veterans Plaza Edmonds Woodway H.S. Musicians Perform



Our own Voice of Democracy champion, with the help and support of fellow student Roger Kitchen and VFW and Plaza Committee members Mike Reagan and Ron Clyborne, produced and presented a musical event at Edmonds Veterans Plaza, with a group of Edmonds Woodway High School musicians on Saturday, September 2.

The goal of these young people, under Olivia's leadership, was to honor the Plaza and the Veterans it represents. The concert was free to attend, but a donation box accepted contributions to go toward the ongoing support of the Plaza, and collected over \$ 800.

These wonderful high school musicians performed three sets of music, which were received with enthusiastic applause and standing ovations.

First up was a string quartet featuring a mostly classical selection which, to your editor's ear, they performed flawlessly.

Following the quartet was a duet of violin and cello with a blend of classical and Scots/Irish folk tunes.



This group of young men and women displayed a superb level of musical skill, reflecting, no doubt, a high level of talent and much hard work from early childhood. Of course we can't neglect to congratulate the wonderful music educators of Edmonds Woodway H.S. who help develop these young musicians.

A big Thank You to Olivia and her musician friends!



Last, but certainly not least, we were treated to an excellent performance by a jazz quartet.



## Post Members recognized for Years of Service

At the August Post meeting we recognized members years of service in the Post with the award of the appropriate lapel pin. Recognition pins are issued in five year increments only. Shown below are those members for whom photos were available from file. Congratulations to all of you!

### Five Years

Amos Chapman  
James Cox  
Ron Fischer  
Jon Koenig  
Robert Little  
William Rogers  
Charles Saint  
Michael Santapolo  
John Westfall  
Daniel White

### Fifteen Years

Barry Long

### Twenty Years

William Bishop

### Twenty-Five Years

Jeffrey Catalini  
John Shelton

### Thirty Years

Jim Tyree

### Ten Years

John Lapham  
Earl Prebazac

### Thirty Five Years

Arthur Petty

**Benton Webb** joined VFW in 1945 and is currently the longest serving member in our post at 72 years. Comrade Webb was overlooked in ordering service pins, but we now have a 70 year pin on order. Congratulations Benton!



## September Meeting Speaker

Capt. Reid Tanaka, USN (Retired)

### The Future of Nuclear Energy After Fukushima



Captain Tanaka shares his experience as a nuclear advisor to the U.S. Military commander in Fukushima during the crisis following the tsunami six years ago. After working in the area for over a year, he still concludes that Nuclear Power is the best way to provide carbon-free energy.

Captain Tanaka served in a variety of submarines and shore assignments including department and command positions aboard USS Nevada (SSBN 733) USS Kamehameha (SSN 642) and as Commanding Officer of USS Charlotte (SSN 766).



## Vietnam War Commemorative

### A look at the role of the “Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club”

(Also known as the U.S. Seventh Fleet)



USS Forrester on fire, the worst US carrier fire since WWII; USS Rupertus (DD-851) maneuvers to within 20 ft (6 m) to use fire hoses.

Fifty years ago this summer, a rocket was accidentally launched from the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Forrester, which was stationed with its battle group off the coast of North Vietnam. The rocket hit a fuel tank, scattering flaming fuel and setting off bombs and other explosions. Within minutes, flames had engulfed a large swath of the flight deck. By the time the fire was under control, 134 sailors were dead and 161 injured, including John McCain, who was hit by shrapnel as he

The Forrester fire is a reminder of the significant, but often overlooked, role that the Navy played in the Vietnam War. More than 1.8 million sailors served; of which, 1,631 were killed and 4,178 wounded. The Navy was there at the war’s beginning and at its very end in 1975, when American ships received helicopters carrying embassy staff and refugees fleeing the fall of Saigon.

While the aircraft carriers operated far offshore, thousands of sailors plied South Vietnam’s rivers, carrying supplies, interrupting smugglers and inserting Army and Special Forces units into combat zones. Well armed but poorly armored River Patrol Boat crews incurred annual [casualty rates of up to 75 percent](#).

Though they didn’t know it at the time, those sailors — in both the brown-water and blue-water navies — were also being exposed to Agent Orange. As a result, thousands of men who never set foot in Vietnam have nevertheless suffered the effects of that herbicide. (*ed. Note: “Brown Water Navy” casualties were reduced dramatically, following the increased use of “Agent Orange” to clear the river banks of dense vegetation, with of course, subsequent disastrous side effects.*)

These men have been [fighting for years](#) for the government to recognize their claims. In 2002, the Department of Veterans Affairs ruled that to receive benefits for Agent Orange exposure, claimants had to have served on dry land or inland rivers — a remarkably narrow interpretation of “service in the Republic of Vietnam.” (This year a bipartisan group in Congress introduced the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017 to extend benefits to sailors who served in harbors and coastal waterways.)

But even when sailors qualify, there is often a bias against them — an assumption that because they served on a ship or a boat, they couldn’t possibly have suffered the physical or mental consequences of serving in a war. Evaluators assume that being on the water makes you invincible. Tell that to the men who served on the Forrester.

by Clay Risen (from an article in a New York Times series on the war)

## Dispatch from Anzio

by Pete Farmer

Following the invasion of Sicily in July of 1943 and the subsequent surrender of Italy to the allies, the German Army fell back to a prepared defensive position, the Gustav Line, running from Italy's west coast and across mountains to The Adriatic coast.

Operation Shingle was conceived to land allied troops behind the Gustav line. The fishing and resort villages of Anzio and Nettuno, about 35 miles south of Rome, were selected for the landing sites. General Mark Clark chose the VI Corps under General John Lucas for the amphibious assault. Neither general had confidence in their leaders or the operational plan, viewing dedicated forces as understrength.

Though surprised, the Germans reacted quickly advancing reserve units to Anzio and establishing defensive positions in hills to the east. Additional divisions were diverted to Italy and by the end of January, 71,500 German troops were present.

VI Corps made two unsuccessful major attempts to breakout. An attack on Cisterna by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division went

terribly wrong when the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalions stumbled into six German divisions preparing for their own attack. Of 761 Rangers, only 6 returned with 300 killed and the rest captured.

Both sides at Anzio fell into a defensive posture of trench warfare that lasted through the winter and into spring. The beachhead was always within German artillery range. War correspondent Ernie Pyle observed "men typically in safe roles in the rear were just as vulnerable as the fighting man". VI Corps headquarters went underground and civilians were evacuated by sea.

With the arrival of Spring and the landing of additional units, a breakout attack began on May 23, called Operation Diadem, in coordination with attacks on the Gustav Line. The 1<sup>st</sup> day was intense with the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division losing 100 tanks and the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID suffering 955 casualties, the highest single day figure for any US division in WWII. The breakout was successful, but Mark Clark chose to head directly for Rome rather than block the retreat of German units from the Gustav Line, an original objective of Diadem.

Anzio and Nettuno were rebuilt after the war and today are again lovely fishing villages and beach resorts. They are just an hour away by train from Rome. There are no signs of the battles that raged there other than wall plaques, an obelisk and some statues and markers. There are two small museums. In Nettuno, there is one of two American cemeteries in Italy. The Sicily-Rome American Cemetery contains 7,860 headstones of servicemen and women to include 25 sets of brothers. The names of 3,095 missing are inscribed on chapel walls. A memorial statue, Brothers in Arms, symbolizes the fraternity between the Army (including Air Corps) and Navy that was essential to the success of the three amphibious assaults in Italy.

