



# the Veteran's Voice



## VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Edmonds Post 8870 & Auxilliary  
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### Events on the Horizon:

Staff Meetings: 1st Tues., 9:00 AM at American Legion Hall, 117 6th Ave. S., Edmonds  
Post Meetings: Third Wed., American Legion Hall; Dinner at 5:00 PM (\$5) Meeting at 6:00 PM  
Post Auxiliary Meeting: Second Thurs., Edmonds Senior Center at noon. No host lunch.  
(Questions: Ruth Herren 425-337-1559 )

*Our next regular Post meeting will be on Wed. July 18, 2018  
Membership Drive - Sat. July 21, Edmonds Farmers Market.*

### Post Members Participate in the 111th "Edmonds Kind of 4th" Parade. With three 100 year old members!

A large contingent of VFW and American Legion members participated in the annual "Edmonds Kind of 4th" Parade, stepping off at noon on a beautiful July 4 in downtown Edmonds. Jim Traner arranged for and towed a flat bed trailer equipped with chairs for those who may walk with difficulty, as others marched along behind the colors.

**Three of our comrades attending the parade this year celebrate reaching the century mark.**

Ed Shepherd (100 on July 4), Don Raliegh and Buck Weaver all will reach that milestone this year.



At left, the VFW Post 8870 color guard leads the parade.

Thanks to Dick Simmons for organizing the color guard and to its members for their efforts. Walking a mile and a half with those flags under a warm sun is a bit of work.

parade, cont'd

## American Gold Star Mothers



The American Gold Star Mothers brought something new to the parade this year, arranging for banners with the images of their fallen loved ones to be carried in the parade.

Chamber organizers passed on this comment:

“I attended with my young family and thought it was the best parade yet (and they are all good!). In particular, I especially enjoyed the group who brought huge pictures of soldiers from our area who had died in service. It was very moving and special and felt patriotic to STAND as they passed and explain to my children why we STAND.

Naturally, we also love the veterans when they go by and stand for them too.”

At right, VFW Post 8870 member Kerry Watkins distributes flags for parade goers along the route.



Below, Kerry is joined by Post 8870 Quartermaster Dennis Peterson.



*Photos courtesy Edmonds Chamber of Commerce.*

## Ed Shepherd Celebrates Centennial *born on the 4th of July*

The World War II veteran, who survived the sinking of a Navy ship in 1943 and raised a family that honors his humor as well as his heroism, celebrated his 100th birthday on the Fourth of July.



Shepherd waved from a float during the parade in Edmonds on the 4th. Then he gathered with loved ones at a post-parade barbecue and party at the Elks Lodge. He shared a long table with four generations of his family, including his brother, daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Friends sat around other tables.

Edgar Shepherd survived the sinking of the USS Helena in the Battle of Kula Gulf. The light cruiser, which had come through the Pearl Harbor attack, was tasked with protecting other ships in the South Pacific during the Guadalcanal campaign. The

Helena went down on July 6, 1943. Nearly 170 crewmen died. Shepherd was part of a group that clung to a lifeboat.

He kept a dollar bill signed by the sailors who survived. It was one of two bills he had in his pocket at the time. He used the other bill, a five, to pay for telegrams so they could tell their families they were alive.

Shepherd was born in Pennsylvania, one of four brothers. He joined the Navy after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. On the USS Helena, he worked in the plotting room, which included the control system for the guns. He also fought in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

After finishing his time at sea, he helped start a Navy reserve center in Colorado before moving to California to help his uncle open a doughnut shop. He got a job in Los Angeles at an electrical company where he worked for 24 years.

A friend persuaded him to visit Seattle, and Shepherd bought a house in Edmonds. He lives there with daughter Paula Kilbourne.

She once offered to take him whitewater rafting. He turned her down. She asked if he didn't think she'd be a good guide. That's not it, he told her. He clung to a rubber raft, adrift in dark waters after the USS Helena sank. He wasn't interested in getting on a raft again.

*Photos The Herald, Article excerpted from The Herald article by Kari Bray, July 5, 2018*

## The South Snohomish County Veterans of Foreign Wars Honor Guard.



Members of the VFW Honor Guard perform military ceremonies for deceased veterans. Included, above center is Post 8870 Chaplain Dan Doyle at a recent graveside ceremony. Members interested in participating are encouraged to join these comrades in their service mission. Chaplain Doyle can assist you with further information.



### The eight-point Veteran's Creed

1. I am an American Veteran
2. I proudly served my country
3. I live the values I learned in the military
4. I continue to serve my community, my country and my fellow veterans
5. I maintain my physical and mental discipline
6. I continue to lead and improve
7. I make a difference
8. I honor and remember my fallen comrades

# In Memoriam

## Ernest H. Luke Sr. USMC-China, USA Korea



Pvt. E.H. Luke, USMC,  
China, 1946

Ernest H. (Ernie) Luke, Sr, the brother-in-law of Post Commander Mike Denton was buried next to Mike's sister Karen on July 9, in Kennewick, WA. Military honors were rendered by a Marine Corps contingent and by Kennewick VFW Post 5785. He was 89 years old.

Three weeks prior to his death, he was awarded the Korean Peace Medal by the Korean Consul General along with other Korea Vets in a ceremony in Richland.

Luke enlisted in the Marine Corps at the age of 17 and served in China at the end of WWII and later in the army on MacArthur's staff in Korea.



The service of the Marines in China at the end of the war is not well known, but involved receiving the surrender of Japanese forces remaining and protecting those troops from communist forces. A detailed history can be found via this link. <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmchist/nochina.txt>

Originally from Kentucky, Luke attended college on the GI Bill, receiving a degree in Physics (later a masters degree) and worked in avionics design with Boeing & Rockwell, and more recently in security systems design at Hanford, where he retired. He leaves his third wife Verla, and the children of Karen and Verla to whom he was step-father, as well as his own three children, Ernest Jr, Susan and David.



## Reagan Awarded Polish Medal

As we have previously reported, Mike Reagan produced set of “Fallen Hero” portraits (shown below in poster form) for the families of Polish KIAs of the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, which were of course well received by those families in Poland.

On the Sunday before Fathers Day, Mike was awarded a Polish medal in honor of his work at a ceremony in Redmond. The medal was presented by Major General Cezary Wisniewski of the Polish Air Force. The General is known as the Polish F16 “Ace” and trainer for their air force and is expected to be the next Commanding General of the Polish Armed Forces.

Mike also learned that three Polish Soldiers are riding their bikes across the USA to remember their fallen, and began in LA recently. They are headed to the East Coast. They stop everyday and set-up a display of their fallen. “Yep, they are using posters made up of my portraits to show the USA who their fallen are”. They all fell, 66 of them, fighting with American Special Forces.



### Michael G. Reagan Portrait Foundation

“Our mission is to honor the American Fallen Heroes for their ultimate sacrifice during the war against terrorism. The foundation will provide the resources to produce and distribute to each family a hand-drawn portrait of their Fallen Hero, created by artist Michael G. Reagan, free of charge. Each portrait is intended to show our Love and Respect for these Heroes and their families.”

Mike has drawn over 5,000 portraits of deceased veterans.