

July, 2019
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Events on the Horizon:

Staff Meetings: First Wed., 4:30 PM 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., June 13th meeting at 12:00 pm at Holy Trinity Church, 657 Daly St in Edmonds, No host lunch.

(Questions: call or email Patsy Ethridge-Neal phone: (206) 919-6533

*Our next regular Post meeting will be on Wed. July 17
Coming events: July 27 Edmonds Garden Market*



Independence Day Parade 2019!

“An Edmonds Kind of 4th”



Vietnam vet Terry Crabtree drives WWII vet Norm Goldstein as Norm hands a flag to a young patriot.

(Independence Day 2019, continued)

For many years, it has been the honor and privilege of our local veterans organizations, VFW Post 8870 and American Legion Post 66 to provide the opening color guard and lead the annual “Edmonds Kind of 4th” parade.

Below right we see VFW members (left to right) Dick Simmons, with the National Ensign, a well hidden Jim Murdock with the American Legion Flag, Post 8870 Sr. Vice Commander Carl Kurfess carrying the VFW colors and John Shelton holding the POW/MIA flag. Somehow it seems appropriate for John, a combat wounded Marine sniper to be aided by Fleet Marine Corps corpsman Dan Doyle. We had a good turnout from both posts and a wonderfully responsive crowd lining the street of Edmonds to cheer on the 90 parade entries. The parade announcers were also veterans and members of both posts, in the persons of VFW Post 8870 Past Commanders Jim Blossley and Mike Denton.



Above, 100 year old WWII vet Buck Weaver waves to the crowd from an antique jeep.

At right is Don Stapleton, handing out some of the more than 2000 flags distributed along the parade route.



Above, American Gold Star Mothers honor their fallen sons and daughters with a large group of volunteers, each carrying a banner with the photo of an individual fallen service member.

Never Forget.



VFW/American Legion Joint Picnic/Barbecue

Following the parade on July 4, another of our traditions has been to hold a picnic/barbecue at the Legion Hall. This year, close to 100 Veterans of Post 66 and Post 8870 including family and friends, gathered to enjoy great

food and comradeship. A few of us who arrived a bit late had to hunt for a place to sit among all the early arrivals.



Grill Masters Sr. Vice Commander Carl Kurfess, left and on the right, Alden Gilliland wield their spatulas.

Among those in attendance, was an honored guest, District 1 Commander Doug White. It is always good to have Commander Doug with us.

The menu included grilled hamburgers and hot dogs and pulled pork sandwiches. To accompany all of that delicious barbecued meat, members brought a variety of salads and side dishes and for dessert lots of cookies and a variety of cakes.



Forming the chow line. Are we back in the service?

It would be difficult to individually thank all of the folks who brought and cooked food and who stayed after the event to clean up, but we certainly thank everyone who participated in whatever manner. It only works if everyone pitches in.

Now all that was needed was fireworks to end a perfect Independence Day celebration on a perfect July day.



June 2019 Post Meeting



At the June post meeting 2019-20 Commander Rose Gilliland took over from 2017-19 Commander Mike Denton in a brief hand-off of the gavel. Past Commander Denton began the meeting and conducted the ceremony of draping the charter for recently deceased comrades Benton Webb and Russ Pitner. (Obits for Webb and Pitner appeared in the May newsletter) The appropriate prayer for departed Comrades was read by Chaplain Dan Doyle.



Commander Rose Gilliland then began the business portion of the meeting during which Post 8870 Surgeon Charles Gaul led some discussion of guidelines for our Hospital and Community Service reports, for which we ask members to submit their activities monthly.

The latest instruction received from Department regarding Hospital reporting are pretty clear; the key being the word “hospital”. If it doesn’t happen in the hospital or nursing home or transport to and from these facilities, it doesn’t get reported in the Hospital Report (with the exception of blood donations).

We are however, seeking clarification as to what is reportable and what is not for the Community Service Report. In the meantime, members may want to continue reporting as we have been and leave it to your Post Officers to judge reportability.

Much of the remainder of the meeting was devoted to plans and preparations for participation in the “Edmonds Kind of 4th” Independence Day parade and picnic/barbecue to follow.

2019 Department of Washington Convention

The annual VFW Department of Washington Convention took place in Vancouver, WA June 19-22. Representing our post were Commander Rose Gilliland and Past Commander/Department Trustee Jim Traner.

Jim and Rose were present for two particularly notable events. First, the presentation of the Department Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award to Post 8870 LEO Detective Nicole Stone of the Mukilteo Police Department. Commander Rose received the certificates and “White Covers” of an Allstate Post on behalf of Post 8870, representing the results of the hard work put in by our members in a wide variety of VFW and community service endeavors.

Congratulations are in order to each and every post member who participated during the 2018-19 VFW year.



Above left, Rose and Jim congratulate Detective Stone on her Award, shown being presented at right by VFW Department of Washington Commander Linda Fairbank and Past VFW Commander in Chief Paul A. Spera.



Rose and Jim join other District 1 representatives at the Award Luncheon.

Fred Apgar Remembers Erv Schmidt

Ervin Schmidt was a 25 year old barber from Marshfield, Wisconsin when he enlisted in the United State Navy in August of 1940. After completing basic training, Erv was assigned to the battleship USS California and participated in numerous training cruises in the Pacific Ocean. In December of 1941, the USS California was docked in what has become known as “battleship row” at Pearl Harbor. Erv was asleep in his bunk when the first of two torpedoes

hit the California. After a second torpedo struck, the Captain issued the order to abandon ship.



Erv, left, with Fred Apar

Erv was then assigned to the heavy cruiser, USS Chicago and the ship deployed to serve as reinforcement to the Australian and New Zealand forces in the vicinity of the Coral Sea. In the confusion after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Erv was listed as Killed in Action, and his family was so notified. Six weeks after his family held a funeral service for him, they learned that Erv had survived the attack.

In January 1943, the Chicago engaged the Japanese in the Solomon Islands, and the ship sustained severe battle damage. Once again, Erv heard the command to abandon ship. Thinking he might be safer under water, Erv volunteered for submarine duty. He was assigned to the USS Saury as a radio and sonar operator, and during his five patrols on the Saury, a total of 9 Japanese ships were sunk.

After some well-deserved shore duty in Portsmouth, New Hampshire he was assigned to another submarine, the USS Torsk, which conducted patrols against enemy shipping, first in Tokyo Bay and then the Sea of Japan. On August 11 and then on August 13, 1945, the Torsk sank two Japanese Naval ships, which were the last two ships sunk by the US Navy in World War II. On August 14, 1945, hostilities in the South Pacific ended. During his 2012 Honor Flight to Washington, D.C., Erv had the opportunity to visit, for the last time, his

beloved USS Torsk, which now serves as a memorial in Baltimore Harbor.



Erv at sea aboard Torsk



USS Torsk

Thanks, Fred for reminding of us our late comrade.

Fred Apgar moved away to the mid-west a few years ago, but he has remained in close touch with the Post and has been kind enough to contribute to this newsletter from time to time. Disappointed with the local posts near his new home, Fred recently re-affiliated with Post 8870.