



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

October 2020 Vol. 18 No.10

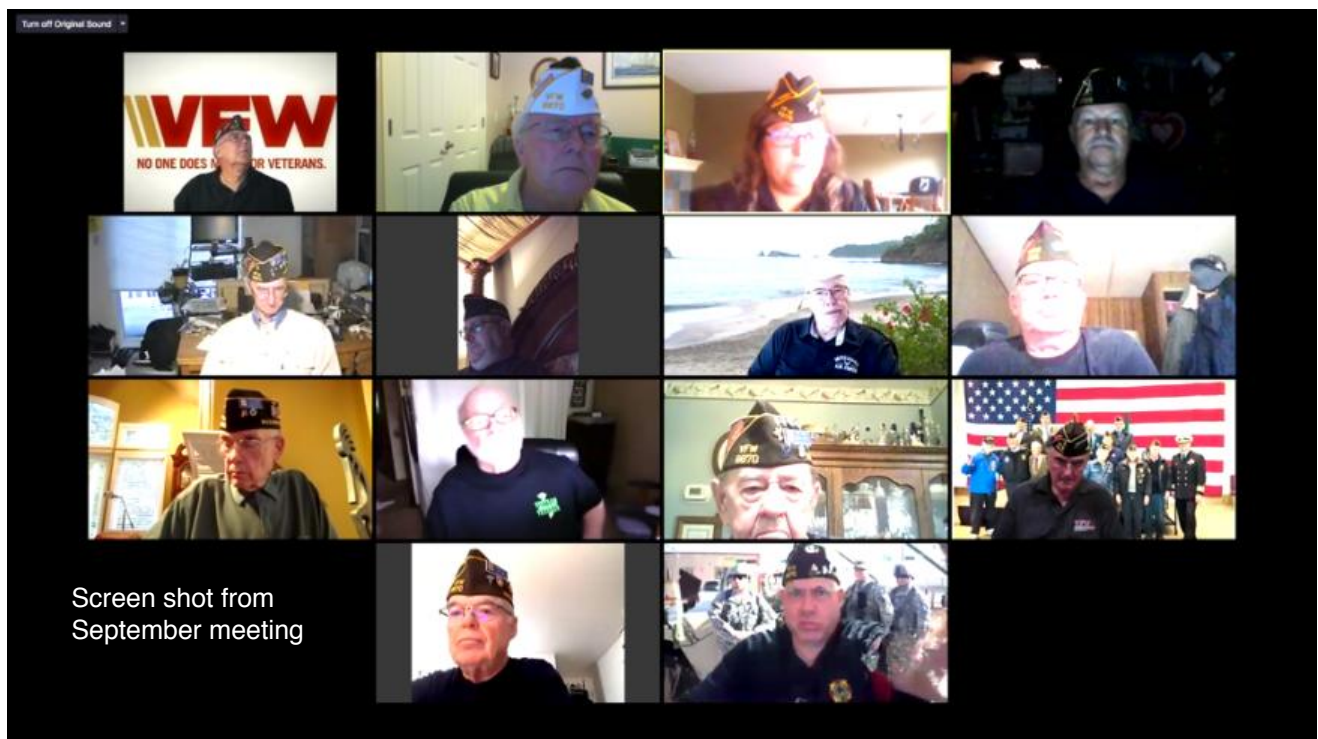
The Veterans' Voice

Edmonds VFW Post 8870

PO Box 701, Edmonds, WA 98020 - 425-245-8545

Commander Rose Gilliland, commander@vfw8870.org
Newsletter Editor, Mike Denton, editor@vfw8870.org

Post Meetings to Continue in Virtual Format



Commander Gilliland truly wanted our next post meeting to be a “hybrid” meeting. Some could meet at the hall and others could join via Zoom. “I have spent a lot of time reviewing the uptick in colds, flu and COVID 19 cases. I do not feel that it is appropriate to have meetings in the hall at this time or for the next few months. I believe that it is the safest approach for all of us to attend via Zoom.” In addition to the safety benefits of virtual meetings, it also allows member who have moved out of Edmonds to join us. Some, such as Past Commander Fred Apgar attend from as far away as Missouri.

Our speaker will be our own Sr. Vice Commander Carl Kurfess, who has a presentation for us on military utility vehicles. You won’t want to miss it. The link for the Zoom stream will be sent via email in advance.

You will want to be on-line with us to join in the discussion of raising money for our Relief Fund, and making plans for our Veterans Day observance, among other things.

Department Firefighter of the Year Award Presented



VFW officials and firefighters plus some family and friends turned out on a windy, rainy afternoon, Wednesday, September 23 for the presentation of local and state VFW Firefighter of the Year Award to South County Fire's own Dave "Bronco" Erickson as he received both the National and the State of Washington VFW award for Firefighter of the Year.

Edmonds VFW Post 8870 Commander Rose Gilliland introduced Erickson and presented the award. "Bronco is a giant amongst us as a public servant," Gilliland said. "This award recognizes your exemplary record of courageous service to the community and the nation and your extraordinary commitment in keeping with the esteemed core values and traditions of the firefighter profession. You are a role model to all firefighters, and this honor reflects the proudest ideals of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. Thanks to you for all you do every day to support your fellow firefighters, our fire chiefs and everyone in our community."

State VFW Senior Vice Commander Chad Hassebroek then presented Erickson with the Golden Eagle, officially recognizing him as the Washington State VFW Firefighter of the Year.

Each year individual VFW Posts are encouraged to nominate a local Fire Fighter or EMT for this award, from which group is chosen the VFW District and State Award winners. The ceremony was held in the Fallen Firefighter Memorial Park adjacent to Edmonds Fire Station 17, sacred ground for firefighters, and a place to which Erickson dedicated years of his life bringing into being. Erickson's role in bringing this memorial to Edmonds was a large part of VFW Post 8870's decision to recognize him with this award.

While the memorial had been his vision and his passion for many years, it began in earnest in 2011 when Erickson personally traveled to New York City to pick up and escort back to Edmonds the one-ton steel I-beam from the wreckage of the World Trade Center, which now forms the centerpiece of the park.

Veterans Day Observance and Buddy Poppies

We will once again be unable to man our usual “Buddy Poppy” Tables due to Covid 19 restrictions at the stores. Hopefully, the situation will change by next spring for Memorial Day, but in the meantime we will pursue some virtual poppy drive activity via Facebook and our local news outlets, as we did last spring.

In addition to our poppy efforts, our artist in residence, Mike Reagan is providing a collection of signed posters of local sports celebs, which will be auctioned off, again in a virtual format, with the proceeds going to our Veterans Relief Fund. Many thanks to Mike for his generosity. The mutual support of Reagan’s foundation and our post continues to be mutually beneficial.

Past Commander Jim Traner has been working on creating a new Post 8870 Foundation under a 501(c) 3 structure the will allow us to fund drive using the Facebook format and perhaps solicit larger donations for which we will then be eligible. Be sure to attend our Zoom Post meeting on line to help the post get to work on these activities.

Veterans Day Observance

At this writing the plan is to form up at the American Legion Hall at around 10:00 AM on Saturday, November 7, parade to the Edmonds Veterans Plaza and hold a short ceremony there at 11:00 AM. We want to maintain proper social distances, so we are not promoting for a huge crowds, however, the Holiday Market will be operating adjacent to the plaza, which may well draw a few more people. Listen for details at the October Post meeting and via email soon.

Gold Star Mothers



The Washington State Chapter of the American Gold Stars Mothers want to thank the American Legion, VFW and Les (I don't have his email) for allowing us to use The American Legion Hall. We were able to assemble 120 Art Therapy kits that the American RedCross/JBLM will be distributing to Veterans at Madigan/or at the WA State Veteran Homes.

Results of Call for Donations to General Fund

Funding effort to continue

Members responded to last month's call for donations with a total of approximately \$ 1,000.00, half of which came from a single anonymous member's \$ 500 match. Those gifts, combined with funds received from VFW National for Life Member dues and a few other gifts has kept the Post general fund afloat for the moment.

We are continuing our funding drive by preparing a mailing to the members honoring their service in foreign wars, and asking for a donation to our general fund. It also asks members to update their demographics. The mailing includes a stamped return envelope to Post 8870. Please give this your attention when it arrives.

We have rearranged our donation page on the web site to make it easier to choose between donating to the general fund, the Poppy (Relief) fund or to the Edmonds Veterans Plaza. Donations can be made by credit card at <https://vfw8870.org/>. The "donate" button is right there on the landing page. You will receive a prompt email receipt.

You might also consider a regular small donation on your credit card, (add it to your monthly bill list). Every little bit helps and remember, we are not permitted to use funds generated by our semi-annual poppy drives for Post operations. ☐



POW Trivia: Skunk Works or "Something smells here"

by Carl Kurfess

The term "Skunk Works" came from Al Capp's satirical, hillbilly comic strip Li'l Abner, which was immensely popular in the 1940s and '50s. The "Skonk Works" was a dilapidated factory located on the remote outskirts of Dogpatch, in the backwoods of Kentucky. According to the strip, scores of locals were done in yearly by the toxic fumes of the concentrated "skonk oil", which was brewed and barreled daily by "Big Barnsmell" (known as the lonely "inside man" at the Skonk Works), by grinding dead skunks and worn shoes into a smoldering still, for some mysterious, unspecified purpose.

Originally, the "Skunk works" was a Lockheed research-and-development operation where the SR-71 and U-2 spy planes were developed. The original Lockheed facility, during the development of the P-80 Shooting Star, was located adjacent to a malodorous plastics factory. According to a memoir, an engineer jokingly showed up to work one day wearing a Civil Defense gas mask. To comment on the smell and the secrecy the project entailed, another engineer, referred to the facility as "Skonk Works". As the development was very secret, the employees were told to be careful even with how they answered phone calls. One day, when the Department of the Navy was trying to reach the Lockheed management for the P-80 project, the call was accidentally transferred to an engineer's desk, who answered the phone in his trademark fashion of the time, by picking up the phone and stating "Skonk Works, inside man here". "What?" replied the voice at the other end. "Skonk Works", the engineer repeated. The name stuck.