



The Veterans' Voice

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

Nov/Dec 2020 Vol. 18 No.11 &12

Edmonds VFW Post 8870

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Post Calendar

Staff Meeting: First Wed, 4:30 PM online via Zoom

Post Meetings: Third Wed., 6:00 PM online via Zoom (informal Holiday gathering)

Post Auxiliary Meeting: (Questions: call or email Jo Boyett, 206-818-4212, joaboyett@cs.com)

For the foreseeable future Post meetings will be held online in the "Zoom" format.

Look for invitations with the link from which to join the meeting in your email

Draping the Charter for Fallen Comrades



Rene Blumenfeld

We lost two of our long time Post 8870 comrades in November. Rene' Blumenfeld, age 92, of Edmonds, Washington passed away on Tuesday, November 17, 2020. At this writing your editor has no further information about Rene. He had been a member of our Post for post for some 25 or more years and was a very regular attendee at post meetings most of that time.



Bob Crawford

Bob Crawford was a retired Navy pilot with terminal rank of Lt. Commander. Bob served in the Vietnam war. Past Commander

Jim Traner tells us: "He ran a small aircraft charter operation out of Anacortes and delivered mail to some of the smaller islands." Bob was our Poppy Chair for quite some time and we have missed his service in that role since his health began to fail a couple of years ago.

Virtual Post Meeting Held in November

We held what has become our usual "virtual" post meeting on November 18 in the Zoom format. Among other topics, we discussed our efforts at another "virtual" poppy drive for Veterans Day, which were much less successful than we experienced for Memorial Day. Total revenues this time were less than \$ 2,000. It looks as though there are just too few charitable dollars available to meet the needs of all of the organizations looking for funds.

On a better note, our call for donations for our Post general fund was quite successful and we were able add over \$ 3,000 to that fund, making Post operations secure for a while.

While we hope and are planning for a return to our traditional store front fund raising for Memorial Day 2021, it looks as though we may have access to at least one of our better producing stores. More on that later, but meanwhile, we want everyone to think about other ways we might replenish of Relief Fund going forward to

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Virtual Post Meeting, cont'd

be able to go on helping veterans in need, and support our other causes if Covid is still restricting us next spring.

Attendance: Head counts at Post meetings of late have not met our usual experience for regular meetings held at the Legion Hall. Our numbers have been running around 15, mostly the Post officers.

You should all be receiving the link to allow you to log into the Zoom meetings and we encourage you to join us. Put your VFW cover on, log in and join us! For December, the format will be a casual 'Holiday' gathering, instead of the regular Post meeting format, at the usual time on December 16, so grab your favorite beverage and snacks and we will all kick things around on line. Watch your email for your invitation with the link.

Christmas Toy Drive - Covid Style



Since we are unable to hold our regular VFW/Legion Christmas Party (a disappointment to all) we will also not be able to hold our annual toy drive for the Edmonds Toy Box program for underprivileged children. For many years we have gathered a substantial number of unwrapped toys as part of our celebration, for distribution to children of families in need.

Chaplain Dan Doyle contacted Teri's Toy Box owner Teri Soelter in downtown Edmonds and arranged to place a Box in the store marked for VFW's Toy drive. The idea is to encourage store customers to purchase an extra toy while shopping and place it in the box. Doyle is delivering those toys to the Edmonds Toy Box and reports collecting enough to fill two garbage bags at pick up time the first week. Post Surgeon Jay

Hansen designed a sign for the box, Post Commander Rose Gilliland decorated the box and delivered it to the store.

In the photo above, Past Commander Mike Denton is with owner Teri Soelter after dropping A few new toys in the box.

Everyone is encouraged to visit Teri's Toy box at 420 Main St in downtown Edmonds, to help us make some kid's Christmas brighter. Here is an opportunity to both support a long time local business and help underprivileged children at the same time. Just select and purchase a toy for any age range and place it in the box, located adjacent to the store's point of purchase. It is a real "feel good" moment. (May as well pick up some last minute items for the kids and grandkids at the same time!)

Large Grant from Anonymous Donor Veterans Plaza & Relief Fund to Benefit



We are very excited to announce that the Post has received a large grant for the Edmonds Veterans Plaza and for our relief fund! A benefactor who donated to the Plaza earlier was contacted by Ron Clyborne regarding a new project for the facility (details on that project to be forthcoming). The donor asked if we had any other needs and was told that we were short \$15,000 in our relief fund due to a disappointing virtual poppy drive. The result is a check deposited the other day by Jim Traner in the amount of \$ 40,000; \$25,000 for the Plaza project and \$15,000 to flesh out the relief fund. With the \$ 1800 raised in our virtual poppy drive, this brings our fall relief fund revenues to just under \$ 17,000. Many thanks to Ron for his initiative and to the anonymous donor for his amazing generosity!

Post 8870 Veterans Day Observance



Chaplain Doyle with our color guard

The pandemic once again interfered with our traditional Veterans Day activities, with poppy distribution and big gatherings at the Edmonds Veterans Plaza cancelled.

Nevertheless, Veterans Day could not go unobserved, so a group of Post members gathered on the Saturday morning of Saturday, November 7 and, led by Commander Rose Gilliland marched from the American Legion Hall to the Veterans Plaza behind our national ensign and our VFW and Legion Post flags. A small group of Post members, family and friends enjoyed a short presentation on the meaning of the day from

Post Chaplain Dan Doyle, followed by a few remarks from our artist in residence, Mike Reagan. Mike once again spoke of the experience of a comrade in Vietnam dying in his arms, a story that cannot fail to move those listening.

In the background are the tents of the vendors of the Edmonds Saturday Market.



YOUR HELP IS NEEDED !
To Complete Veterans Plaza Kiosk Data



We would like to complete the **Information Kiosk** at the Edmonds Veterans Plaza by inputting data for each dedicated veteran. We created **Online Forms** for this purpose. **Please help us!**

If you have purchased any of the several types of memorial spaces in the plaza for either yourself or other veterans, living or deceased, please select one of the Forms below and use its link to enter requested data for each honoree.

The Edmonds Veterans Plaza Kiosk team is happy to announce that the kiosk is now loaded with the veterans' basic information excerpted from the memorialized pavers and benches. Some of the veterans dedicated also have provided additional information and photos. You can go to the plaza and check out to see if you, your friend or family member is showing up. The Memorial ID and the map on the screen can help users to locate their pavers, etc.

The team will continue the effort to add more information and edit if needed. Please see the online version of the kiosk here (In other words, you can do the checking from your home remotely, too!): <http://tribute-kiosk-software.com/edmonds/>

You are welcome to complete one of the forms below. Or send the veterans' information and photos to evpkiosk@gmail.com. Also use the same email to correct the existing information on the kiosk. See the form below for what types of information we can use. Although ideal, it doesn't have to be complete. **Please use this format and save the committee the effort of following up with you individually!**

Please select one of the Forms below and use its link.

- **Form A:** For those who have a Google account**. Only Google account holders *can upload photos* directly from the form. Prepare the photos (Read Photo Specification*) and start the form below.
---> <https://forms.gle/HXNLN8AoGuJWtW4G7>
- **Form B:** For those who do not wish to have a Google account. We will send a separate email requesting photos later. Please go ahead and fill the form below.
---> <https://forms.gle/1iqMkSoaPUHfzo8H9>

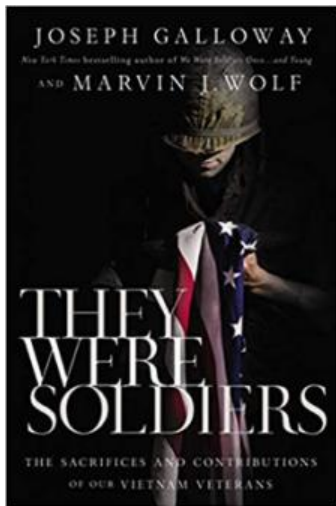
Either way, you will be requested (but not required) to provide up to 2 photos.

***Photo specification:** Ideally optimized for 400w X 500h in pixels at 72 DPI and JPG (.jpg) format is preferred (up to 10 MB per photo in size allowed). You may want to start preparing them before you start filling the form. If you do not know how to do this, do not worry but go ahead and upload photos as they are.

**** To create free Google account:** (If you use Gmail or Google Calendar, you already have a Google account.) You can create it by visiting: <https://support.google.com/mail/answer/56256?hl=en>

From the Book Shelf

by Mike Denton



***They Were Soldiers* showcases the inspiring true stories of 49 Vietnam veterans who returned home from the "lost war" to enrich America's present and future.**

In this groundbreaking new book, Joseph L. Galloway, distinguished war correspondent and *New York Times* bestselling author of *We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young*, and Marvin J. Wolf, Vietnam veteran and award-winning author, reveal the private lives of those who returned from Vietnam to make astonishing contributions in science, medicine, business, and other arenas, and change America for the better.

For decades, the soldiers who served in Vietnam were shunned by the American public and ignored by their government. Many were vilified or had their struggles to reintegrate into society magnified by distorted depictions of veterans as dangerous or demented. Even today, Vietnam veterans have not received their due. Until now. These profiles are touching and courageous, and often startling.

They include veterans both known and unknown, including:

- Frederick Wallace ("Fred") Smith, CEO and founder of FedEx
- Marshall Carter, chairman of the New York Stock Exchange
- Justice Eileen Moore, appellate judge who also serves as a mentor in California's Combat Veterans Court
- Richard Armitage, former deputy secretary of state under Colin Powell
- Guion "Guy" Bluford Jr., first African American in space

Engrossing, moving, and eye-opening, *They Were Soldiers* is a magnificent tribute that gives long overdue honor and recognition to the soldiers of this "forgotten generation." (With thanks to Jim Traner for bringing this book to my attention)