

VFW *The Veterans' Voice*

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

February 2021 Vol. 19 No.2

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 Calendar

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

Post Meetings: Third Wed., 6:00 PM online via Zoom

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.**

January Post Meeting

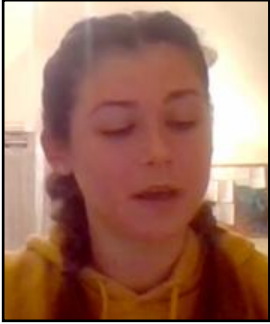


The meeting began via “Zoom” online with our usual opening ceremonies and the draping of the charter in memory of departed comrades Rene Blumenfeld and Bob Crawford. Detailed obituaries appeared for both in earlier editions of this newsletter when we learned of their passing late in 2020. We have lost two brothers who were active members of the Post.

The first order of business was to introduce distinguished guests including District Senior Vice Commander Drew James, shown sitting in front of the flag in the center of the above screen shot. Sr. Vice James is also running for Department Surgeon and used the occasion to ask for our votes. A very active VFW member, James is a veteran of Afghanistan operations with the Army’s 10th Mountain Division.

Our other distinguished guests were our winners for the several categories of the 2020-21 VFW Youth Essay contest.

Josie Bigger, Sammamish High School First Place, Voice of Democracy



Josie Bigger, an 18 year old Senior at Sammamish High School, pictured at left, read her winning Voice of Democracy essay for the assembled membership. It appears below in its entirety.

Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?

The preamble to the Constitution states: “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America.” Written in 1787, this is the vision our fathers had for the newborn country. The great spirit which had inspired men and women to shake free the bonds of oppression and subjection to England rose again, this time to cast a new vision for the country, to propel it forward to become a nation indivisible, under God and unlike anything the world had ever seen.

America stands on the pillars of freedom and equality; the irrefutable truth that all men are created equal. While this was the vision the founding fathers wrote into the Constitution, the culture and atmosphere of the time prohibited this from becoming a reality. Despite obstacles and hardships, the flame of the American spirit has been carried by brave and diverse people throughout generations, and the truths written in the Constitution have become real, and America is now the most diverse, free and equal country in the world. However, some freedoms which the constitution defends, like speech and press are being threatened by a new wave of oppression. Media companies are inhibiting the propagation of real journalism and are consistently silencing voices opposing mainstream ideas. Politics have infiltrated everything from social media to the clothes you wear. The new age of workers and identity politics is not the vision our fathers had. The intolerance of opposing ideas is not the vision our fathers had. The division, separation and hatred for America is not the vision our fathers had.

Despite our shortcomings and failure to fully realize our fathers’ vision, the great American spirit continues to live on and strive for what it was born to achieve: freedom, equality, prosperity, liberty private property, social mobility, checks and balances, the list goes on. This country is like no other, where you can come from any part of the world and find freedom and the ability to make a better life. America is a country which rewards hard work and perseverance and upholds human rights and freedoms unlike any other nation. This is the vision our fathers had and that we as Americans should strive to create and uphold for ourselves and the communities around us.

I am a proud possessor of that American spirit. The spirit which rests in the great American Dream, which promises all a better future and a brighter hope. I love America and I thank from the bottom of my heart every single individual at the VFW, those still serving and those who have given their lives for this great nation.

Marius Hill, Edmonds Heights, K-12, took 2nd place in Voice of Democracy

Marius is a senior at Edmonds Heights K-12 School, our Edmonds School District unit charged with support of home school students.



Ashton Fairchild, Grade 6 Harbor Point Middle School 1st Place, Patriot's Pen

“What is Patriotism to Me?”

Veterans have worked tirelessly to protect our country and rights. Without all the work they have done, we would not have the freedom we have today.

Patriotism to me means freedom to do what I like. Being able to shop at a grocery store with a large selection of food is only because veterans once fought in wars, defending our rights and freedom. If it wasn't for them, we wouldn't have a president or equal rights. Adults can choose their job and not be forced to work without pay. Patriotism to me also means freedom of speech, so that I can say what I want. Veterans fought in war to provide us the freedom we have today. If war starts, they will defend no matter what for all the things we love. They fight for liberty and freedom, no matter what cost.

If veterans had let other countries win at war, we might be living somewhere else, with slavery and no clean water. If they didn't fight around the clock tirelessly, none of this would exist. We could be living in slavery if it wasn't for the people who fought against other countries to defend our freedom, rights and liberty. If they let their guard down, we would probably not be here right now. We have clean water, good housing and free food all because of them.

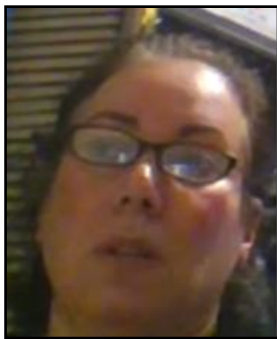
We only have these freedoms because of veterans who fought until they felt like they couldn't, but still carried on, even in the darkest of times. When nobody else was there to fight, veterans always came. When they thought that they couldn't win they persevered. They sometimes didn't sleep for days, making sure no war could take away our justice. They fought for days to protect our people. They would save America at all costs, even if it felt like it would be nearly impossible. Veterans have worked tirelessly to protect our country and we should honor and appreciate them. There is no way to put into words how much effort they put into defending our country and rights.

Avery Fairchild, Picnic Point Elementary School. 1st Place Youth Essay.

Why Veterans Should be honored

If you have ever read the newspaper or watched the news, you have probably heard of the election. Do you know why we have an election or how we get to vote in our country unlike countries with kings and queens? Well it is all because of veterans. They fought for our right to vote. They fought for all kinds of things. When things weren't right or were unjust, veterans tried to defend the people and bring in new laws. So many people in the Army, Navy, Air force, Marines and Coast Guard fight for justice, we will be grateful of what they do for us. Would you want to do what they do? It's not easy work. They risked their lives for many things and this is a few: Freedom of speech, voting, freedom to do what you want. Like have a job you actually like and go anywhere you like. But, they sacrificed a lot for those things. They had to fight in a war for years and be away from home in a foreign land you've never been to. Like the Vietnam war, across the world from where I live. They had to go where they've never been, also a place where people wanted to kill them. It wasn't an incredible trip either. I'm not even talking about the war - I'm talking about the food and a place to stay. They had MREs (meals ready to eat) and built their own tents to stay at. So it wasn't so luxurious, but it helped our country greatly and look at us now. We're a free country. So, since this is the end of the paper, this is the last thing I have to say:

THANK YOU VETERANS!



Welcome New member Parnia Parvivi

Senior Vice Commander Carl Kurfess introduced Navy veteran Parnia Parvivi, who served aboard USS Abraham Lincoln in the Gulf War and served as Navy Culinary Specialist. Parvivi was duly elected and sworn in as a member of Post 8870.

Edmonds Veterans Plaza Kiosk Up & running.

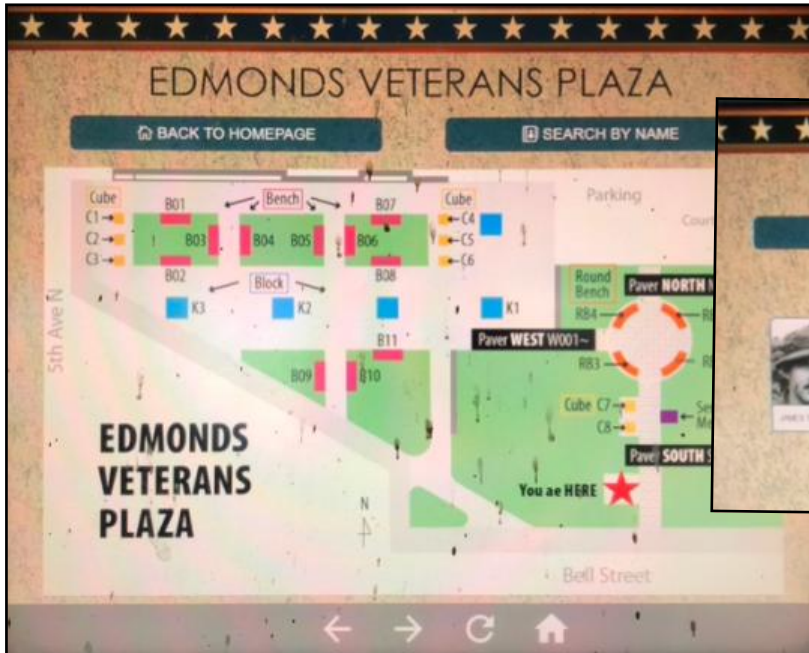
It has been quite a challenge getting the information kiosk at the plaza going, but we seem to be at a point where it is now really useful to visitors. Everyone is encouraged to visit the plaza and check out the content of the kiosk. If you have yet to submit details for any pavers, benches, or other items you have purchased to honor a veteran, please see the instructions for doing so, which are repeated later in this newsletter.

Further planned improvements to the Plaza include building a roof over the kiosk and adding a statue, possibly in the form of a human handler adjacent to the service dog statue, located at the east end of the plaza. Generous donors have already provided funding for these projects which are now pending design and city approval.

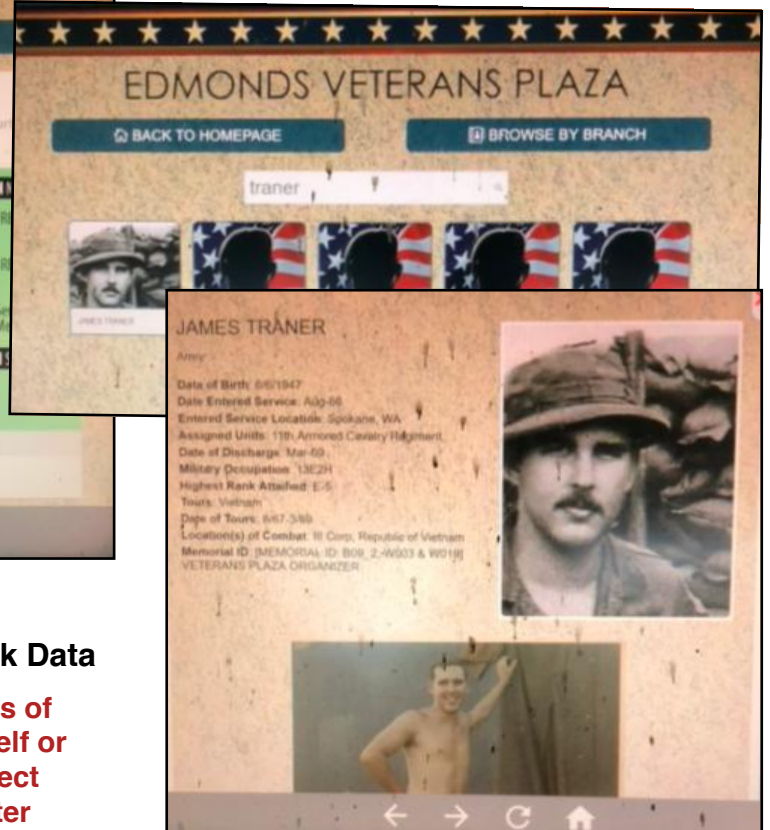
Additional images follow this page.



Map of Edmonds Veterans Plaza layout



Example of an individual page.



Instructions to submit Veterans Plaza Kiosk Data

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.

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/liqMkSoaPUHfzo8H9>

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>

An Update from Heroes Cafe

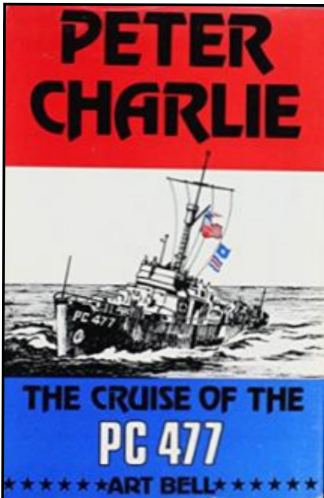
- Thank you again for all of you that supported the food and personal care drive, the Dessert Drive-through on Veterans Day 2020, and most recently the Cold Weather Clothing drive earlier this month. (December) Your donations of time and product improved the quality of life of many veterans and civilians in need throughout Snohomish County. I still have some coats, sweatshirts, long sleeve undershirts, scarves, socks, hats, shirts, and gloves that need a home. Please tell me about a veteran you know who is in need.
- **As always, provided personal information is kept in the strictest confidence.**
- I highly recommend you check out the site <https://myneighbornewsnetwork.com/>. This newsletter provides great information in the Lynnwood, Edmonds, and Mountlake Terrace areas. In the 29 Jan Lynnwood edition, there is an article offering free legal assistance through the Sanders Law Group, Edmonds. I have been asked by many veterans about legal support. The following is the article:
 - *Free Legal Services Offered 3 Feb: The Sanders Law Group and the Edmonds Waterfront Center are continuing to offer a free legal clinic for seniors every month in 2021. It's your chance to ask your burning legal questions, at no charge. This popular monthly clinic features 15-minute individual appointments with an elder law attorney. Due to the pandemic, consultations are only offered via phone call. The clinic runs from 1-3 p.m. Space is limited. Call ahead to the Edmonds Waterfront (Senior) Center for reservations: 425-774-5555. You will be assigned a time, and asked to provide your phone number.*

Thanks again and we can not wait to have our first gathering of 2021.

Gary Walderman, Retired USAF Veteran

From the Bookshelf

by Mike Denton



Aboard a patrol boat in World War II, chasing Japanese subs

In 1942, Art Bell was a twenty-three-year old ensign in the U.S. Navy, assigned to duty aboard the PC 477. The PCs were 173-foot, steel-hulled submarine fighters. Uncle Sam had thousands of seamen on hundreds of PCs convoying and patrolling in WWII. They were introduced in the desperate, early days of the war, when the waters off America's Atlantic coast were a graveyard of torpedoed ships. They performed essential, hazardous, and sometimes spectacular missions, yet the PCs were scarcely known at all outside the service.

Here is the story of the wartime service of one of those ships, taking the PC 477 from the Gulf Coast, through the Panama Canal and on across the South Pacific to the Solomons campaign and beyond.

The book was originally self published by Bell and is written as a memoir of his wartime experience.