

THE

A Monthly Publication for the Members of VFW Post 3873



KENDALL-GRAM



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Commander Tom Parker



Every year we participate in a number of different activities throughout the community to promote patriotism and to recognize/honor veterans. While activities like Memorial Day and Veteran's Day get us in the spotlight with members of our schools and city, other programs occur that receive much less fanfare. Two of those programs are Voice of Democracy (VOD) and Patriot's Pen. For those that aren't aware, both of these are scholarship competitions where winners receive monetary awards beginning at the Post level and they can receive higher awards if they progress to the District, State, and National level. The VOD audio essay competition is for high school students and the Patriot's Pen written essay competition is for junior high/middle school students. Both programs have patriotic themes each year and they are designed to allow our young people to reflect on the heritage and sacrifices that have been made to make this country so great. The students then express their thoughts and opinions in their essays. The competitions at our level begin in earnest as the school year starts each fall and the judging is done in early November. While that may seem like a short timeframe, our VOD Chairman, Thys Vandervelde, and our Patriot's Pen Chairman, Hugh Boger, are busy throughout the year working with their Auxiliary counterparts to get the word out to schools and students, collecting all the entries, and coordinating to ensure the judging is done on time.

For anyone that believes our youth are only concerned with the latest X-Box game or what the next tweet will be, I challenge you to help with the judging. For the past 6 or 7 years I have read and listened to our many entries and have been absolutely impressed with the level of thought that goes into the essays and the clarity with which the students express their thoughts on patriotism and why our country is worth preserving. The younger folks do "get it" and I think we are going to be in good hands. I believe that what we do in the schools and community, combined with what they are learning from their parents and teachers, has gone a long way towards helping them understand what patriotism is all about.

In the coming weeks, our Post winners from both competitions will be attending District level awards programs and we hope to hear their names called as the winners at that level. I'd like to extend my personal thanks to Thys and Hugh for all of the long hours and hard work they put in each year to make these programs such a huge success at our Post and in our local schools. For anyone looking for a way to help out at the Post and to make a difference with our youth, think about getting involved with these programs.

Just a reminder that if you participate in any activity that promotes patriotism or Americanism in the schools, retirement communities, or any other venue, please send a message to the Commander about what you did, where you did it, and how many hours you were there. All of these events are reported to the State level and help us earn the Community Service awards that are displayed on the back of the building.

Senior Vice Commander Pablo Araya

Just wrapped up my packing for our Griswold-like drive to sunny Florida. In about seven hours, Reane and I will be headed to beaches and surf, but not before hitting Atlanta and visiting with Erik, an old USS MIDWAY (CV-41) squadron shipmate. Hard to believe that “only” 30 years ago we flew shipboard ops off a pitching deck, both too young and eager, to grasp the seriousness of what we were doing.



After a visit with him we'll drive a few more miles south to Jax, FL, where we'll visit, and hang out with Kenny, an old Navy buddy of mine who went through flight school with me a mere 33 years ago. If time permits, we'll head back to Chicago via Virginia, where my former Commanding Officer, Skipper Young, has a standing invitation for dinner and golf. I'm looking forward to the camaraderie, memories and simply catching up with friendships forged during an unforgettable period in our lives. A period, all of you who are proud members of the best VFW in the world, can identify with. The bonds and friendships made while in service to this great country are not soon forgotten, or easily broken, and are valued more than any material wealth.

Which brings me to our own Post, and the value of membership. It's not about numbers (but since you asked, we're at nearly 92% with six months to go!), rather it's about the same camaraderie and friendships that allow us to drop in on each other, no matter how much time has passed; it's about counting on each other when times get tough; it's about the confidence in knowing that our fellow service brother or sister, will always have each other's backs. And back home at Judd Kendall, it's about all of that, and more. It's about our chance to help those that have, and are still serving. Never breaking the chain. So look around, and take note of your fellow Veteran, and tell them about Post 3873. Who knows, they may have been waiting for that sign of rekindled fraternity, and will be eager to join or Post.

Junior Vice Commander Dave Angelus

2017 has showed up like a midnight freight train running through a small town. There are quite a few activities that are taking place at the post. As we speak, we are in the midst of retiring the old sound system and replacing it with a modern PA system. In addition to being much clearer and louder they system will be upgraded to allow new sound inputs from laptops, phones, ipod's etc. We are even looking for a method to add blue-tooth as well. To add to the capabilities we are also adding self-powered speakers in the Canteen as well as the patio. If events are running upstairs, anyone downstairs will be unable to hear what's going. Once the sound system is upgraded we are looking to upgrade the entrance area to the office and the office itself with new paint, carpeting, and furniture. The plan is to reconfigure the space to be more user friendly and allow for some more desk space as well. Please let me know if anyone would like to assist in these activities.



Starting at the end of February we are going to commence with our annual Fish Fries again. They will run for 8 weeks starting Feb 24th running through April 14th each Friday. As usual each week will feature a service night. We will start off with the Marines on Feb 24th. Someone even requested a Coast Guard night. All members from that branch are requested to attend. We will also host the Hines Blind unit as well. For 2017 we have dispensed with the early bird specials and have changed the times from 4:30 – 8 PM. To assist with the work each week I am coordinating again with the local high-schools, Boy Scouts, Sea Cadets, and local softball team. The post was able to make some changes last year and increase profitability we are hoping to keep up the trend for 2017.



Judd Kendall VFW Post 3873, American Legion Post 43 – Veteran of the Month

Name: Brian Byrne
Rank: Captain (03)
Branch of Service: Army
Current Age: 40
Total Years Served: 8
Served from: 2000 - 2008
Places Served:

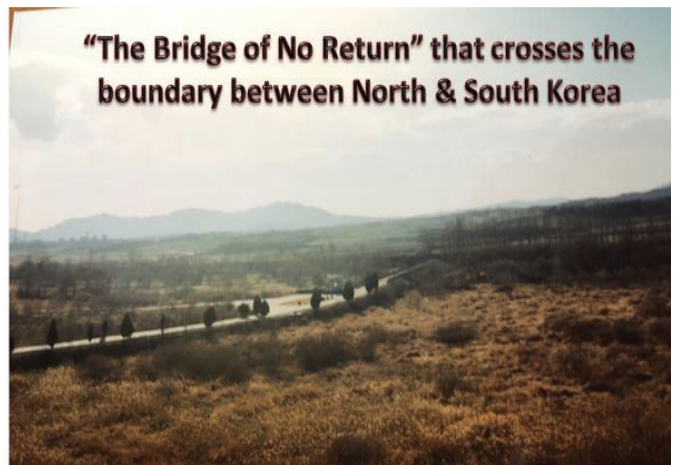
- * Fort Leonard Wood, MO (went here for Office Basic Course and Captain’s Career Course - used to be known as the Advance Course)
- * Camp Casey, South Korea
- * Taegu, South Korea
- * Seoul, South Korea
- * Fort Riley, Kansas
- * Rustamiyah, Iraq (deployment w/ 1st Infantry Division from Fort Riley)

Job or Specialty: 31A, Military Police Officer, (also had the Combat Advisor, Skill identifier). In Iraq I was an advisor to the Iraqi National Police. Our job was to coach teach and mentor them and put them in the lead during the 2007-2008 Surge.

Fondest memory while serving: Getting our in-brief in Iraq from General David Petraus. He told us to look around the room and said “Gentlemen, you are our country’s exit strategy.” Also seeing the improvements that were done in our sector of Iraq while we were there was rewarding as well.

Quote:“Culture eats strategy for breakfast” Peter Drucker, I use this as my guiding principle as a manager today but it applied in uniform also, the best unit I was ever in had a very engaged Battalion Commander who made sure he had a communication culture up and down the chain of command.

One of my favorites is from Lawrence of Arabia. this was used during our training for OIF: “Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.”



Flower Sale

Planning is well underway for the annual VFW Flower sale. The form will be in the March Kendall-Gram as well as in the canteen at the VFW and is must be returned by April 15, with a pickup date of May 9th. We hope you’ll consider ordering your annuals from us. Proceeds from the sale are used to enhance the exterior grounds of the VFW.

Dates to Remember

Feb 1 - Yoga for Vets 9:30 a.m.
Feb 1 - Auxiliary to Community Convelescence, 2 PM
Feb 2 - Legion Meeting, 7 PM
Feb 4 - Visit with Vets at Monarch Landing 10 a.m.
Feb 7 - VA Mobile Unit 9-2:30 PM
Feb 8 - Yoga for Vets, 9:30 a.m.
Feb 9- VFW Meeting, 7 PM
Feb 10- C of A meeting in Springfield
Feb 11 - Visit with Vets at Brookdale Plaza, 10 a.m.
Feb 11 - State VOD Banquet in Springfield, 6 PM
Feb 12 - Life Member Breakfast, 9:30 a.m.
Feb 14 - Valentine's Day
Feb 14 - Visit to Hines Hospital, 6:15 PM
Feb 15 - Yoga for Vets, 9:30 a.m.
Feb 16- Auxiliary Meeting, 7 PM
Feb 18- Visit with Vets at Independence Village,10 a.m.
Feb 18 - American Legion Dinner, 6 PM
Feb 19 - District 19 Meeting at Naperville
Feb 20- President's Day
Feb 22 - Yoga for Vets, 9:30 a.m.
Feb 24 - FIRST FISH FRY - 4:30 - 8 PM
Feb 28 - Taco Tuesday 5:30 - 7 PM

Dates of Interest

Feb 2 - Army Nurse Corp Established, 1901
Feb 8 - Boy Scouts of America Founded
Feb 11 - 360 Youth Services Chocolate Walk
Feb 12 - Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
Feb 22 - George Washington's Birthday
Feb 15 - March 12 - US History Exhibit
Napier Settlement

Ready Vet Go

The VFW Running and Walking team will be participating in the annual Naperville St. Patrick's 5K run. It will be held March 11, 2017 at 8 a.m. The race is limited to the first 3000 entries and cost is \$30 for adults and \$25 for children. Sign up at www.stpaddysday5k.org. We will meet for a picture at the flag pole near the bath house at Centennial Beach before the race for a picture. Time to get in shape!

Also present at the race will be the Winged Foot Foundation, collecting new and used running shoes and Working Bikes Chicago collecting working or repairable bikes for shipping to Lesotho, Africa.

Member News

For those that didn't see it in the "Naperville Magazine" or on our Facebook page, U.S. Navy Commander and Post member Joe Stubitz will be the Operations Officer for the Street Cordon during the Presidential Inauguration parade. As explained in the Naperville Magazine, "the mission of the Street Cordon is to show appropriate honors to the national colors, the president, and the vice president by rendering hand salutes. The Street Cordon team plans, coordinates and establishes a visible and uniform military presence along the presidential motorcade's route to the Capital, where the president-elect will take the oath of office, and then from the Capital to the White House. Over fifteen hundred selected Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine and Coast Guard service members will line this route and render salutes." Congratulations Joe on being selected for this honor!

Will You Nominate Naperville's Citizen(s) of the Year?

Naperville American Legion Post 43 began naming a Citizen of the Year in 1986. Three years ago the program was expanded to consider naming a Citizen of the Year in up to three categories— Service to the Community, Service to Youth, and Service to Veterans.

We are again asking for community assistance to identify deserving candidates in each category and we especially want input from our own Legion and VFW members.

Nominees must be Naperville residents; and their service must have been performed in a volunteer capacity, rather than as part of compensated employment.

Anyone may nominate a candidate by sending a letter or email that includes a comprehensive description of the services the nominee performed, the time frame, duration, and significance of the service to others, and the category they are being nominated for, along with the name and contact information for the nominee and the person offering the nomination. Letters from others endorsing the nominee are encouraged.

Naperville is blessed with people who serve their fellow citizens. Typically, the judges have a very difficult task. Comprehensive information-attachments and endorsements may be included-are of great help to them in selecting the winners. They may be mailed to American Legion Post 43, Citizen of the Year, Post Office Box 4, Naperville, 60566 or emailed to vahlej@comcast.net to arrive by March 15, 2017.

Winners will be announced in the local media and honored at the Legion's Awards and Recognition Banquet on April 15, 2017.

So, fire up your keyboard; sharpen your pencil; and make sure the selection committee knows about your candidate.

Questions? Contact Jim Vahle at 630-864-7183 or vahlej@comcast.net

VFW and Legislation Affecting Veterans

One of the VFW's most important missions is to promote legislation important to veterans. This work occurs on three levels.

1. At the national level, the VFW maintains an office just a block from the Capitol Building in Washington. A small team of VFW employees (all whom are VFW members) work with congressmen on a daily basis to ensure our elected officials understand the importance of legislation affecting veterans. This work includes meetings with individual congressmen and senators and the staffs, written correspondence and formal testimony to House and Senate committees.
2. At the state level, one or two VFW members are appointed to the VFW National Legislative Committee. These individuals travel to Washington twice each year to visit each elected official from their state to explain the top legislative priorities for this year. (Our own Phil Maughan is one of the two Illinois members on this committee.)
3. You. Every VFW member is invited to become a member of the VFW Action Corp. Participants receive a weekly email summarizing what is going on currently in Washington. Whenever there is a vote scheduled in Congress that is important to veterans you will receive an email from VFW outlining the legislation and sample wording for you to send your congressman and your senators. You can modify the wording or utilize the suggested wording and then click on Submit. Based on your address, the VFW computer will direct your message to your congressman and both senators. Of course, if you do not want to speak on this bill you simply do nothing. When a bill is coming up for a vote, congressmen and senators pay attention to constituents' opinion. Your participation at this stage is powerful.

Join the Action Corps today! Go to vfw.org, click on Advocacy and then on the Action Corps. Help the VFW pass legislation needed for the health and welfare of veterans.