



Wenatchee Valley 3617 Post & Auxiliary News



Volume 14, Issue 2

Centennial Edition

March 2022

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Commander's Letter

In keeping with the spirit of St Patrick's Day throughout the month of March, I greet everyone with a hearty "*Mora duit!* (Hello)." We have officially entered the month of our 100th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in the Wenatchee Valley. We have a lot going on in the next couple of months as we creep out from under Winter's icy hold and I dare say that our first 70-degree day should be in about 3 weeks according to long range forecasts. We made it!

WENATCHEE VALLEY VFW POST 3617 CELEBRATES 100 YEARS As you recall from our last newsletter, our post will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of VFW Post 3617 on March 29, 2022. We've included an extra section in this centennial issue to look back at the military and veteran history in our valley.

100th ANNIVERSARY (FREE) DINNER AT OLIVE GARDEN You're invited to the Olive Garden on **March 29th at 6pm** to help celebrate our first century of service to veterans and citizens of the Wenatchee Valley. This is a RSVP dinner and you must register to attend. You will be able to select any item off the menu as long as it doesn't exceed \$14 due to our budget constraints for this event. I'm also asking for a **\$5 RSVP fee** when you register, but with that fee I cover the cost of fountain drinks or coffee and pay the tip to the staff. If you want beer, wine, or cocktails, that will be on a separate tab and your responsibility to pay. Quite the deal! Please drop by the post to register (Signup is on the dry erase board) and pay your RSVP fee. As of today there's around 15 seats left. **Deadline for registering is 6pm on Saturday, March 26** (Call me at [509] 630-1754 if you can't make it in to the post). Hope to see you there!

APPLE BLOSSOM & CLASSY CHASSIS PARADES We're back on to sponsor the Washington State Fallen Heroes Memorial for Apple Blossom. After a 2-year break due to COVID, **the Memorial Float and 300-plus banners will back in Wenatchee**. The Classy Chassis Parade in East Wenatchee starts at 5:30pm on Friday, May 6, and the Stemilt Apple Blossom Grand Parade starts at 11am Saturday, May 7, from Triangle Park in Wenatchee.



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Notifications to our community for banner walkers are going out this week. There will also be a signup list at the post for individuals to carry a banner. We usually get several community sport teams, churches, civic clubs, and student groups. 2019 was the first year that every banner made it on to the parade route and we're looking to do the same this year.

BUDDY POPPIES On **Saturday, May 28** we'll be holding our Spring Buddy Poppy Drive in East Wenatchee, Cashmere, and Leavenworth. First shift will be from 9am to 12 noon. Second shift will be 12 noon to 3pm. Hopefully we'll receive our white colored poppies (denoting our 100th anniversary) in time for this event. The signup list for stores will be posted right after Apple Blossom.

MEMORIAL DAY SCHEDULE The Patriotic Council has set the schedule for this year's Celebrations as follows:

9am	Evergreen Cemetery
10am	Black Pedestrian Bridge over the Columbia
11am	Wenatchee City Cemetery
12 noon	Pybus Public Market
12:30pm	Free Veterans Lunch at American Legion Post 10



We're really striving to fill all 8 Color Guard positions from the VFW. The American Legion will provide the Firing Party. If you can help out, the Color Guard signup sheets for these events are posted on the board. Thank you.

VETERAN'S FOOD PANTRY We finally opened our Veteran's Food Pantry this past week and we've already helped one veteran out. The Pantry is located in the short hallway cupboard leading into the Kitchen. Once the weather warms a bit, we'll construct a small pantry outside the building stocked with quick ready-to-go items like soups, crackers, bottled water, etc. that will be available 24 hours a day. Once we gauge the need, we'll adjust the pantry accordingly.

POST SPRING CLEANUP Steve and Dee Johnson are excited to return from their snowbird retreat in Apache Junction, Arizona during the first week of April. They're so excited in fact, they've been planning a major landscaping project all winter and just had the budget approved. I can't wait!

The Annual Post Cleanup Day will be **Friday, April 15 right after coffee**. Bring your gloves and favorite tool. I'll be providing pizza and drinks for the volunteers at around 12:30pm. Spring is here!

FINAL THOUGHTS We continue to learn every couple weeks or so about a comrade or sister that has passed away in previous months or in some cases over a year. We've lost more than 30 members in the last year. This isn't only happening to the VFW. All veteran organizations and even civic clubs are experiencing this same cosmic shift of aging membership. Most organizations like ours have been led by Korea and Vietnam vets over the last 25 years. Even the youngest Vietnam vet will turn 65 this year. If our VFW Post is to survive another 10 years, it's absolutely critical to ensure we have the younger membership to lead our Post into the future.

Our younger vets of Desert Storm, Iraq, and Afghanistan are vastly different from previous generations of GIs because of one special trait they all have in common - 100% of them volunteered for their military service.

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Quoting General David Petraeus, US Army (ret.) who in 2011 said...

“With them in mind, I should begin by noting that the post-9/11 generation of veterans has deservedly come to be known as America’s new greatest generation. Like their grandparents who endured a Depression and won a world war, the members of the post-9/11 cohort have responded with valor, purpose, skill, and courage to the defining conflicts of their day. In so doing, they have earned their place in the long line of patriot soldiers on whom our country has always depended.

We should also note that America has never had a group of men and women who, on average, have served so long in combat or have spent so many tours down range. This is, of course, the result of our country’s shift from the drafted forces that fought our past wars to the professional force that has prosecuted our post-Vietnam and, in particular, our lengthy post-9/11 engagements. That’s a policy with which I strongly agree, but one that obviously means that the burdens of military service are borne disproportionately by those who volunteer.”

Even after their discharge, I believe this newest generation of veterans still have that drive in their hearts to be a part of something bigger in their community. These professional soldiers, marines, sailors, airmen, and coast-guardsmen have a skill set and core values instilled during their service that would help immensely in guiding this organization forward. While they may not have time to sit in meetings or hang out drinking coffee, I believe they will respond if asked to help with leadership positions, veteran relief projects, Honor Guard details, and patriotic education in our schools. We just have to ask.



During the next decade, it will be up to us to reinvent ourselves and our veteran organization that will capitalize on this spirit of volunteerism in our most recent veterans. It’s time to share the torch of leadership in the VFW and I’m asking for your help.

**** We have an opening for a Quartermaster for 2022-2023 ****

- Brad Pieratt, Commander

Zoom Meetings Information

We are continuing to offer a virtual attendance option for our monthly meetings. This allows members to attend from the comfort of home while still being involved in the business matters of our Post. If you would not normally be able to come to our Post home for the meetings, please give this virtual option a try.



Join a zoom meeting one of 3 ways:

1. Use the Zoom app, tap Join
 2. Visit <https://zoom.us/join/>
 3. Dial +1 253 215 8782
- then enter the Meeting ID and Passcode when prompted.

Post Meetings: 20 Apr & 18 May @ 7pm

Meeting ID: 815 7531 2989

Passcode: 996024



Auxiliary President's Letter

The sun is shining today could Spring be just around the corner? I can't wait for longer, warmer, sunnier days. Now that COVID may be on the decline I am sure we are all looking forward to the rebirth that comes with spring. Let us hope this is the year all gets closer to normal.

The Auxiliary has been able to do a lot of things for veterans, even with ongoing restrictions. In February member **Carol Trunzo** handmade over 100 Valentines to send to Veterans. We all appreciate the hours she spent making this a special Valentines for so many. The Auxiliary also partnered with Rock Island School to provide Valentines for the residents at the Orting Soldiers Home. Thanks to the teachers and crafty students, we sent 104 Valentines to Orting.

We are continuing our Community Outreach program with the Humane Society - we are collecting toilet and paper towel rolls which they use to entertain the animals by putting food or treats in the rolls as a puzzle for the animals. If you have rolls you can drop them off at the Post.

On March 19th we had a Veteran's Breakfast at the Post. Thanks to everyone who came out!

We donated to the cold weather shelter run by The Peoples Foundation at St Joseph Church. The shelter has 15 individual tents with beds to house the homeless (many veterans) during the cold.

The Auxiliary is looking forward to seeing the art work sent in as participation in the Art Contests. The Illustrating America, Patriotic Art, and Sing the Red, White, and Blue contest entries are **due by March 31st**. [Editor's note: contest details and entry forms available at vfwpost3617.org under Auxiliary menu]

I want to recognize **Judy Ebi** for her dedication to the VFW. She is being recognized as this years outstanding member and will have a life membership to the National Children's Home purchased in her name. This is an honor given to a member each year by our Auxiliary.

In closing I want to let everyone know that **May is National Veteran's Caregiver month**. Please give a special thank you to the medical staff at the CBOC in May. They are our front line people taking care of our Veterans. The Auxiliary will be hosting a lunch for the CBOC in May as our way of saying thank you.

If you are interested in learning more about what the Auxiliary has going on or want to volunteer for any of our projects please give me a call. I always enjoy talking to Post and Auxiliary members.

~ Shirley Lance, Auxiliary President (425) 223-2172 slanc0382@netzero.com

Why I Belong to the VFW Auxiliary – Shirley Lance

Ten years ago my husband (Curt) and I moved to East Wenatchee to be closer to our family but not on the west side of the mountains. After driving through the Wenatchee area at Christmas we decided it was the right place for us. We happened to move walking distance of the Post. As we kept driving past, my husband mentioned we should check it out — That was the best thing we ever did. We were quickly welcomed by everyone at the first coffee we attended. We made good friends and instantly had a place we belonged. When my husband passed away suddenly (2019) the Auxiliary was my lifeline. The support I received from the Post and Auxiliary was amazing. I know my life would not be as happy and good as it is without my VFW family.



Veteran History in Wenatchee

On the centennial anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars serving veterans here in the Wenatchee Valley, I'd like to share a look back at how our local military and veteran organizations provided a solid foundation on which this valley grew and prospered. Information was gathered from multiple sources including The Wenatchee World newspaper, "A History of Wenatchee", by John Gellatly (1962), American Legion Post 10 Historian's Office, internet sources, and personal conversations I've had with members since 2005. -Brad Pieratt, Commander

IN THE BEGINNING

Wenatchee has had a rich history of military service dating back to the mid-19th century. During the Yakima War in 1856, US Army Colonel George Wright was in our valley to help keep the peace with the local Wenatchi tribe. In 1891, two years before the city of Wenatchee was incorporated, over 75 percent of the men in town were veterans of the Civil War. Others in the area could be counted as veterans of the Indian Wars from the 1850s to 1879.

Through all this early history in our valley, veteran groups strived to provide a common place that like-minded veterans could meet, honor their fallen, pass on their legacy by providing patriotic education to the younger generations, and help their community by involvement with civic projects and memorials.

EARLY WENATCHEE VETERAN HISTORY

The first veteran's group to organize was in 1891 when the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Daniel McCook Post 105 was established with 86 veterans of the Civil War. 18 years later in 1909 when the GAR monument was erected in Wenatchee, only 9 members remained.

One of their biggest contributions was the procurement of a civil war cannon with carriage and cannon balls from the Secretary of War at a cost of around \$300. The cannon, a Model 1844 32-pounder field howitzer, was manufactured in 1855 and weighs 1,874 pounds. It is one of five known still in existence and may have seen action in the Civil War with the Union Army, though no one has been able to provide documentation saying so. It was one of 16 surplus cannons secured for the state by Senator Wesley L. Jones (R-WA 1909-1932). In 1913 it was shipped from the Benicia Arsenal in San Francisco, CA to the Puget Sound at the freight cost of \$26.20.

On September 11, 1915, a time when there were only 66 veterans of the Civil War left living in the Wenatchee area, the cannon was dedicated at Carnegie Park (original name of Memorial Park). Today, the cannon still remains as property of the Department of Defense on permanent loan to the City of Wenatchee. The stacks of cannon balls were removed out of safety concerns and the carriage was lost to time. On September 11, 1998, the cannon was rededicated and given its concrete pedestal we see today. Of the 16 cannons procured in 1913 for towns and cities in Washington, only the Wenatchee cannon and a pair of cannons located at Fort Steilacoom remain. Several of the sister cannons out of that original procurement were melted down as scrap during World War II.



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AMERICAN LEGION POST 10

When the World War ended on November 11, 1918, the local boys began to return to the valley after their fight against the Germans in Europe. On July 2, 1919, a group of veterans met for the purpose of forming a Legion Post in Wenatchee. By August 1919, the charter arrived and the election of the first commander, Cliff Chase, was held. Wenatchee was the 10th post to receive its charter in the State of Washington, hence it was named Post 10 and had 94 men sign the charter. Today, American Legion Post 10 has 479 members.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS (Early Years)

The Veterans of Foreign Wars can trace their roots back to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their service. Many arrived home wounded or sick. There was no medical care or veterans' pension for them, and they were left to care for themselves. In their misery, some of these veterans gathered together and formed smaller local organizations that would eventually band together and become known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

In 1921 the VFW Department of Washington was chartered and set out to establish VFW Posts across the state. In 1922, Wenatchee's Lyle B. Cain Post 902 was chartered. The post was named after Sgt Lyle B. Cain of Wenatchee who was wounded while rescuing two other wounded soldiers near Fismes, France on August 10, 1918. He died of his wounds on January 31, 1919 in New York. Sgt Cain was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroism on that battlefield.

Unfortunately, beyond this early history which was provided from newspaper articles, all records and history of the early years of Post 902 were destroyed during the fire of 2002 which gutted the Veterans Memorial Hall.

VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL

In "A History of Wenatchee", authored by John Gellatly in 1962, he states that *"The Veterans Memorial Hall, located at 215 Okanogan Ave, was built by the citizens of Wenatchee to the end that the Legion members would have a home of their own, as we all felt the boys who had offered their lives to their country were entitled to it."*

An article in the Wenatchee Daily World on October 11, 1955 sets out the facts relating to the Veteran's Memorial Hall and how the city of Wenatchee came to possess the property:

In 1923, Mr. Troy Gibbons, a former garage owner, and his wife, past residents of Wenatchee, constructed the 6,640 sq ft building and deeded it along with the lots to the City of Wenatchee to be held in trust, with certain stipulations as to the maintenance, etc. Under the terms of the deed, the property was to be used for the benefit and enjoyment of ex-servicemen of the United States in the World War as a club house, community meeting



Post 902 Perpetual Charter
recovered from the fire.

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place, and other similar purposes. The city will pay for maintenance and operation of the building which amount to \$1,480 per year in 1923. The deed specifies that if at any time in the future ‘there are not sufficient of said ex-service men in Wenatchee and vicinity to warrant the continued maintenance of said property for the purposes specified, the property shall go to the city for use in such a manner as city officials determine.’

For almost 80 years it would come to house many veteran organizations like the Spanish American War Veterans; Veterans of World War; American Legion Post 10; VFW Post 902; Disabled American Veterans; and Marine Corps League. In March 2002 the building was gutted by an arson fire that destroyed most of the historical documents and photos of veteran activities since 1923.

Since the building belonged to the City of Wenatchee, they received an insurance settlement of \$880,000. In 2006, the City of Wenatchee constructed the 2,100 sq ft Veteran’s Hall behind the new Community Center on S. Chelan Ave. This facility housed VFW Post 902 and the Marine Corps League until 2018 when the city removed the word “Veteran” from the Hall as they transitioned the building into just another city facility available to rent for private functions. Veteran groups no longer have the ability to use the facility without paying for it.

In an effort to live up to the requirements stated in the original deed, current Wenatchee mayor Frank Kuntz replaced the Vet’s Hall with the lease of a 3,000 square foot facility from the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 204 at 1206 N. Wenatchee Ave. This new Veterans Hall was renovated by a team of veteran volunteers and contractors. The Hall is finally up and running and serving all veterans of the valley with a space they can call their own.

WENATCHEE VALLEY VFW POST 3617

In 1980, a group of VFW Post 902 members splintered off to form their own VFW Post in Douglas County. Named East Wenatchee VFW Post 3617, the membership met at the East Wenatchee Grange by Carmichael’s Gas Station on Sunset Hwy for the first year before finding a permanent piece of property they could purchase. By taking out a loan and pooling their money, dipping in to savings, and in some cases taking out a second mortgage on their personal home, the membership purchased the East Wenatchee Garden Club building located at the corner of N. Baker Ave. and 11th Street NE. In 1984 the (Ladies) Auxiliary was chartered and joined the comrades. Later, a 900 square foot addition was added to the north side of the building for the Comrades meeting hall and improvements were made to the entire structure. By the 1990s the mortgage and personal loans were paid and the building was free and clear to the members.



In 2007, the post membership approved a name change to Dean M. Baughman Post 3617 in honor of a previous commander that led the purchase and renovation of our current facility. Later when Post 902 of Wenatchee and Post 10445 of Cashmere dissolved because of a lack of members and officers to lead them, their remaining members were transferred to our post. In recognition of the geographic areas that makeup the sum of our membership area, our name was changed to Wenatchee Valley VFW Post 3617. Today our membership is around 230 members.

Why I Joined the VFW



Steve Johnson, Jr Vice Commander, 2020—

Branch of Service: Army

Yrs. Served 1968 - 1969

Military Occupation: Rifleman

Country Assignment: Vietnam

Yr. joined VFW: 1997

At a street fair in 1997, I was challenged by a VFW Recruiter as to why I had never joined the VFW. I told him no one ever asked. We talked about the local programs the organization sponsored. The activities sounded interesting so I thought that I would try it out for a year. 25 years later as a Life Member, I've served in most of the local Post Officer positions, including 9 years as Post Commander. When I relocated my family to another region of the State, I made it a priority to seek out the local Post. Every year has been a rewarding experience in our communities. I'm proud of the way the VFW works to help Veterans in our country!

Editor's Note:

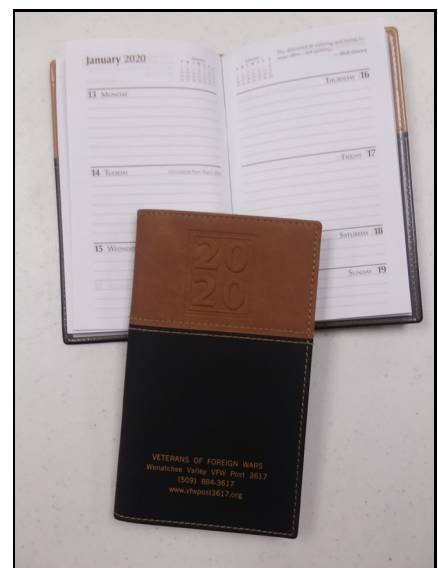
Would you like to share your story about why you joined the VFW/Auxiliary and what it has meant to you? We would love to feature you on our website and in upcoming editions of our newsletter! Please reach out to Adjutant Hill at vfw3617adj@gmail.com with a brief write-up similar to those you've seen in this edition. Including a photo is optional.

Stay Organized with FREE VFW Pocket Planners

Keep track of all your upcoming appointments, meetings, important notes, and volunteer activities with a lovely embossed Pocket Planner, courtesy of VFW Post 3617.

The planners come in a black and brown leather cover that has been embossed with the year and the name and address of our Post. Inside there is a notepad of blank paper, along with a week-by-week calendar with full-month pages throughout. Plenty of room to keep track of what's coming up as well as what you've already done, which makes reporting your community service hours at the end of the month that much easier!

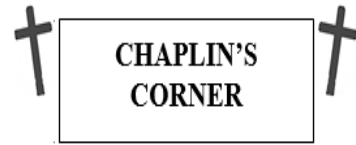
Planners are free—simply come to the Post and ask for one! We will also have 2023 editions on hand later this year.



Forward-Looking Joy

Scripture Reading — Philippians 3:12-16

“A person does not drive a car forward while looking too much in the rear-view mirror. A sprinter loses valuable time if he or she glances back too often. Similarly, a believer does not dwell on past failures but looks ahead to future joy.” - Calvin Hoogendoorn



He makes a good point. Too many times we think there were “good ‘ol days” behind us. That our present is somehow more devoid of morality and peace than were earlier days. That is untrue. Both past and present are marked by sin and blessed by grace.

When we look to the past, may we be encouraged by seeing the hardships we’ve already survived. May we see today as an opportunity for joy and tomorrow as full of hope.

I pray this message finds you in peace and good health and that God blesses you with many Wonder-filled days.

- Sarah Simonson, Chaplain

Excerpt from: <https://todaydevotional.com/devotions/forward-looking-joy-2008-09-23>

Welcome New Members!

Howard Honeysett
Jeffrey Gatewood
Richard Harper
Alvin Davis

TAPS - Remembering those we’ve recently lost

William Lasseter
Scott Parsons

From the Editor

As a reminder, any member of the Post or Auxiliary may submit stories, photos, article ideas, etc for inclusion both on the website and in our newsletter. The next issue of the newsletter will publish in May, so the **deadline for submissions is 09 May 2022** (just after Apple Blossom). Photos and stories to be included on the website can be submitted at any time via email.

If you have any questions, comments, stories, photos, or just ideas, email webmaster@vfwpost3617.org

Thanks,

- Connie Hill, Adjutant / Newsletter / Webmaster

Veterans of Foreign Wars
Wenatchee Valley Post 3617
211 - 11th St NE
East Wenatchee, WA 98802
509-884-3617
vwpost3617@nwi.net

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100
YEARS

Anniversary dinner at
Olive Garden - see
inside for details!



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