



Wenatchee Valley 3617 Post & Auxiliary News

Volume 14, Issue 5

Sept 2022

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Commander's Letter

The days are getting noticeably shorter, some pear orchards are in harvest mode, and the kids are back in school. High school football, cooler nights, and Voice of Democracy applications are going out. A sure sign that Fall is just a couple weeks away. Congrats everyone for surviving another brutal Summer. The break in hot weather that occurred on September 3 has given me hope that my front lawn will survive (barely) yet another season. Speaking of lawns, please notice as you drive by the Post on Baker St, our contractor has completed the retaining wall project and it looks awesome!

Commander Brad Pieratt

GUNNERY SERGEANT ARTHUR B. SUMMERS LAID TO REST

Gunnery Sgt. Arthur Summers was 27 when he was shot and killed while fighting Japanese soldiers in the 1943 Battle of Tarawa. For 76 years, his remains were lost on a small island among hundreds of missing Marines.

A non-profit group that specializes in finding missing service members recovered his body in 2019 and on [August 30th] Summers' remains were interred at Evergreen Memorial Park & Mausoleum in East Wenatchee.

The funeral was attended by about 100 people, including members of the American Legion Post 10, American Legion Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign War Post 3617, VFW Auxiliary, Sons of the American Revolution Mid-Columbia Chapter, Patriot Riders, East Wenatchee Police Department and Wenatchee Valley firefighters.

Battery P, 5th Battalion, 14th Marines of Yakima provided an honor guard and delivered Summers' casket to the grave.

Since the USMC Detachment from Yakima was providing the military honors, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and their Auxiliaries provided assistance by supplying the US and military flag set for the service, directing traffic, and helping with setting up the table of memories associated with GySgt Summers. Additionally, two pop-up shelters were erected in the background that provided cold bottled water for those in attendance. And once again, our local Costco came thru and donated all the water and ice for the service.



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Thank you to everyone that showed up to honor this hero and support his family during this bittersweet memorial. Welcome home Marine, Semper fidelis..... [Editor's note: You can see more photos and read more about Gunnery Sergeant Summers on our website: <https://vfwpost3617.org/news/gunnery-sergeant-arthur-summers-laid-to-rest/>]

SUMMER PICNIC

The annual Wenatchee Valley Veteran's Picnic will take place on Sunday, September 18th at Walla Walla Point Park in Shelter No. 1. Good food, games, and camaraderie. Mark your calendar and see the flyer in this issue. If you plan on attending, please bring a side dish. If you want to help the volunteer show time is 0900. We will start serving at 1130. The menu will include hamburgers, brats, fried chicken and fresh corn on the cob. We'll see you there!

WHEELCHAIR RAMP PROJECTS

The Post has been busy for the past month with constructing ADA access ramps for veterans. Utilizing funds from a Home Depot Foundation Grant, we were able to build a couple ramps during the month of August.

The first project was to provide access from the residence floor level to a lower garage area at Comrade Peart's house. The platform and 12-foot ramp was built in just one day, led by architect and custom builder Andre Pieratt (your commander's brother). We're waiting on the final piece of steel plate to bridge the gap between the ramp and garage floor before we call it complete.



The next ramp project was located up the Chumstick area out of Leavenworth. Retired United States Air Force MSgt Butch Johnson from Dayton, Ohio was moving here with his wife to be closer to family. He uses a walker and needed a ramp to help with the 27-inch difference from the floor of his house to the carport.

Because of the length of ramp required on this project, we teamed up with "Operation Ramp It Up" out of Cincinnati, OH that provides modular aluminum ADA access ramps to veterans free of charge. Bruce Krieger, from Snohomish VFW Post 921, is the Washington State representative for Operation Ramp It Up and immediately said he could help.

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Utilizing funds from our Home Depot Foundation Grant, volunteers from Chelan County Fire District 3 (Leavenworth) helped us modify the existing deck area to allow for the modular aluminum deck pieces to be installed. Comrade Elmer Johnson, Adjutant from Snohomish Post 921, made the trip over with the ramp parts and we were able to finish the installation in less than 2-hours.

By teaming up with Operation Ramp It Up, our capability to help more veterans with ADA access to their homes is improved greatly. It also stretches out our grant funds from Home Depot as we no longer have to build the entire ramp from wood. We just use the grant to pay for minor alterations to the existing property that will allow for the attachment of aluminum ramp.



BUDDY POPPY DAY ON NOVEMBER 12

This year we will have our annual Buddy Poppy Drive on Saturday, November 12th (the day after Veteran's Day). Sign-up list for the participating stores will be posted on the board September 30. Thank you in advance for supporting this important fundraiser for Veteran's Relief.

Douglas County Service Officer has a new location

Douglas County Veteran Service Officer Sarah Simonson has a new office and is **no longer located within our Post home.** Please update your address books:

Douglas County Veteran Service Office
110 2nd St NE
 East Wenatchee, WA 98802
 (509) 683-3605
 vso@co.douglas.wa.us

Feedback Requested: Meeting Day/Time Change

Our Post has had the same monthly meeting time (third Wednesday at 7pm) for many years now, but we are considering changing things up. Because many of our members prefer not to drive in the dark of winter (those 4pm sunsets can be tough), we are exploring shifting to a different time of day, or even day of the week.

If you have any thoughts on this change, we want to hear it. **We'd especially like to hear from our members that don't typically come to our monthly meeting**—is the time or day something that prevents your participation? Would a different time or day make it easier for you to attend? If so, please let us know what times would be better for you.

Please send your feedback to Commander Pieratt via email (commander@vfwpost3617.org), phone call, or in person chat; to Adjutant Hill via email (webmaster@vfwpost3617.org); or to the Post via mailed letter. All feedback will be considered, and any final change will be presented to the membership for an official vote.



Auxiliary President's Letter

Fall is in the air. Shorter days and cooler nights. Summer is always too short when we look back, we will be missing those hot days soon. Hopefully everyone had a good summer. The Auxiliary was busy and we are looking forward to the projects coming up.

I want to thank everyone who signed up for a committee assignment. We will have lots of projects that will complete the needs of all of the committees. Our focus for now is the Scholarship programs. The **Voice of Democracy**, **Patriots Pen**, **Youth Essays** and **Teacher of the Year** programs are starting. If anyone has a child or grandchild who would like to participate we would enjoy having their entry. *[Editor's note - more information about these contests can be found on the next page and on our website www.vfwpost3617.org under the Programs drop down menu]*

Of course we are looking forward to the Veteran Picnic on September 18th. The Auxiliary will have a table of activities for children. We have saved school supplies from Operation Homefront and will be giving them out at the picnic. Please invite your families and children to the picnic—it is always a fun day for everyone. The Post will be supplying the main course and the Auxiliary will provide salads. It is always fun to see all of the different salads and such good eating.

Bicky LaRoque is organizing a Blood Drive with the American Red Cross. This will probably be in the spring so we will keep everyone informed when we have a set date.

September is Gold Star Family Month. We want to recognize those families that sacrificed so much. The Auxiliary will be donating \$150.00 to the Washington Fallen Heroes Banner Project to buy a new case for the Fallen Soldiers Banners. This program is near and dear to our hearts. The more cases they have the more banners they can take to parades.

We had a fun time putting together the basket for the SOAR Auction. Our theme was "What to do on a rainy day." The auction is to support the Thomas A Biddle Foundation. The Foundation gives grants and scholarships to families that are touched by military suicide. This is often a forgotten group so the foundation is an important resource for them.

We are looking forward to another busy year helping our Veterans. If you have not attended a meeting lately we would love to see you. If there is project you would like to work on just let us know. As always give me a call with any questions or just to talk.

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

Zoom Meetings Information

Post Meetings: 21 Sept & 19 Oct @ 7pm

Meeting ID: 815 7531 2989

Passcode: 996024

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.

Youth Scholarships

The **deadline for submissions to our Post is 31 October 2022**. See our website for more details including eligibility, submission guidelines, and entry forms.



VFW's Voice of Democracy program is an audio-essay competition providing students in grades 9-12 the opportunity to express themselves in regards to democratic ideas and principles. The national first-place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship with other scholarships ranging from \$1,000—\$16,000.

The theme for 2022 is: **"Why is the Veteran Important?"**

See: <https://vfwpost3617.org/programs/voice-of-democracy/>

VFW's Patriot's Pen youth essay contest encourages young minds (grades 6-8) to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300- to 400-word essay, expressing their views based on a patriotic theme. The national first-place winner receives \$5,000.

The theme for 2022 is: **"My Pledge to Our Veterans"**



Youth



Essay

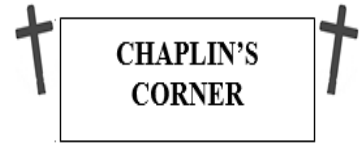
The VFW Department of Washington State offers an additional **Youth Essay** opportunity for students in Third, Fourth and Fifth Grades to submit a written essay of up to 250 words. There will be a Post winner FOR EACH GRADE, as well as a State Winner FOR EACH GRADE. Awards are at the discretion of the local Posts and their Auxiliaries, as are the District Awards.

The theme for 2022 is: **"Why are Veterans so important to us?"**

More information on both of these contests can be found at:

<https://vfwpost3617.org/programs/patriots-pen-youth-essay/>

Some people have difficulty understanding and accepting Christianity because they cannot accept and believe that God became a man. In their opinion, it is not possible nor should it happen that God became the same as His creation.



As Christians, we believe that this is the proof of God's great love for us. He wants to save all of us, the sinners, and He knows that we can only be redeemed from the punishment of sin by the blood of His sacrifice, Jesus.

According to the Apostle Paul, faith in Jesus is a life that is completely surrendered to Jesus. This is not a half-hearted surrender but a complete surrender. This is not about us, but about Jesus Christ. All of our life is used to glorify the Lord. Our works, businesses, ministries, statuses, homes, families, and everything else belong to God and God alone.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Excerpts from: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/23928-book-of-galatians/day/1>

God Bless, Chaplain Sarah Simonson

Wenatchee Valley Veteran's Picnic



Sunday, September 18TH from 1100 to 1500

Walla Walla Point Park at Picnic Shelter #1

All veterans & active duty military members and their families are invited to join VFW Post 3617 and American Legion Post 10 as they host their annual picnic at Walla Walla Point Park in Wenatchee.

The picnic will be held at Picnic Shelter #1, which is by the Swim Beach and Bathrooms.

Remember to bring your lawn chair!

Menu for the day will be hamburgers, hot dogs, and bratwurst accompanied by potluck side dishes, desserts, sodas and water.

We'll have games, good food and camaraderie. Hope to see you there!

Wenatchee Valley Veterans
Stand Down
September 17th 2022

National Guard Armory

1230 Fifth St, Wenatchee, WA 98801

8 am - 3 pm

OPEN CEREMONY @ 8 am

DOOR CLOSES @ 3 pm

Sponsored by:



NCW Vets Serving Vets

Post 10 American Legion

Post 3617 Veteran's of Foreign Wars

Services:

VA Medical, Counseling, Dental,

VA Benefits Advocacy, Employment

Opportunities, Legal Services,

Haircuts, Necessity Supplies, Lunch.

ADMISSION:

MILITARY ID, VA ID, DD214

POC: Jose Solis

jose.m.solis27@gmail.com

(509)393-2509

<https://www.facebook.com/events/560013255922256>

From the Editor

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

If you'd like to receive our newsletter via email, please visit <https://vfwpost3617.org/news/newsletter/> to sign up. This is a double opt-in process, so after entering your email address in the form, you will need to check your email and click the link to **confirm your subscription**.

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
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East Wenatchee, WA 98802
509-884-3617
vfwpost3617@nwi.net

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