



Wenatchee Valley 3617 Post & Auxiliary News

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April 2024

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Commander's Letter

Welcome to Spring! Out of the clutches of Winter, it looks like we made it through a mild winter season as the crocus and daffodils sprouted early. We're leaning forward into a busy couple of months starting with Apple Blossom, Buddy Poppies and then Memorial Day. Our Friday Community Coffees are going great at the Post. We're seeing around 25 people showing up on every Friday between 0900-1030 for some conversation, a fresh donut, and a weekly SitRep where we discuss what's going on in the Valley for veterans and their families. We have plenty of room for new faces so if it's been a while since you've stopped by, this is your invitation to get to know us again.

- Commander Brad Pieratt

APPLE BLOSSOM & CLASSY CHASSIS PARADES

The 2024 Apple Blossom Festival is almost here! As always, we're sponsoring the Washington State Fallen Heroes (WFH) for Apple Blossom. The WFH Memorial Float and 300-plus banners will be back in Wenatchee. The Classy Chassis Parade in East Wenatchee starts at **5:30pm on Friday, May 3rd**. Then on **Saturday, May 4th** the Stemilt Grand Parade in Wenatchee **starts at 11am**. As of this newsletter, the starting location for this year's main parade is still up in the air due to a scheduled construction project at Triangle Park. We'll distribute instructions and liability waivers for both parades in the next couple weeks.



We always need volunteers to carry a WFH Banner in both parades. There is a signup list at the Post for individuals to carry a banner. We're really hoping for the return of several community sports teams, churches, civic clubs, and student groups. We haven't had all 325 banners carried in the Grand Parade since 2019. Our volunteer numbers really dropped due to COVID

restrictions and a security incident in 2022. This year we're looking for help to get the word out and get back to carrying every single banner of a Fallen Hero to help honor their sacrifice.

Memorial Day Ceremonies

The events listed below will take place on **Monday, May 27th**.

This year, we're starting with a ceremony at **Evergreen Memorial Park** on 10th Street NE, East Wenatchee at **9am**. Guest speaker is East Wenatchee Mayor Jerrilea Crawford.

At **10am**, a smaller event will take place mid-span of the **Old Wenatchee Black Bridge**. This ceremony is to honor all those that served at sea. A ceremonial wreath will be tossed into the Columbia River by Mayors Crawford and Mike Poirier.

At **11am**, the same ceremony that took place at Evergreen will be repeated at the **Wenatchee Cemetery** with guest speaker Wenatchee Mayor Mike Poirier.



The day's ceremonies conclude at **Pybus Public Market at 12 noon** with the raising of the colors followed by a rifle volley and the playing of Taps. Commander Pieratt has the honor of giving a short patriotic speech to conclude the official events of the day.

Afterwards, at approximately **12:30pm**, the auxiliaries of the American Legion and VFW will host a **free luncheon** at American Legion Post 10 in Wenatchee.

Upcoming Dates to Note

April 17	Post & Aux Meetings, 7pm (dinner @ 6pm)
April 20	District 7 Meetings, 1pm (lunch @ noon; officer elections)
April 24	Lunch & a Movie, noon
May 2	Breakfast @ Country Inn, 9am
May 3	Classy Chassis Parade, 6pm
May 4	Stemilt Grand Parade, 11am
May 15	Post & Aux Meetings, 7pm (dinner @ 6pm)
May 18	Armed Forces Day
May 25	Buddy Poppies, 9am—3pm
May 27	Memorial Day (observed)

Zoom Information

We host our regular Post Business meetings via zoom so that members can stay involved even if they can't physically come to our Post. Please considering joining us remotely for our next meeting.

Meeting ID: **815 7531 2989**

Passcode: **996024**

We may also use zoom for other events in the future. If so we will provide a different meeting ID and passcode at that time.

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.



Auxiliary President's Letter

It is hard to believe but spring is finally here. The hills are turning green and trees are blooming. Soon we will be out planting our flowers and vegetables. This is the best time of year! Keeping in the theme of gardening we have chosen that as the theme for the raffle basket we will be putting together for the VFW Convention in June. If anyone wants to donate "spring" items we will be collecting at the Post until the end of May. We are also collecting items for a raffle basket themed "It's All Fun and Games" that will be donated to Operation Catching Freedom for their fundraiser in June.

The Auxiliary has been busy these last few months. We completed our food drive for Serve Wenatchee, delivering a car load of food and toiletries to them. A special thank you to everyone who donated to our now-annual event that helps our community in the "off season". This year our Community Outreach project was to help collect used durable medical equipment (DME) for KC Help. If you are not familiar with this organization, they collect, refurbish if needed, and provide items to community members for free. On March 23rd we held a drive to collect DME for KC Help, and we collected a variety of items including a wheel chair, canes, crutches, knee braces, and more.



*Donations received and delivered to
Serve Wenatchee.*

It's **Apple Blossom and Classy Chassis** parade time already. The Auxiliary will be handing out American Flags at the Classy Chassis before the parade starts. We will walk the block of Grant Road between Valley Mall Parkway and Eastmont Ave giving flags to everyone who is getting ready to watch the parade. This is our small way to show Patriotism.

Each year the Auxiliary votes for a member to receive a life membership to the National Home. This year Kim Pieratt is our honoree. Kim is a very active member who always jumps in when we need her. Thank you and Congratulations Kim!!

Looking ahead, we are already planning to hand out coffee at Nason Creek Rest Area during the week before Labor Day, **August 27th through August 30th**. Please mark your calendars as we will need lots of help covering our times. We always welcome any Veterans who want to volunteer and hang out with us too. It is a fun way to meet people and talk about what we do to help veterans.

As always if you want more information about anything the Auxiliary has planned please give me a call or email. If you are a member who has not attended for awhile we would enjoy hearing from you.

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

Pray For Them

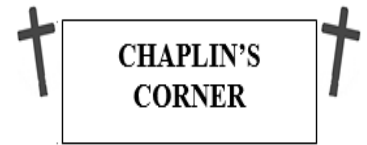
I think it is safe to say we all have friends or family members that are in need. People you care about are in difficult places. It can leave you feeling helpless and unsure of what to pray. The Bible instructs us to bear one another's burdens. Many problems are too heavy for us to bear alone. Faced with extreme hardship, Paul wrote that he counted on the prayers of his friends for victory (2 Cor. 1:8-11, Phi. 1:19, Rom. 15:30-32). As much as we would like to "fix" things we can't. We can pray for our friend and family to be strengthened and aligned with God's will and purposes. God knows far better than we do all that He is up to in the lives of our loved ones.

Here are a few ways you can pray for friends and family when you're feeling helpless otherwise. Know that prayer is powerful and effective, and God hears every one! Keep your eyes and ears open for how He responds. It may not be directly, it may not be in an easily recognizable "act of God," but know that He is there and he is working all things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28).

1. Pray that their love for others will grow. 1 Cor. 13:4-7, Phi. 1:9-11
2. Pray that they will know who they are in Christ. Col. 1:28, 2:10, Eph. 1:3-4, 7-8
3. Pray that they will develop a praying heart, worshipping, praising, and thanking God as they see His hand of blessing extended to them. Psalm 103:1-2, 1 Thes. 5:17-18

*Excerpts from: <https://thefathersbusiness.com/devotion/10-things-pray-friends-family/>
and Taken from Prayer Portions p. 321, © 1991, 1992, 1995 by Sylvia Gunter*

God Bless, Chaplain Sarahbeth Simonson



Spring Buddy Poppy Drive - May 25

Our Spring Buddy Poppy Drive will be held on **Saturday, May 25** at several East Wenatchee and Cashmere retail locations. **Volunteers are always needed** for these events—it's a great opportunity to meet people, talk about what the VFW does, and brighten someone's day. Funds raised from these drives support our Veteran's Relief Program and Youth Patriotic Scholarships. Please consider helping by signing up for a 3-hour shift (9am to noon or noon to 3pm). Signup sheets will be available at the Post after Apple Blossom, or let an Officer know and we will get you on the schedule.



Name the Jeep continues...

The Jeep committee is asking the Post and Auxiliary membership for help in giving our Jeep a name.

Below are the current nominees:

Annabelle	Jennie
Curfew Crusader	Nadine
DD-214	Nelly Bell
Enola Gay	Norma
Fair Winds	Patton's Own
Irene the Siren	Peggy Sue
Jeepers Creepers	Rosie



To vote, please submit your favorite name via email

vwfpost3617qm@nwi.net, standard mail, or in person to Dave Schwab, chairman of the Jeep Committee, **before the end of April**. The top 3 choices will be presented for a final vote.

Lunch & a Movie

On **Wednesday, April 24th at noon**, the Auxiliary will put on a luncheon to be followed by the showing of "*Oppenheimer*", a 2023 epic biographical thriller film that follows the life of Robert Oppenheimer, the American theoretical physicist who helped develop the first nuclear weapons. During World War II, Lt. Gen. Leslie Groves Jr. appoints physicist Robert Oppenheimer to work on the top-secret Manhattan Project. Oppenheimer and a team of scientists spend years developing and designing the atomic bomb. Their work comes to fruition on July 16, 1945 as they witness the world's first nuclear explosion, forever changing the course of history.

The movie won seven Academy Awards this year including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor, as well as prizes for Editing, Cinematography and Score. The movie is 3-hours long, butt fear not, we'll take an intermission part way through. Hope to see you at the movies!

There is no charge to come watch the movie. Lunch is by donation.



Remembering Larry Strozyk

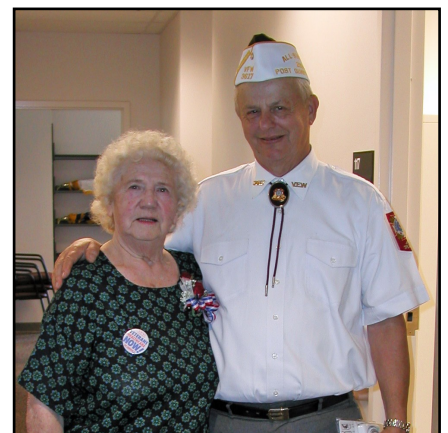
Last December, we lost a true comrade and our friend Larry Strozyk. When I arrived at this Post in 2005, Larry was the face of our organization. He had all the answers to questions I was asking about our Post operations, veterans outreach, community involvement, even down to how we got our lawn mowed.



Wearing many hats for this organization, Strozyk was the Adjutant and Quartermaster, Bingo Manager, and Service Officer. He was the voice people talked to when they called the VFW and was the person that greeted you when you came to the Post. In those days, Larry was it! From 9:15am to 4:30pm, Larry was at his volunteer duty station providing answers and helping veterans and their families. Of course, as the Bingo Manager, he didn't leave to go home until 10pm on Friday nights. Over the 15 years that he was Bingo Manager, the Post was the recipient of over \$100K in profit from the games he managed. I'm sure he averaged over 40 volunteer hours per week keeping the doors open, answering the phone, and keeping the VFW relevant in our community.

A vital program that Larry really took to heart was his service work to help veterans and their families. He volunteered for training to become a Service Officer from the WDVA and our Department of Washington VFW Service Office. Larry had a sympathetic and kind way of talking to veterans and their family about serious issues like filing a VA claim, or providing the paperwork to have a veteran buried in a National Cemetery. He truly cared for every case that walked in his door. I have no doubt that the claims he filed on behalf of veterans has resulted in millions of dollars in earned benefits and assistance being paid into North Central Washington over the years. Many of us owe him a debt of gratitude for the financial security we find ourselves in today.

Larry was also a key member of a local coalition, made up of numerous veteran organizations in the valley, to lobby the VA and our Congressional members for the construction of a VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC). The effort paid off with the clinic opening in August 2007 and later named for Cashmere VFW member Elwood "Bud" Link, who sparked the grass roots movement that ended with the state-of-the-art new facility for our valley. Strozyk was involved from the beginning to opening and dedication of the clinic. A wonderful accomplishment that will continue to serve the veterans of North Central Washington far into the future.



Larry with Hellen Link, widow of Elwood "Bud" Link, at the opening of the CBOC in Aug 2007

Rest easy my friend knowing that you left our Post, the VFW, and our valley in much better shape. Thank you for all you did.

Submitted by Brad Pieratt, Commander

Remembering Larry Strozyk

I wandered into the Wenatchee Valley VFW Post soon after I moved to East Wenatchee. I was curious about the process of getting glasses and hearing aids through the VA. Larry Strozyk welcomed me and a relationship started. As I was already a VFW Life Member, I transferred my membership into my new community and learned about the VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (VBOC). Before I realized it, Larry wrapped me in the community projects and social activities of Post 3617.

Remember, all I wanted was hearing aids and glasses.

Larry asked about my military service, what I did and where I served. I gave him my DD-214, and he asked me to write 3 things that I did in the Army. I filled in a few blanks and Larry suggested I attend the Agent Orange Registry at the Spokane VA Facility. I attended, and they suggested I file a Service-Connected Claim. The next time I met with Larry I had lots of questions.

Larry reminded me of the 3 things I had written about my experiences and suggested I start to write more about them. Sentences turned into paragraphs and paragraphs into pages. Twelve months in Vietnam and the Infantry in 1968 fueled a lot of memories, some not so good. I described what I saw, what I smelled, what I experienced and the impressions that they had had on me throughout my life.

Remember, all I wanted were hearing aids and glasses.

At Larry's Celebration of Life, friend Dave theorized that Larry probably helped a Vet every week in his role as Volunteer Service Officer. Over his 20 years of service, that rolled to about 1000 Vets. I am one of Larry's 1000 Vets, grateful for all he did for me. Thank you, Larry!

Submitted by Steve Johnson, Junior Vice Commander



Larry (left) with VFW National Commander in Chief Richard DeNoyer during a Post visit, Nov 2011



From the Editor

As a reminder, any member of the Post or Auxiliary may submit stories, photos, and articles, to be included on the website and in our newsletter. Please email webmaster@vfwpost3617.org with any questions or submissions, or with any updates to mailing addresses. You may also consider signing up for "digital only" delivery for this newsletter—visit <https://vfwpost3617.org/news/newsletter/> and complete the short form below the archive list. - Connie Hill, Adjutant / Newsletter / Webmaster

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