



# Wenatchee Valley 3617

## Post & Auxiliary News

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April 2025

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### Commander's Letter

I want to start off this issue of our VFW Newsletter by thanking all of our members that show up when the call goes out, rain or shine. We've had a busy schedule since the Holidays and we couldn't have accomplished all we did without you showing up and representing the VFW in our community. You are the backbone of this organization, and I thank each one of you for your continuing service. You remind all of us that **"We Are Still Serving!"**

As Spring sprung to life last week with temperatures in the 70s, it signals the rapid approach of the month of May with the Apple Blossom Festival, Buddy Poppies, and Memorial Day just around the corner. We offer plenty of opportunities to step out into our town and help with three very important projects to honor our Heroes and raise funds for our Post Veteran's Relief Fund. *No experience necessary!* New volunteers will be paired with an experienced member, or two, to carry a banner of a fallen Hero in the Classy Chassis or Apple Blossom Grand Parade. If walking the parade routes isn't in your skillset, you can give us a hand by volunteering for a 3-hour shift receiving donations at local stores. I hope to see you out there as we live up to our VFW motto, **"No one does more for Veterans."**

- Commander Brad Pieratt

### SPRING CLEANING AND LANDSCAPING

The annual Spring Cleaning ritual of the Post grounds and planting flowers will take place on **Friday, April 25th** following our weekly coffee break (10:30 am). We have a little pruning and flower bed maintenance to accomplish in addition to planting the flower beds and pots. Please bring your own gloves and any tools that you'd like to operate! Donuts and coffee are free to the volunteers on this day and we should be finished by 12 noon.



(Continued on page 2)

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### **CIVIL AIR PATROL ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY**

We were pleased and honored to present the Annual VFW Cadet NCO and Cadet Officer awards at a meeting of the Pangborn Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol on March 4th.



*Commander Pieratt presenting the VFW CAP NCO Award to Cadet SMSgt Olivia Benningfield.*



*Commander Pieratt presenting the VFW CAP Officer Award to Cadet 2nd Lt Connor Lyons.*

### **PANGBORN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD VISIT**

On March 12th, we made a visit out to the new Army National Guard Aviation Unit stationed at Pangborn Memorial Airport. We were greeted by Captain Taylor Payne and Chief Warrant Officer (CW4) Cody Eastman.

The unit numbers about 75 soldiers on drill weekend duty, and maintains a core of about 15 permanent officers and NCOs that work and live here in the valley. The aviation unit flies UH-72 Lakota helicopters in support of their mission to support DEA, Homeland Security, and firefighting operations.

We were also able to view a Lakota as it was undergoing a Phase Inspection to check for wear & tear of components and air worthiness. Sergeant Julia Akova, who is a mechanic for the helicopters, briefed us on what she does to maintain these critical assets for the Army and local agencies.

*(Editor's Note: please see the post on our website for more details and photos of the tour.)*

<https://vfwpost3617.org/adopted-unit/treated-to-a-tour-of-army-aviation-support-facility-2/>



*Sgt Akova speaks to our group*



## Auxiliary President's Letter

Spring is here! The plants are starting to get leaves and soon the hills will be green instead of snow capped. If you are a gardener I am sure you are anxiously waiting to get out and start planting. We can also look forward to the farmer's market at Pybus starting in the next few months.

Along with spring the Patriotic Council has started meeting to plan our Memorial Day programs. We look forward to everyone turning out for the different ceremonies. Also coming up are the Classy Chassis and Apple Blossom Parades. Once again the **Auxiliary will be handing out 200 flags** to the spectators at the Classy Chassis. We will pass them out on Grant Road from Eastmont to Valley Mall Parkway before the parade starts.

The tour at the Army National Guard Aviation Support Unit at Pangborn was a lot of fun and very informative. *[Editor's note: see previous page and our website for more details and photos.]* The unit keeps the helicopters flying and gives support here in the valley. We thank them for all they do. It is nice to have a local unit we can give support.

We are also working on the **District 7 raffle basket** for the state convention. The basket will be filled with numerous gift cards. We are asking for donations of gift cards. If you have a gift card you haven't used and would like to donate it that would be great. We have until June to get everything together.

At our April meeting we will be **electing officers for next year**. If you are interested in a position please let Shirley know. It is hard to believe we are wrapping up this year and looking forward to the new year starting in June. As always, if you have questions or just want to talk please give me a call.

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

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## From the Editor

As a reminder, there's only so much space in our newsletters. Because of this, some stories submitted by our members only get a short space in print. Fear not! I am adding them to our Website so you can see more pictures and read more details, and we can show the world what we've been up to. Please be sure to visit <https://vfwpost3617.org> to see. If you want to **submit something to be included on the website/newsletter**, please send an email to [webmaster@vfwpost3617.org](mailto:webmaster@vfwpost3617.org) with any photos and all story details—I can put it all together to be published. Please also contact me with any mailing list updates including **change of address** or switching to **digital-only delivery**.

- Connie Hill, Adjutant / Newsletter / Webmaster

## A Strong Tower of Protection



*The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe. Prov. 18:10 (NKJV)*

May the following blessings bring strength, comfort, and joy. In the coming days of Spring, may you be able to look toward the sun and soak up the peace of the Son.

Be blessed to find refuge and strength in the name of the Lord, for it is a strong tower where the righteous find safety and deliverance. Run to Him with confidence, knowing that He is your shield against all that seeks to harass, intimidate, or harm you.

*He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. Psalms 91:4 New Living Translation (NLT)*

Be blessed with courage and faith, knowing that He is your protector and defender. May His strength uphold you and His peace surround you as you walk in the security of His love. Be blessed with the assurance of His protection and the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Be blessed in the name of the One who is our ultimate refuge and strength.

*Excerpt from Sylvia Gunter's [Strength To Equal Your Days: A Year of Prayers and Blessings](#).*

- Chaplain Sarahbeth Simonson

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## Congrats to Harold & Colleen Peart!

A graphic with the text 'Celebrating 70 years of marriage' in a cursive font, framed by decorative horizontal lines with diamond shapes at the ends.



In late March, we gathered to celebrate the Peart's 70th Wedding Anniversary! Harold is a Past Post and District Commander, and Colleen is a member of our Auxiliary. Both are still an active with our activities when able, especially Friday Community Coffee.



## Vietnam War Veterans Day

On March 29th at Wenatchee Valley College, veteran organizations from around the valley joined together to mark the 50th Anniversary of the end of hostilities in Vietnam. The afternoon's program paid tribute to all who served in Vietnam and recognized those Chelan and Douglas County military members that were killed during the conflict.

The event was held in the WVC Student Rec Center with nearly 400 people attending. The Wenatchee Valley Symphony Orchestra and Wenatchee Apollo Club Men's Choir provided patriotic and uplifting music throughout the ceremony. Flags of our country and military branches were presented by Color Guard members of the VFW and American Legion. Mayors Mike Poirier, of Wenatchee, and Jerrilea Crawford, from East Wenatchee, welcomed the audience and later laid wreaths at the POW/MIA flag. During a special part of the ceremony, both mayors presented Vietnam 50th Anniversary Pins to qualifying veterans in attendance. Also, military nurses that served during the conflict were celebrated for the compassion and care they provided to our wounded and injured military members.

March 29, 1975 is recognized as the official end of hostilities in Vietnam, but the last American military member to actually leave was Marine Master Sergeant Juan Valdez on April 30, 1975 as he boarded a CH-46 helicopter from the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon.

More photos at <https://vfwpost3617.org/events/community-honors-vietnam-war-veterans/>



*Mayor Crawford shakes the hand of Vietnam Veteran and Honor Guard member Fred Wilsey while Commander Pieratt looks on.*



*Brigadier General (Ret.) Dick Black explains the symbolism of the Commemorative Vietnam War Flag while Post members Dent and Reece display it.*

## Upcoming District Meetings

The next VFW District 7 Meeting will take place at our Post on **Saturday, April 19th**. District 7 Auxiliary will be meeting also. Luncheon will be served at 12 noon with meetings scheduled to start at 1pm. At this meeting we will be electing the District 7 Officers for 2025-2026.

## Fallen Heroes Banners: Apple Blossom & Classy Chassis

The 2025 Apple Blossom Festival is just 30-days out! 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 2nd. Saturday, May 3rd, the Stemilt Grand Parade starts at 11am. We'll distribute instructions and liability waivers for both parades in the next couple weeks, as soon as we know our starting location.



We always need volunteers to carry a WFH Banner in both parades. There will be a signup list at the post for individuals to carry a banner. We're really hoping for the return several community sport teams, churches, civic clubs, and student groups. 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.



## Zoom Information

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.

## Upcoming business meetings:

16 April & 21 May at 7pm

Meeting ID: **815 7531 2989**

Passcode: **996024**

## Memorial Day Ceremonies

The events listed below will take place on **Monday, May 26th**.

This year, we're starting with a ceremony at **Wenatchee Cemetery** at **9am**. Guest speaker is Wenatchee Mayor Mike Poirier.

A smaller event to honor all those that served at sea includes tossing a ceremonial wreath into the Columbia River, location to be determined.

At **11am**, the same ceremony that took place in Wenatchee will be repeated at **Evergreen Memorial Park** on 10th Street NE, East Wenatchee with guest speaker East Wenatchee Jerrilea Crawford.

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.




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## Planning Ahead—Upcoming Dates to Note

Apr 19	District 7 Meeting @ 1pm (potluck lunch w/ Aux at noon)
Apr 20	Easter
Apr 25	Spring Cleanup and Flower Planting
May 1, June 5	VFW Breakfast, Country Inn @ 9am
May 2	Classy Chassis Parade
May 3	Apple Blossom Grand Parade
May 24	Buddy Poppies— <b>Volunteers needed!</b>
May 26	Memorial Day
June 14	Flag Day
Jun 17-21	VFW Dept of Washington Convention, Yakima
<b>Sept 14</b>	<b>Annual Veterans Picnic, Walla Walla Point Park</b>



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**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.**



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