



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Post 3272

Avon, Connecticut

“On Target”

The Post’s Monthly Newsletter

**May 2011
LETTER #113**

The Post met on Wednesday, 27 April 2011 at the Italian Club with 43 members in attendance. The *Ladies Auxiliary* provided great sandwiches and salads with plenty of second helpings for our hungry troops and their guests.

Our **next meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, 25 May 2011** at the Italian Club.
Cocktails begin at 1800 hours with dinner at 1830 hours.
Hope you will join the **Post Family** for another pleasant evening of **great food, special comradeship and timely information**

Vice Commander Grant Hagedorn, filling in for Commander Roy Walton who was away, introduced the speakers for the evening. *Ginny Vocelli*, Director of the Avon Library, and *John Carmon* of Carmon Funeral Home who updated us regarding the Avon Library expansion progress and its fundraising efforts. Ginny noted that one of the changes underway is the moving of the Avon Historical Room to the first floor where our Post Military Service Histories will be stored and more readily available to the public. John focused on the fundraising and, although he stressed he was not here to solicit funds, noted that bricks in various sizes were available for purchase and donations were greatly appreciated.

Vice Commander Hagedorn opened the meeting at 1945 hours. Mike Gould led the members in the Salute to the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance. *Chaplain Bob Galiette* offered the VFW Prayer and Grant *Hagedorn* provided the POW/MIA Prayer. The Vice Commander also asked for a moment of silence in memory of *Tony Rizzo*, a member of our Post, who passed away on 6 April. The minutes of the last meeting and the financial report were available on the tables for the members to review. Motions were made to accept the minutes and financial report as provided, seconded and approved by the members present.

Comrades in Distress this month include *Mike Battaglino, Mike Busha, Bob Campbell, Dr. Tim Curran, Bill Gresh, Josephine Hinman, Jim Katzung, Ed Stepien and Clyde Whirty*. Please remember to keep them in your thoughts and prayers - and visit them if you are able. Comrades new to the list this month are underlined. We ask that you also let our *Chaplain Bob Galiette* (860-673-9324) know if you learn of any other Post members who are ill or hospitalized.

Under Committee Reports, *Bill Samol* noted that he generally ready for the Memorial Day Parade but still needs a Chaplain as of this date. He has concerns regarding the picnic as it appears unlikely that the Italian Club area will be ready to host the picnic in view of their renovation. Bill also made a request for more assistance with the set-up and cooking.

Bill Newman, Poppy Chairman, distributed poppies and cans for a number of volunteers after the meeting and will provide these items to the remaining volunteers over the next few weeks. He noted that each volunteer will be assigned their own reusable can and initially 100 poppies. The *Poppy Drive begins at Wal-Mart on Thursday, May 19th and ends on Sunday, May 29th* (11 days). We additionally have 2 days at Stop N Shop (5/27th & 28th) and 3 days at Shop-Rite (5/27th, 28th & 29th). Accordingly, we have *128 timeslots to fill* (8 slots per day X 16 total days) and need 42 volunteers to take 3 timeslots each and 2 of these to take 4 timeslots in order to cover all these 2-hour slots.

Bill Newman noted that the slate of Officers and Committee Chairmanships for the next year needed to be placed in nomination at this meeting. He read the list of nominees for the various offices and asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Since none were submitted, *George England* made a motion that this slate of Officers and Chairmanships be accepted as read. The motion to accept the slate as read was seconded and approved by the members present. See the 2011 Post Officers and Chairmanships on the following page

Concerning Unfinished Business, the Vice Commander noted that Wal-Mart has added more space to its Veterans Wall. He asked more members to bring their military photo to Aldo at Wal-Mart and he will display it on the Veterans Wall. Aldo will make 2 copies (5x7) of your photo and will place one on the Wal-Mart Wall and give the other to you.

Under the Good of the Order, *Vice Commander Hagedorn* awarded a Five Year Continuous Membership Pin to *Bernie Driscoll*. The Commander has several more Continuous Membership Pins to award which were listed in our April Newsletter. If any member believes that they are entitled to one of these lapel pins, and haven't received it, based upon your continuous membership in the VFW, please contact Quartermaster Don Perreault.

Dick Bensch
U. S. Army - WWII

It is with much sadness that we inform you of the passing of **Richard O. Bensch** (90) on 8 May 2011 at New Milford Hospital. Dick served in the U.S. Army during WWII in the European Theater. He enlisted on 5 September 1942 in New York City at 21 years old with the 304th Ordnance Base Regiment with the rank of Sergeant and Auto Parts Clerk. After attending several Ordnance courses, he rose through the ranks to Master Sergeant and Chief Clerk. He was sent overseas to England where he supervised & trained soldiers in the procedures and methods employed in the packing, marking and shipping of supplies required in the European Theater. Dick was then sent to France as Chief Clerk, relieved of duty as a Master Sergeant on 20Jul45, then commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Ordnance Corps on 21Jul45 and served in France as Administrative Supply Officer. His military decorations include the Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, European Campaign Medal w/ bronze star, WWII Victory Medal and Marksman Badge. Funeral arrangements were handled by Lillis Funeral Home in New Milford. A Memorial Service was held at St. Ann's Church in Avon at 10am on 16May followed by internment with full military honors at the Connecticut State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown, CT. May Dick and all our departed Post Veterans rest in the Eternal Father's Peace!

VFW Post 3272

2011 Officers and Chairmen

POST OFFICERS

POST COMMANDER – ROY WALTON

SENIOR VICE CMDR – GRANT W. HAGEDORN
JUNIOR VICE CMDR – PHILIP K. SCHENCK
QUARTERMASTER – DONALD J. PERREAU
ADJUTANT – ALDO M. VERNESONI
ADVOCATE – ROBERT C. HUNT, JR.
CHAPLAIN – ANGELO R. GALIETTE
SURGEON – SCOTT W. THOMAS
TRUSTEE 3 YRS – WILLIAM J. NEWMAN
TRUSTEE 2 YRS – WILLIAM L. SAMOL
TRUSTEE 1 YR – RICHARD C. PETERSEN, SR.
OFFICER OF THE DAY – MICHAEL A. GOULD
HISTORIAN – ROBERT C. HUNT, JR.

POST ACTIVIES CHAIRMEN

AMERICANISM – TIMOTHY L. CURRAN
ACTION CORPS & PAC – WILLIAM T. COFFEY
BUDDY POPPY – WILLIAM J. NEWMAN
HOMELESS VETERANS – BRIAN R. O'DONNELL
COMMUNITY SERVICE – RICHARD R. ECKE
LEGISLATIVE – ROY WALTON
MEMBERSHIP – WILLIAM J. NEWMAN
NATIONAL HOME – BOB GALIETTE
OPERATION UPLINK – CHRIS LAELLE
POW/MIA – FRED B. HUDON
PUBLIC RELATIONS – REBECCA A. WAREING
SERVICE OFFICER – WILLIAM T. COFFEY
VOD/YOUTH ESSAY – JAMES C. HUTTON
YOUTH ACTIVITIES – EDWARD S. SIMONDS
POST NEWSLETTER – WILLIAM J. NEWMAN
MEMORIAL DAY PARADE – WILLIAM L. SAMOL
POST WEBMASTER – LEE M. WILSON

Post Activities & Developments

We are very pleased to introduce the following 9 new members to have recently joined our Post:

Dawn Surprenant – is currently on active duty with the Connecticut Air National Guard. She enlisted in 1998 at 17 in the Guard and in 2001 was activated to Title 10 in support of Operation Noble Eagle and served with the Security Forces Squadron until 2003. She was again activated in 2008 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and deployed to the desert with the Services Squadron. In 2009, after about 11 years enlisted, she attended the Academy of Military Science and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. Dawn currently works in the Public Affairs Office as the Public Affairs Officer. Her military decorations include the Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, A.F. Good Conduct Medal, Nat Defense Service Medal, War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, War of Terrorism Service Medal, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border, Longevity Service Award Ribbon and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. Dawn lives in Broad Brook, CT and was introduced to the Post by *Roy Walton*.

Jim Arsenault - is a Navy Veteran who served in the Vietnam War. He enlisted in the U. S. Navy in December 1966. After basic training, his first ship was the USS Estes AGC-12 and, while on the line they operated with the HMM-265 out of Da Nang up and down the coast of Vietnam in the South China Sea. While he was on that ship, Jim was transferred to the USS Iwo Jima LPH-2. Due to this change, he thought he would not have enough time in the Navy to do another cruise (as he was getting short) but that didn't happen. When the USS Iwo Jima got back to San Diego, Jim found out that the ship was selected to be the prime recovery ship for Apollo 13 – so it was back to sea again. But this cruise proved to be an extraordinary experience and he felt very fortunate to be able to play a part in that historic recovery. He was discharged from the Navy in September 1970 having spent 3 years and 8 months on active duty with 2 years of it at sea. His military decorations include the Navy Good Conduct Medal, Nat Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal. He resides in Farmington and met *Bill Newman* at Wal-Mart.

Vic Viering - Served as an Army Captain in Vietnam from May68 to May69. Vic attended Officers Basic in El Paso, TX and was stationed in Germany in a Hawk Missile Battalion. He was transferred to the 24th Inv Division and served as the CO of the Transportation Company. After his return to the states in 1968, he was sent to Ft Lee, VA for training before deployment to Vietnam. In Vietnam, he served as the S4 of the 64th Quartermaster Battalion and was then assigned as the CO of the 512 Petroleum Operating Co with 375 men, 40 miles of pipeline and a million gal tank farm. The company handled 10 million gallons of fuel a month for III & IV Corps at Long Bin & Ton Son Nut Airbase in Saigon. Vic served on active duty from 1Nov67 to 12Mar71. His decorations include the Bronze Star, Nat Defense Serv Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation and Basic Missile Badge. Vic resides in Avon and was introduced to our Post by *Bob Skeels* who met him at Wal-Mart.

Art Curry – is an Air Force Veteran who served on active duty from 30Jun66 to 17Aug73 and was honorably discharged as a Captain. Art served in Southeast Asia (1969-70) supporting air and ground combat operations over Vietnam. After his return to the states, he was assigned as Chief of Supply at Loring AFB, ME where he was responsible for all base supply/equipment support and aircraft ground refueling for base-assigned B52/KC135 Aircraft. His career specialty was Logistics & Supply. His military decorations include Air Force Commendation Medal, Nat Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal w/2 bronze service stars, Air Force Overseas Ribbon, A.F. Longevity Award Ribbon & Vietnam Campaign Medal. Art lives in Farmington and was introduced also to the Post by *Bob Skeels*.

Alon Lloyd served on active duty in the U. S. Army for 24 yrs as well as 2+ years in the Army reserves. He retired at yearend 1975 as a Regular Army Colonel (O-6). He graduated from the Univ of Tenn and an ROTC Commission (2nd Lt) in 1949. Employed as chemist at Oak Ridge Nat lab, he volunteered for active duty in Korea in Nov1951 but was assigned to Ft. McClellan as CO of the 365th Chemical Maint Co. Assigned to the Nevada Test Site in 1955, he served as a Radiation Exposure Control Officer & then was sent to France in 1956 where he developed & implemented the Army's 1st radiological defense program. After his returned to U. S., he attended the Chemical Officer's Adv Course in 1959 and received his M.S. in Nuclear Chemistry in 1961. Assigned as Chief, Chemistry Div & then Deputy Cmdr, US Army Nuclear Defense Lab at Edgewood Arsenal, MD, he received orders for Vietnam in 1963 but JFK's assassination diverted him to the Presidio as Nuclear Effects Engineer, HQ 6th Army where he developed teams for nuclear weapons accidents & radiological defense. In 1965, he was assigned to Korea & served as Special Weapons & Chemical Officer for the 7th ID. In 1969 he was assigned to the Pentagon's General Staff and served in key positions with the Ballistic Missile Defense Agency. His military decorations include the Legion of Merit w/olc, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal w/olc, Nat Defense Service Medal w/olc, Korean Defense Medal and ROK Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon. Alon (Al) resides in Canton with his daughter & her family.

Walt Mucha, Jr. – is an Army Gulf War Veteran who served as an infantryman (E-4) from August 87 to September 91 including 3 yrs & 9 mos of overseas service. Prior to serving in Desert Storm with S-3 Ops, Headquarters & Hq Co, 2 Brigade, 1st Armored Div, he had a tour of duty in Erlangen, Germany also with the same unit. His military decorations include the Good Conduct Medal, Nat Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Medal w/ 2 bronze stars, Overseas Service Ribbon, Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB), Sharpshooter Rifle Badge (M-16) and Marksman Badge (Grenade). Walt lives with his family in Harwinton and was introduced by *George Holewik*

Rich Miller – is a Marine Corps Veteran of the Korean War who enlisted at 17 ½ in August 1949 in Hartford and served on active duty until November 1952. He was sent for basic training to Parris Island. After basic, he was shipped out on a Liberty Ship to Japan & boarded an invasion-bound LST to Korea. Rich participated in the Inchon Landing on 15Sep1950, helped liberate Seoul in 21 days and reached the Yalu River in North Korea before the Chinese pushed them back. He saw the Chinese swarming towards them and said they looked like a colony of ants covering the landscape. Rich served as a tank crewman with the 1st Tank Company, 1st Marine Division under Chesty Puller and was one of the Chosin Reservoir Survivors (the Frozen Chosin). The 1st Marine Division fought their way down to Hungnam where the Navy evacuated them to Pusan. He said the Navy Corsairs saved them. His decorations include the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, Marine Good Conduct Medal, Nat Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal with six bronze stars, ROK Presidential Unit Citation, UN Service Medal and the ROK War Service Medal. Rich resides in Avon and was introduced to the Post by *Marty Brighenti*.

Ralph Hammond-Green – is a Navy Veteran who served in Korea from Mar 1970 to Apr 1971. He was drafted on 22Sep69 and converted to an enlistment on 26Sep69. After completing basic training at Ft. Campbell, KY he went to AIT at Ft. Gordon, GA and was trained there as a Communications Center Specialist. He was sent overseas to Korea in Mar70 and was stationed in Seoul with Company C, 304th Signal Bn as a lead company clerk for a battalion with troops supporting communications throughout Korea. He returned home in mid-March 1971 and was then sent to Company B, 16th Signal Bn in Butzbach, Germany in Apr71 as the NCOIC (E-5) for a communications center (teletype). He returned to the states in Apr72 and was discharged from active duty on 27Apr72. His decorations include Navy Good Conduct Medal, Nat Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and the Expert Rifle (M-14) Badge. Ralph lives in Hendersonville, NC and came to us through *Phil Schenck*.

Rich Zommer – served in Vietnam with the Marine Corps in Chu Lai from January 1968 to February 1969. He enlisted 8Mar66, took basic at Parris Island and was sent to NAS Memphis for Marine aircraft basics. Sent next to Cherry Pt, NC he was trained on pneumatics & hydraulics for the A-6, then on to Whidley Is, WA and Yuma AFB. After his return to Cherry Pt, he was sent to Vietnam – arriving 2 weeks before TET68. Assigned to VMA (AW) 533rd Squadron as an Aircraft Mechanic, he worked on the A-6. After his return to the states, he was first stationed at Buford, SC & then sent to Hawaii. He was discharged on 13Mar70. His decorations include the Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Unit Commendation, Marine Good Conduct, Nat Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service with bronze star, Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, Vietnam Civil Actions Unit Citation, Vietnam Campaign and Rifle Marksman Badge. Rich was a Charter Member of the Canton Post, lives in Canton and was introduced to us by *Greg Sims*.

We are very pleased to report that our Post, for the fourth straight year, has qualified for All-State Honors based upon its growing membership and expanding community service. We thank all our members who made this award possible – especially those who introduced new members to us during the past year. The Post now has over 180 members – its highest membership in its long history – 66 years!

At our weekly coffee at Friendly's last week (May 12th), we had 33 members in attendance. Among this group of veterans was Evan O'Donnell, one of our youngest members and our Past Commander Brian O'Donnell's son, who will be leaving on or about 20 May for deployment to Afghanistan as a proud Marine with the 1st Battalion, 9th Regiment (*known in Vietnam as the "Walking Dead"*). He is with the weapons company and will serve as a turret-gunner. We'll be sending him care packages as soon as he advises us of his new address. Keep him in your thoughts & prayers!

Memorial Day Visits to the Avon Cemeteries

We ask as many members as possible to attend our **Memorial Day Service** at the Avon Cemeteries. This is really one of our profound duties on Memorial Day – a day set aside to honor our fallen and departed comrades. **We meet by O'Neil Chevrolet at 0730 hours** and drive together to visit six Avon Cemeteries where we offer prayers, place a wreath, salute our departed comrades and play taps. Please join us and participate in this traditional ceremony which honors and remembers our departed comrades – many of whom were members of our Post. Remember wherever the body of a comrade lies is hallowed ground!

After these memorial services at the cemeteries, **we are invited for coffee and donuts at Lee & Terri Wilson's house** on 64 Mountain View Ave. You can park your car at Sperry Park (turn right at the 1st light on Simsbury Rd & go right up hill) and walk over to their house. All our veterans in the parade are invited.

We also ask as many veterans as possible to **march or ride with us during our Memorial Day Parade on Monday, 30 May**. We assemble at the Towpath Annex on Simsbury Road at 1030 hours and step off at 1100 hours. Please wear your **Blue & Greys with Overseas Cap**, a Military Uniform or something that clearly identifies you as a Veteran. Remember you are the **focal point** of this Parade – **so please participate!!!**

BILL NEWMAN