



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Post 3272

Avon, Connecticut

“On Target”

The Post’s Monthly Newsletter

**May 2009
LETTER #93**

The Post met on Wednesday, **22 April 2009** at the Italian Club with 40 members in attendance. The Ladies Auxiliary prepared an excellent, home-cooked meal (ham, potatoes, salad and a variety of desserts) with plenty of second helpings for a bunch of hungry troops and guests. It was another fine evening of renewing friendships and engaging in pleasant conversations.

Our *next meeting* will be held on **Wednesday, 27 May** at the Italian Club. Cocktails begin at 1800 hours with dinner at 1830 hours. We will install the new Officers and Chairmen at this meeting. Join our **Post Family** once again for an evening of **good food, stimulating conversation and great friendship!!**

Our speakers for the evening were *Donna Miller*, Assistant Director and *Tad Kuziak*, Board Member of the Avon Public Library who discussed the library’s expansion plans and the increasing usage that the library is experiencing. They noted that the increase in Avon’s population to almost 18,000 is causing widespread demand in all areas of the library from parking spaces to computer usage. They displayed maps showing the new addition which includes the Avon Historical Society on the 1st floor.

Commander Bill Newman opened the meeting at 1945 hours. The Officer of the Day, *Mike Gould*, led the members in the Salute to the Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance. *Chaplain Tom Chrosniak* offered the VFW Prayer and *Fred Hudon* provided the POW/MIA Prayer. The minutes of the last meeting were distributed by *Adjutant Aldo Vernesoni* and financial reports were also made available by *Quartermaster Don Perreault*. The Commander asked for a motion to purchase flags (U.S. & POW/MIA) for the Italian Club for a cost of \$84.85. The motion was made, seconded and approved by the members present.

The Commander introduced several Past Post Commanders including *Marty Brighenti*, *Ken Case*, *Steve Cavallari*, *George England*, *Bill Gresh*, *Nick Lavnikovich*, *Brian O’Donnell*, *Don Perreault* and *Bill Samol*. The Past Commanders were warmly welcomed by the members present.

The Commander also introduced a new transfer to our Post from the Winsted Post – **Jerry Bahre** - a Vietnam Veteran who lives in Canton and also new member **Jeff Mando**, a Vietnam Veteran of the U. S. Navy, who lives in Avon. Both were warmly welcomed by the members present.

Comrades in Distress this month include *Bob August, Stan Barnett, Dwight Douglas, Josephine Hinman, Joe Hatala, Bill Huebner, Jim Katzung, Sanford Lindy and Harold Schaal*. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers – and visit them if you are able. Please inform our *Chaplain Tom Chrosniak (675-9196)* if you know of any other members who are ill or hospitalized.

The *Service Officer Bill Coffey* noted that the *Connecticut War Service Medal* is still available for veterans in Connecticut who served during wartime. He has applications and will process all requests for our Post members who have not yet applied for this medal

Under Committee Reports, *John Caruso, the Poppy Chairman*, reported regarding the 2009 Poppy Drive which kicks off on 14 May at Wal-Mart and noted that he will have signs developed and distributed around Avon. He advised the members that once again “*Big Y*” has refused to let us distribute poppies at their location and that the *Super Stop N Shop* in Unionville is covered by the Farmington Post. He discussed the possibility of buying four (4) card tables for the Poppy Drive and it was noted that the Italian Club has some card tables that we might be able to use. *Marty Brighenti* agreed to check with the President of the Italian Club regarding our borrowing some of these tables for use during our upcoming Poppy Drive. Bill Newman advised the members that we have a limited number of larger cans for poppies courtesy of *Charlie Kilgore* that we will use this year. He noted that he is in the process of affixing decals to these new cans. Bill advised that he will be distributing poppies and cans to the volunteers after the meeting.

Bill Samol announced that preparations for the *Memorial Day Parade* are on schedule. He will be working with the Manager of Stop N Shop regarding food for the picnic. He could use some help setting up for the picnic at 0800 hrs on Memorial Day at the Italian Club. He also noted that a Blackhawk flyby is been scheduled. Bill stated he would have a number of antique cars for veterans to ride and is hoping to also have Ernie Rettig’s son $\frac{3}{4}$ ton truck available for the parade.

Tom Chrosniak, acting as Chairman of the Post Nominating Committee, read the names of those members who are being nominated as Post Officers and Chairmen for the 2009 – 2010 year. He asked if there were any further nominations from the floor and, after none were presented, recommended that the nominations be closed and the slate be placed in nomination. (See page 6 of this newsletter for the 2009 nominated slate of officers and chairmen).

Bill Newman, pinch-hitting for *Tim Curran* who is in Florida, noted that we need volunteers for our upcoming *Golf Fundraiser on Saturday, 27 June* at Blue Fox Run. Tim reported at the last meeting on the three (3) assigned dates we have for the Golf Fundraiser this summer.

Under Unfinished Business, *Brian O’Donnell*, the Post Homeless Veterans Chairman, proposed that we donate \$500.00 to the Rocky Hill Veterans Home from our Relief Fund. The motion was seconded and approved by the members present.

Under the Good of the Order, *Bill Newman* advised that we have received two requests for the Post Color Guard. We have been asked to participate in the National Day of Prayer at the Gazebo on the Town Green on 7 May at noon and also to participate to a Memorial for the Fallen at the Avon Senior Center at 1300 hours on 18 May. All members of the Post are invited to attend these two events.

Post Developments & Activities

We are pleased to announce the following new members who have recently joined our Post. Please welcome them to the Post Family at your earliest opportunity

Ray Poirier served in the U. S. Army on active duty from 5Sep50 to 21May52 including 8 months in **Korea** with Headquarters Detachment, 2nd Log Command. His decorations include the Nat Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal w/bronze star and UN Service Medal. Ray lives in Canton.

Lee Wilson, a Combat Engineer and Heavy Construction Operator with the U. S. Army, who served 7 years on active duty including 3 years & 11 months overseas. He is a veteran of **Desert Storm**. His decorations include the Army Commendation medal w/ oak leaf cluster, Army Achievement Medal w/ 4 oak leaf clusters, Good Conduct (2nd Award), Nat Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal w/ 2 bronze stars, NCO Professional Dev Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Superior Unit Award and Kuwait Liberation Medal. Lee lives in Avon.

Ed Simonds served as a 1st Lieutenant and Birddog Pilot with the 221st Aviation Company in **Vietnam** from July '65 to July '66. His decorations include the Bronze Star, Air Medal w/23 OLC & V device, Nat Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Cross of Gallantry and Army Aviator Badge. He was on active duty with the U. S. Army from August 1963 to June 1967. Ed received his ROTC commission from UCON and lives in Unionville.

On 22 April our Ladies Auxiliary installed the following officers for the 2009 – 2010 year with Jeanette Simonelli acting as the Installation Officer. *Elinor Salvetti* was installed as Auxiliary President, *Kathleen Walton* as Vice-President, *Elinor Burns* as Treasurer and *Caroline LaMonica* as Secretary.

On 27 April 2009 Fred Hudon attended the *Korean War Buddies Reunion* held in Lancaster, PA for their 9th Get-Together to celebrate their service to their country and to renew old friendships. There were 18 men and 16 wives present at the Fulton Steamboat Inn. All present enjoyed the planned activities of meetings, slideshows, dinners, socials and side trips to areas close by. The Group was formed 10 years ago by men from several military police companies which served in Korea. These men were chosen from all frontline Divisions, had all seen combat and had some military police and honor guard training. Their assignment was to guard the 8th Army Headquarters and provide protection and assistance to our ambassadors and visiting dignitaries. They were also the primary protective support for the peace talks at Panmunjom and the repatriation of American and South Korean troops. This great and humble group who have become family will gather for their 10th reunion in Charleston, SC next year. The group appreciated the comments of Commander Bill Newman passed on by Fred regarding their service and their commitment to being strong voice for our freedoms and our veterans. A small gift was sent to Bill in appreciation of his comments.

On 7 May, the Post Color Guard, consisting of *Mike Gould, Fred Hudon, Bill Newman, Brian O'Donnell and Art Ostheimer*, participated in the *National Day of Prayer Observance* at the Avon Town Green Gazebo. Several area clergy and town officials offered prayers for our nation, its leaders and our military. This year's theme was "*Prayer - America's Hope*". *Brigadier General Stephen Rhoades, US Army (Retired)* provided a moving prayer for our Armed Forces.

Our Post Color Guard also participated in a Memorial Ceremony at the Avon Seniors Center on 18 May to honor veterans. In addition of our Color Guard of *Bill Coffey, Mike Gould, Brian O'Donnell and Don Perreault*, we had also several members of the Post attend this event – including *Jim Burns, Bob Hannah, Nick Lavnikovich and Aldo Vernesoni*. Bill Newman read the names of 13 Members of our Post who have passed away since last year's Memorial Day.

Alice Zacchera has informed us that her family would like to donate Ray Zacchera's motorized scooter to our Post to use as we see fit. *John Higgins* was very grateful for the use of this scooter for his niece who has since passed away. If anyone in our Post knows of someone disabled who could use this scooter, please inform us.

On Saturday 23 May, *Bill Coffey* will be accompanying as a Guardian some 122 WWII Veterans who will be flying from Bradley Airport to visit the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC as part of the American Warrior Project. These veterans in their 80's and 90's have never seen this Memorial which was built in their honor some 60 years after the War. They will be provided with a free 1st class round-trip ticket. As part of this trip, there will be a homecoming celebration at Bradley to cap off this event. Please consider taking part in this celebration at 8pm this Saturday evening at the US Air Terminal and make it part of your Memorial Day Weekend as we pay tribute to veterans of the greatest generation!

John Caruso, Chairman of the Poppy Drive, reports that the 2009 Poppy Drive is going very well and we have to date opened 19 full cans and made our 1st deposit of \$2,200. We have another 35 full cans waiting to be opened and counted and have distributed over 5000 poppies. You may have seen the new signs displayed around Avon announcing the Poppy Drive and observed many of our volunteers at Wal-Mart from 0900 to 1700 over the last 7 days – they are out there passing out poppies, interfacing with the public, collecting donations for our Relief Fund and even recruiting prospective new members. We are in line to challenge last year's record Poppy Drive but much will depend on this last big push this weekend. We do still have a few open timeslots – especially at Shaw's for Friday & Saturday. Please contact us if you are available – as we will be at four (4) locations this last weekend – *Wal-Mart, Stop N Shop, Shaw's and St. Ann's Church!*

Bill Newman requests 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 a traditional ceremony that honors and remembers our departed comrades this Memorial Day Remember wherever the body of a comrade lies that is hallowed ground!

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

We have been invited by the Principal, Dr. Crisanne Colgan, to attend a program honoring veterans at Roaring Brook Elementary on Wednesday, 27 May beginning a 2pm. This is an event that should not to be missed as the children are so enthusiastic and the teachers are so supportive of veterans. The Roaring Brook schoolchildren come to our program at the Memorial on Veterans Day and this is our time to come to them. Please attend this inspiring event!

**NEWS RELEASE
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST 3272, AVON CT**

“AVON MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCES May 25, 2009”

The Avon V F W and their Color Guard, as has been their solemn duty for decades, **will begin their Memorial Day at 8:00 am by visiting the Avon cemeteries.** Placing wreaths, performing a brief service and playing taps in recognition and honor of the departed veterans from Avon who are interred there.

Avon’s Annual Memorial Parade will step off on **Monday, May 25th at 11:00 am** according to **Bill Samol**, Parade Marshall and Past Commander of Avon’s VFW Post 3272. The Governor’s Horse Guard will lead the parade, followed by the Avon Police and their Color Guard, members of the Avon Veterans of Foreign Wars and their Color Guard, along with all other veterans who would like to march .The Avon Fire Department and their Color Guard, and the Avon High School Marching Band. Also included in this honored group, are the Boy and Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Brownies. There will be a Fly-Over by the Connecticut Army National Guard at approximately 11:15 am. The parade will begin at **Towpath Annex on Simsbury Road**, stop at the Avon Congregational Church Cemetery for a short memorial service to honor all fallen veterans, proceed down Old Farms Road to Columbus Circle, continue around the circle, stop at the Prince Thomas of Savoy Club to honor their departed veterans, then march back to Route 44 and conclude at the Veteran’s memorial at Avon Park South.

The public is cordially invited to participate in this traditional memorial event and observe with us the **true meaning of Memorial Day** – a day in which we honor those who served their country in times of war and especially those who gave their lives to ensure the freedom and independence we now enjoy. By honoring those who lost their lives defending us, we preserve their memory, service and sacrifice.

At 12 noon, there will be a brief memorial service at the Avon Veteran’s Memorial with **Bill Samol** as Master of Ceremonies and **Bill Newman**, Commander of Avon VFW Post 3272. The invocation will be offered by **Farther Paul McNellis, S.J.**, a Viet Nam Veteran and Professor at Boston College, followed by the laying of the Memorial wreath and forget-me-nots, a Firing Squad salute by the Governor’s Horse Guard, and TAPS played by members of the Avon High School Band. The National Anthem will be sung by **Heather St. Peter** with **Gary Jensen** playing the bagpipes. This year’s keynote speaker is **Chris D. LaSalle**, U.S. Army Warrant Officer (Retired) – a Veteran of Desert Storm, Somalia and Iraqi Freedom.

The War Memorial on the Town Green lists **719 Veterans** from the Avon community who served their country from the Mexican War to the Gulf War and separately honors 41 Veterans who gave their lives in four wars. “Show your strong support for America, its Armed Forces and its Veterans – especially during this time of War. This is a year for families and friends to demonstrate their patriotic spirit.”

PLEASE NOTE: In the event of rain, the ceremonies will be conducted at Avon’s Senior Citizen Center at 11:00 am and the public is invited.

BILL NEWMAN, Commander, Avon VFW Post 3272

VFW Post 3272

2009 Officers and Chairmen Recommendations

POST OFFICERS

COMMANDER:	William J. Newman
SR. VICE CMDR:	Roy Walton
JR. VICE CMDR:	Arpad J. Ostheimer
QUARTERMASTER:	Donald J. Perreault
ADJUTANT:	Aldo M. Vernesoni
POST ADVOCATE:	Robert C. Hunt, Jr.
CHAPLAIN:	Thomas D. Chrosniak, Jr.
SURGEON:	Scott W. Thomas
TRUSTEE 3YR:	William L. Samol
TRUSTEE 2YR:	Richard C. Petersen, Sr.
TRUSTEE 1YR:	Nicholas J. Lavnikovich
OFFICER OF THE DAY:	Michael A. Gould
HISTORIAN:	Robert C. Hunt, Jr.

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

AMERICANISM:	George H. Slack
ACTION CORPS & VFW/PAC:	William T. Coffey
BUDDY POPPY:	John R. Caruso
HOMELESS VETERANS:	Brian R. O'Donnell
COMMUNITY SERVICE:	George W. England
LEGISLATIVE:	William J. Newman
MEMBERSHIP:	William J. Newman
NATIONAL HOME:	Bob Galiette
OPERATION UP-LINK:	<u>Chris LaSelle</u>
POW/MIA:	Fred U. Hudon
PUBLIC RELATIONS:	<u>Arpad J. Ostheimer</u>
SERVICE OFFICER:	William T. Coffey
V.O.D./YOUTH ESSAY:	Douglas S. Sutter
YOUTH ACTIVITIES:	Roy Walton
NEWSLETTER:	William J. Newman
MEMORIAL DAY PARADE:	William L. Samol

Names underlined are new to the position this year

I have omitted "Noteworthy Quotes" this month due to time constraints and since this Administration appears to have things well under control!

Bill Newman

