



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Post 3272

Avon, Connecticut

“On Target”

The Post’s Monthly Newsletter

**JUNE 2009
LETTER #94**

The Post met on Wednesday, **27 May 2009** at the Italian Club with *47 members* in attendance. The *Ladies Auxiliary* provided another exceptional meal for a hungry group of vets & guests.

Our **next meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, 24 June 2009** at the Italian Club. Cocktails begin at 1800 hours with dinner at 1830 hours. Join our **Post Family** for another evening of **good food, stimulating conversation and great friendship**. Hope to see you there!!!

Our speaker at the May meeting was **Father Paul McNellis, S. J.** - a Vietnam Veteran and Philosophy Teacher at Boston College. Father served in Vietnam in 1970-71 as an MACV Advisor to the Recon & Scout Companies, 47th Regiment, 22nd ARVN Division in II Corps and has returned to Vietnam and Cambodia many times over the last several years. In addition to telling us of his military service with the South Vietnamese Forces as American troops were disengaging from Vietnam, he discussed his experiences and observations developed as a result of his recent visits to Vietnam and Cambodia – including his trip to both countries last summer. After his discharge from the service, Father Paul returned to Vietnam as a free-lance reporter with the Associated Press for six (6) months. Concerned about the fate of the Vietnam in the wake of the American drawn-down and John Kerry’s testimony before Congress, he joined the *Vietnam Vets for A Just Peace* and debated the *Vietnam Veterans Against the War* on several campuses in 1972-73. Unable to get back to Vietnam again, he returned to Southeast Asia in 1974 with Catholic Relief Services and assisted refugees in Cambodia while the Khmer Rouge was perpetrating the “Killing Fields”. In addition to Vietnam service awards, he has received the Bronze Star w/ “V” device, Air Medal, Good Conduct, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab, Special Forces Insignia and CIB. We sincerely thank Father Paul for serving as our Chaplain on Memorial Day and providing an inspiring talk on Vietnam to our members and their guests.

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 and the financial report were available on the tables for the members to review courtesy of *Adjutant Aldo Vernesoni* and *Quartermaster Don Perreault*. Motions were separately made to accept the minutes and financial report as provided, seconded and approved by the members present.

The Commander introduced four (4) new members to the Post membership; Tim Curran – a WWII Army Air Corps Veteran who served as a Medical Doctor (ENT) in the European Theater from 1943 to 1945 and participated in six campaigns; Dick Ecke – a Navy Veteran who served on active duty from 1966 to 1969 and as a P3 Orion crewman on ASW & RECON missions in Vietnam in 1969; Ray Poirier - a Korean Veteran who served on active duty from 1950 to 1952 with Headquarters Detachment of the 2nd Log Command as a clerk typist; and Lee Wilson – an Army Veteran of Desert Storm who served as a NCO & Combat Engineer and spent over 7 years on active duty with 3+ years overseas. Each of these veterans was warmly welcomed by the members present.

Comrades in Distress this month include *Bob August, Stan Barnett, Lew Capitani*, Josephine Hinman, Bill Huebner, Jim Katzung, Sanford Lindy and Harold Schaal* Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers - and visit them if you are able. We ask that you also let our *Chaplain Tom Chrosniak* (675-9196) know if you learn of any other Post members who are ill or hospitalized.

Under Committee Reports, *Bill Newman* noted that the Poppy Drive went very well but we have over 60 cans to open so it's way too early to tell how well we did. It appears that we distributed well over 8500 poppies and he thanked the 26 volunteers who were out there over the 10 day period of the Drive filling 122 timeslots at 4 main locations – Wal-Mart, Stop N Shop, Shaw's and St. Ann's Church. We also had volunteers at Dunkin Donuts and Lou's Donuts. It was another super effort again this year and it will certainly pay off in our results!!!

Master of Ceremonies *Bill Samol* commented that the Memorial Day Parade was the best yet. The weather was perfect, the crowds large and plenty of veterans participated – either marching or riding. He noted that he had 12 antique cars available for veterans to ride in this year. Bill stated that our Keynote Speaker Chris LaSalle did a great job which prompted a number of very favorable comments. We sincerely thank Bill Samol for all his hard work in organizing & overseeing another (his 9th) Memorial Day Parade and Post Picnic. Great job, Bill!!!

Bill Newman advised that our 1st Golf Fundraiser is coming up on Saturday, 27 June at Blue Fox Run. We still need a couple more volunteers – so please let Tim Curran (673-0673) know if you can help. It's a fun time and is the key fundraiser for our General Fund

Regarding Communications, *Bill Newman* noted that *Alice Zacchera* has dropped us a note telling us that the family is donating Ray's motorized wheelchair to the Post to use as we see fit. Accordingly, we are looking for any disabled person who could use this wheelchair and ask our members if they know anyone who might be able to benefit from this wheelchair.

Under the “Good of the Order”, *Commander Newman* advised the members that the Post 3272 has been designated an “All-State Post” for 2009 and led all the 20 Posts in our Division in terms of membership this year. Bill thanked all those who helped us achieve our membership goals this year. A special thanks is given to *Quartermaster Don Perreault* who closely monitored the membership profile of our division throughout the year and insured that we were properly credited with our new members during this period.

Past Commander George England, acting as the Post Installation Officer, performed the Installation Ceremony in accordance with the VFW rites. *Bill Newman* was reinstalled as the Post Commander, *Roy Waldron* as the Senior Vice Commander, *Art Ostheimer* as the Junior Vice Commander, *Don Perreault* as the Quartermaster and *Aldo Vernesoni* as the Adjutant. The remaining Post Officers and Chairmen were presented in the May Newsletter

Post Developments & Activities

The final results of our 2009 Poppy Drive are now in and we are delighted to announce that once again we set a *new record* for donations to our Relief Fund. We raised a total of \$15,516.00 and netted \$14,411 for our Relief Fund after expenses of \$1,105 for poppies and cans. This clearly represents an extraordinary effort in a weak economic environment and is testimony to the dedication of our many volunteers and the strong support for veterans that is inherent in the Avon community. We sincerely thank all of you who participated in this Poppy Drive, the businesses that allowed us to distribute poppies and the continuing public interest which makes this possible.

Bob Galiette is proud to report that his grandson – James C. B. Flannery from New Hartford, CT - graduated from the U. S. Military Academy at West Point on 23 May, received a Bachelor of Science degree and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U. S. Army in the Infantry branch. Bob and James's Father pinned the gold bars on the new Lieutenant. A U. S. History Major, Cadet Flannery was named to Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society for History. As a graduating cadet, he was a recipient of the Brigadier General Vincent J. Esposito Award for the highest standing in History of the Military Art, the Lt. General Thomas J. H. Trapnell Memorial Award for excellence in the study of Military History and the Superintendent's Award for Achievement. He completed the Airborne Course last summer at Ft. Benning. Lt. Flannery will report to Ft. Sill, OK in July for Basic Officers Leadership Course, then to Ft. Benning, GA for Infantry Officer Basic Course and Ranger School, and then to his Post at Ft. Campbell, KY with the 101st Airborne Division. Lt. Flannery will be our guest at the Post meeting in June.

At our meeting on 27 May, the owners, Mitchell and Rose Ann Pianka, of Papacelle Ristorante in Riverdale Farms presented Commander Bill Newman with a check for \$315.00 which represented 10% of the dinner receipts the restaurant received on Saturday, 23 May. The check was a donation to our Post's General Fund in honor of Memorial Day. We thank the Pianka Family for their generous gift on this occasion and several Post members and their wives dined that Saturday evening at the restaurant in support of this gesture. This donation was a direct result of a contact Bill Samol made with another member of the Avon Chamber of Commerce.

It is with sadness that we inform you of the passing on 30 May 2009 of Peter Frattini (92) of Avon. Peter was an Army Veteran of WWII and served in the European Theater as a Radio Operator with the 863rd Field Artillery Battalion of the 61st Infantry Division. He served on active duty from 9Nov43 until 18Jan46. In addition to his WWII service decorations, Peter was a recipient of the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. He joined our Post in 1967. Funeral arrangements were provided by Ahern Funeral Home in Unionville with calling hours on 1 June and a Funeral Liturgy at St. Ann's Church on 2 June followed by burial with full military honors at St. Ann Cemetery in Avon. Quartermaster Don Perreault represented the Post at the Ahern Funeral Home on 2 June 2009. May Peter and all our departed comrades find their rest with the Eternal Father!

Mort Katz informs us that his Law Firm (The Law Offices of Morton N. Katz) has been designated by the Avon Chamber of Commerce (to which the Post belongs) as the "2009 Small Business of the Year". Our congratulations, Mort!!

Some of you have asked for Jessie Rhoades' Address. She is being cared for at the Wethersfield Health Center, 341 Jerome Lane, Wethersfield, CT 06107.

Bob Hunt sent an email a few days ago that I thought many of you would find both interesting & timely. It prompted, he noted, a heated discussion in his office as to which was the most important WWII event – Midway or Omaha? Bob voted for Midway!! How would you vote?

Bob, Just wanted to drop you a note to let you know that tomorrow I'll be thinking of you and your comrades who hit the beaches in 1944; especially all the guys who never got off the beaches. Wednesday, of course, was the anniversary of the Battle of Midway, and I've been thinking a lot as well of the brave Navy, Marine, and Army pilots and aircrew who hurled themselves against an unbeaten and very capable foe using mostly 2nd class aircraft, and also of the steadfast crew of the Yorktown, who kept her afloat and in the fight longer than anyone had a right to expect. Although there aren't too many of your generation still with us, no one will ever forget what you all did for the world, at least as long as there is a United States of America. The wealthy and free country in which we live, and to which people from all over the world still want to come, might not even exist if you guys hadn't smashed the fascists so soundly. No matter how many monuments we erect to the veterans of WWII, we can never erect one greater or more appropriate monument than the nation you helped save and the nation it has become in the years since WWII ended. Thank you, RFW

Please remember that our annual Ray Zacchera Memorial Picnic is set for Wednesday, 22 July 2009 beginning at 1800 hours at the Zacchera Compound on 15 West Ridge Drive off Route #44 in Avon. We will have plenty of food and beverages on hand so come and bring your spouse or a friend. Let us know at the June meeting if you plan to attend so we can get an accurate headcount. We are, of course, most grateful to Alice Zacchera and her family for inviting us to use the compound again this year. As most of you know, Ray Zacchera hosted this Post Picnic for many years and we accordingly call this event "The Ray Zacchera Memorial Picnic" in honor and memory of our dear comrade!

Noteworthy Quotes

Fighting Evil Is the Only Way To Stop It

“Sherman was right: War is Hell. The current war against the Judeo-Christian world waged by al-Qaida and other radical Moslems is no different. War is Hell and Hell is full of torments. Our role is to make that Hell and those torments as quick, as slight, and as limited as possible. But it is not our power to end pain, to make peace, or to stop torture. We cannot stop a Holocaust without inflicting pain. We cannot end the Gulag without hurting people. We cannot free slaves without the horror of civil war. We can be silent, passive, and helpless in the face of evil, and, perhaps, survive. But we cannot stop evil without fighting evil, and that battle cannot be conducted without hurting people. War itself is torture. Men in combat suffer in ways which make water boarding look like a roller coaster ride in a theme park. War maims, burns, starves, cripples, traumatizes, humiliates, and destroys. We pretend that there are rules in war, but that is all we do "pretend." Decent, sane people, forced into war, can only make their own rules. These rules are fairly straightforward and easy to understand. Inflict the pain on the guilty as much as possible and on the innocent as little as possible. America does this better than any nation in the history of the world. On September 11, 2001, thousands of innocent men, women, and children were tortured to death -- that is the blunt fact -- and since then America has operated using its own, compassionate rules of combat to liberate captive, tortured populations in Iraq and in Afghanistan using the mildest means at our disposal. If we grow sallow, puerile, vain, and pompous, then the suffering on planet Earth will not diminish: It will, instead, return with a vengeance.”

“War Is Hell”, Bruce Walker, Am Thinker, 5/12/09

Global War on Terror Becomes Global Crime Scene

“The strategy of the new administration looks a lot like the course the Clinton administration set us on before Sept. 11, 2001. And we know how that turned out: Clinton relied on prosecutors to fight terrorists, mistakenly treating terrorism as random crime rather than the grave national security threat that it is. After each al-Qaida attack that occurred on his watch, Clinton dispatched FBI agents and lawyers overseas to collect evidence. This simply bought Osama bin Laden and his henchmen more time to launch their "Big Bang," as counterterrorism officials call 9/11. Astonishingly, this administration seems to have adopted that failed strategy, which could leave us exposed to an even bigger bang. According to the Los Angeles Times, the Justice Department will now have "a central role in overseas counterterrorism cases." The administration has expanded its authority to question foreign suspects and gather evidence "to try to ensure that criminal prosecutions are an option." In other words, the FBI is in, the CIA is out, and the Pentagon is gradually being stripped of its war. The Global War on Terror is now a global crime scene. The real battles going forward will be waged inside courtrooms. The FBI played a lead role in international terrorism investigations before 9/11. Its intelligence proved lousy. The Pentagon and CIA, meantime, have taken the fight to the enemy in their backyard, keeping them off balance. Yet they're being edged out, and the White House has even directed the Pentagon to stop calling what it's doing in Iraq, Afghanistan and other terror fronts a "war." In a recent e-mail to Pentagon staffers, the Defense Department's office of security review noted "this administration prefers to avoid using the term 'Long War' or 'Global War on Terror.' (GWOT.) Please use 'Overseas Contingency Operation.' " Contingency is code for reacting to trouble, and not going on the offensive — though the aggressive strategy has kept the country free from a major attack for eight years. According to a recent internal report by the Department of Homeland Security, the administration thinks Timothy McVeigh types pose a greater domestic threat than radical Muslims, even though several homegrown terrorism cases have popped up in the last month alone — including Monday's shooting of U.S. soldiers in Little Rock by one Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad. DHS was set up after 9/11 to protect the country from Islamic terrorism. All this comes on top of the administration's plan to close Gitmo and transfer al-Qaida terrorists into the U.S. court system, treating them as if they were criminal defendants and not the enemy combatants they are. With each passing month, the administration seems to backslide deeper into a dangerous pre-9/11 mentality that puts the nation at increasing risk of attack.” War? – What War?, Editorial, IBD, 6/2/09

“D-Day” Revisited

“Normandy is the most inspiring, humbling and historically important place to visit in France. Standing above Omaha Beach looking out across the English Channel from what was a Nazi cement bunker, provides a commanding view of what the allied forces faced that monumental and awesome day—"the longest day." Excerpts from Adolf Hitler's "Directive No. 51," 3 November 1943, expose the resolute and seemingly invincible Nazi army entrenched against the allied forces. Hitler demanded defense of the coast of France at all costs: *“If the enemy here succeeds in penetrating our defenses on a wide front, consequences of staggering proportions will follow within a short time. All signs point to an offensive against the Western Front of Europe no later than spring, and perhaps earlier. For that reason, I can no longer justify the further weakening of the West in favor of other theaters of war. I have therefore decided to strengthen the defenses in the West, particularly at places from which we shall launch our long-range war against England. For those are the very points at which the enemy must and will attack; there-unless all indications are misleading-will be fought the decisive invasion battle. During the opening phase of the battle, the entire striking power of the enemy will of necessity be directed against our forces manning the coast. Only an all-out effort in the construction of fortifications, an unsurpassed effort that will enlist all available manpower and physical resources of Germany and the occupied areas, will be able to strengthen our defenses along the coasts within the short time that still appears to be left to us. Should the enemy nevertheless force a landing by concentrating his armed might, he must be hit by the full fury of our counterattack. For this mission ample*

and speedy reinforcements of men and materiel, as well as intensive training must transform available larger units into first-rate, fully mobile general reserves suitable for offensive operations. The counterattack of these units will prevent the enlargement of the beachhead, and throw the enemy back into the sea.” General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, commissioned our troops as they boarded planes, gliders and ships, great and small. *He called them to nothing less than full victory.* An invading army had not crossed the treacherous English Channel since 1688. The heroes of "D-Day" knew that the beaches of Normandy had to be taken or else. There would be no throwing them back into the sea: It was to be the largest combined, sea, air, and land military operation in history, made up of three million men, 13,000 aircraft, 1,200 warships, 2,700 merchant ships, and 2,500 landing craft. Fifteen minutes after midnight on June 6, the first of 23,000 U.S., British, and Canadian paratroopers and glider troops plunged into the darkness over Normandy, and the Allied liberation of France was underway. Just before dawn, Allied aircraft and ships bombed the French coast along the Baie de la Seine, and at daybreak, the bombardment ended as 135,000 Allied troops stormed ashore at five landing sites. Despite the formidable German coastal defenses, beachheads were achieved at all five landing locations. At one site—Omaha Beach—German resistance was especially strong, and the Allied position was only secured after hours of bloody fighting by the Americans assigned to it. By the evening, some 150,000 American, British, and Canadian troops were ashore, and the Allies held about 80 square miles. Over the next five days, Allied forces in Normandy moved steadily forward in all sectors against fierce German resistance. On June 11, the five landing groups met up, and Operation Overlord—the code name for the Allied invasion of northwestern Europe—proceeded as planned. *By nightfall on June 6, more than 9,000 Allied soldiers were dead or wounded, but more than 100,000 had made it ashore, securing French coastal villages. “D-Day – Day of Glory”*, *Jan LaRue, American Thinker, 6/6/09*

Timely Quote from “Honest Abe”

George England recently sent the following email and it seems especially timely given this Administration’s interest in *Abraham Lincoln* and its populist objectives which run counter to this dictum of “*Honest Abe*”!!

“You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.

You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.

You cannot lift the wage earner up by pulling the wage payer down.

You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred.

You cannot build character and courage by taking away people's initiative and independence.

You cannot help people permanently by doing for them, what they could and should do for themselves.”

.....Abraham Lincoln

As we have done over the last several years, this is our last newsletter until September. God willing, we’ll return in September rested, refreshed and ready to report on the many activities and developments of our “Historic Post” as well as some of the risks and opportunities that face us as Americans in this ever-changing world. Despite the lack of newsletters and meetings this summer, we will continue has our coffee klatschs at Friendly’s in Avon each Thursday morning at 1000 hrs – so join us when you can. We hope all of you have a pleasant, healthy and safe summer!!!

Bill Newman