



# VFW News

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Woodstock VFW Post 5040 and Auxiliary

## Post 5040 commemorates Veterans Day

By Matt Klos, VFW News Editor

Despite temperatures in the upper 30's, VFW members and local area residents gathered in the Post 5040 parking lot to listen to the Veterans Day speech and watch the Firing Squad.

VFW Commander Bill Lyford gave opening comments for Veterans Day. Dwayne Raney, VFW 5040 Adjutant, provided the opening prayer.

In his message to the small group that gathered on this day, Commander Lyford commented on the number of WWII veterans that were dying each day and how we need to remember these older veterans in our communities. He also cited the need to reach out to the newer veterans of today's wars. In closing Bill mentioned VFW Chaplain Howard Engstrom's service and commitment to the community. Engstrom dedicates a large amount of time to visiting veterans in need around the area at their homes and at hospitals.

Closing prayer was given by Howard Engstrom. In his prayer, Howard asked that, "We all pay tribute to the men and women of today's wars."

A ham lunch was served after the ceremony. A smaller crowd than in recent years, about 90 people were served the ham lunch.

The VFW Rifle Squad stands at parade rest listening to VFW Commander Bill Lyford on Veterans Day 2006.

From left: Rifle Squad Commander Hank Nulle, Harold Irwin (hidden from view), Larry Dhom, Bob Gibson, Jerry Riley, Bud Pflug, Chuck Mathey, Arnie Doerfert, Fred Noble, and Dick Glawe. (Matt Klos photo).



Flag bearers line up behind the Rifle Squad at the VFW Post 5040 Veterans Day Ceremony 2006.

From left: Bob Schroeder (behind VFW flag), Mike David, Sid Sherwin, Marv Monson, Hank Enstrom. (Matt Klos photo).

## Great Lakes band plays for Hebron school

By Don Peasley  
VFW News Editor 1955-2002

Alden-Hebron students had a rare treat Tuesday, November 7 with the Great Lakes Ceremonial Navy Band performing stirring marches and patriotic songs in the high school gymnasium.

Janet Hall, office manager for Hebron Elementary School, arranged for the band's appearance, an effort she began in the spring. Under the direction of Petty Officer Rich Lindberg the band presented many familiar songs including John Philip Sousa's Washington Post March, a special version of God Bless America and the performance Lindberg described as "our national march, "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Hall said the concert was an opportunity for students to show their respect for veterans and to appreciate their patriotism. Four students opened the ceremony by

## Freedom

By Mrs. Charles Mathey

The opinion of some is that we don't belong in the war in Iraq. That or any war overseas, period. Two erroneous assumptions:

- 1) History from the 1990's on is a whole new ballgame. Everything is global. The previous thinking was, if we keep them away from our shores, they can't harm us. That's no longer true.
- 2) Fallacy: People of Iraq and countries where we have a military presence don't want us there. This may never have been true. It is just that the citizens don't have a voice.

One incident from a few years ago proves my point. In 1999 I went with my husband, Charles Mathey, on a visit to Japan and Korea. His military years were 1951 to 1953, most of it in a motor pool at Seoul, Korea in the 121st Evacuation

SEE KOREA TRIP, page 2.



VFW Post 5040 Commander Bill Lyford opens Veterans Day ceremony at 11:00 am in the VFW parking lot. (Matt Klos photo).

SEE NAVY BAND, page 3.

## VFW Post 5040 - Post Officers 2006 - 2007

Commander	William Lyford	(815)-337-0025
Senior Vice Commander	Henry Nulle	(815)-337-7529
Junior Vice Commander	Fred Noble	(815)-338-5655
Quartermaster	Thom Gillespie	(815)-338-6826
Chaplain	Howard Engstrom	(815)-338-4453
Assistant Chaplain	Charles (Chuck) Mathey	(815)-338-5374
Service Officer	Ron Nehls	(815)-568-0708
Judge Advocate	Dick Glawe	(815)-385-3156
Post Surgeon	Harold Irwin	(815)-338-1264
Officer-of-the-Day	Bruce Shisler	(815)-338-4735
Adjutant	Dwayne Raney	(815)-338-1652
1 Year Trustee	Allen Belcher	(815)-338-7689
2 Year Trustee	Arnie Doerfert	(815)-385-2923
3 Year Trustee	Larry Dhom	(815)-338-4134

## Ladies Auxiliary to VFW Post 5040 Post Officers 2006 - 2007

President	Nyda Fogarty	(815)-338-1759
Senior Vice President	Bonnie Kagel	(815)-648-4958
Junior Vice	Viola Brown	(815)-338-1446
Secretary	Christine Gehrke	(815)-338-3533
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Chaplain	Karen Wells	(815)-338-4821
Guard	Margie Humphrey	Unavailable
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1 Year Trustee	Lois Freund	(815)-338-5261
2 Year Trustee	Margaret Webb	(815)-338-4213
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## Ladies Auxiliary - from the president

By Nyda Fogarty, President 2006-2007

One of our long time Auxiliary members died on Friday, November 3. Anna Mae Weber was a tireless worker at the Post in the kitchen and on Wednesday nights with serving dinners. She spent many years at the club. I attended her wake and funeral which was Wednesday, November 8 at the funeral home.

Our plans have been made for our Christmas party which will be on Thursday, December 7. Cocktails at 6:00 pm and dinner at 6:30 pm. The meat will be furnished by the Auxiliary. Please bring the following: dish to pass, wrapped \$5.00 grab bag gift, and wrapped white elephants for some prizes for games. Chris Gehrke is Chairman of the party and Bonnie Kagel will be in charge of games. If your dues are current for this year, you will be eligible for a **drawing for three free dues for next year**. However, you must be present at the party to win one of the three free dues.

This next year our Auxiliary will have their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We would like to have a dinner but it takes a lot of work and money.

For some time now it seems other meetings have also been held downstairs on the first Thursday of the month while our meeting is going on. Other organizations have no right to have their meeting downstairs at that time. Their meeting should be upstairs and this should be corrected by whoever schedules the meeting on the calendar.

**Happy New Year  
VFW Post 5040!**

## Appointments made for VFW and Marine Corps League

William F. Lyford, Woodstock VFW Post 5040 Commander, has appointed Dwayne E. Raney, replacing Arnie Doerfert, who is stepping down for personal reasons, to be the new Delegate to future VAC meetings, effective immediately. A new Alternate will be appointed replacing Raney who had been serving in that capacity, as soon as possible.

Wes Orcutt, VFW member and Marine Corps League member, was appointed Chaplain of McHenry County Marine Corps League Detachment 1009 in November.

## ✠ Chaplains report ✠

By Howard Engstrom, Chaplain

I had the privilege of giving the invocation at the new Valley High building ribbon cutting ceremony, along with the honor guard on October 20, 2006. This will be a very nice building once occupied.

A thought to consider: Pride is tasteless, colorless, and size less, yet it is the hardest thing to swallow.

Comrades, have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### Phone / Cards:

- Wilbur Kiefer Family
- Stanger Family
- Marv Bohnhoff
- Harry Siddons Family
- Anna Mae Weber

### Personal Visits:

- Harry Siddons - Wake
- Otis Setser - Valley High Nursing Home
- Herb Hensel - Valley High Nursing Home
- Thor Vail - Valley High Nursing Home
- Gerald Donahue - Valley High Nursing Home
- Ken Korst - Valley High Nursing Home
- Ray Benoy - Valley High Nursing Home
- Fred Wallis - Home & Hospital

### Drape Charter:

- Fred Wallis

## Korea trip

Continued from page 1.

Hospital. We toured the city, shopped, and when we were finally ready to leave, we needed to change money at a bank. We were directed to the second floor, where a young English speaking banker helped us.

During the conversation the banker asked us (as did most people with whom we came in contact) "What brings you to Korea?" Chuck explained he was there in the early 1950's with the United States Army.

Business done, Chuck shook hands with him and thanked him. The banker replied, "No, it is I who should thank you, for coming to our country to help us keep our freedom." He solemnly turned to other workers around him and spoke in Korean. There were solemn expressions on their faces as well, and short little respectful dipping bows.

The remarkable part is that none of these young people were born yet at the time of the war. But the thankfulness of those people had never worn off. Instead, it has been passed down from generation to generation.

Does America make a difference? You bet!

## Navy band

Continued from page 1.

presenting the colors. They were Josh Lyons, J.J. Linquist, Tyler Sheeks and Josiah Layoff. The audience included several veterans in the Hebron area and many faculty members.

Lindberg said the ceremonial band consists of between 14 and 25 members and they participate in a variety of activities. The Ceremonial Navy Band participates in about 500 activities a year, and in this band is their full time job.

“We participate in everything from retirement ceremonies to launching a ship. We especially enjoy performing at schools,” said Lindberg. Lindberg is from Heights Town, New Jersey and this is his 13<sup>th</sup> year in the Navy.

The Great Lakes Ceremonial Navy Band presents marches and patriotic music in a memorable performance for all Alden-Hebron School students in the high school gymnasium. (Don Peasley photo).



## VFW member Wilbur Kiefer remembered

By Don Peasley

Wilbur Kiefer, who died October 14 at his home, will be long remembered in Woodstock history as one of two Woodstock men aboard ships at Pearl Harbor during the December 7, 1941 attack by the Japanese.

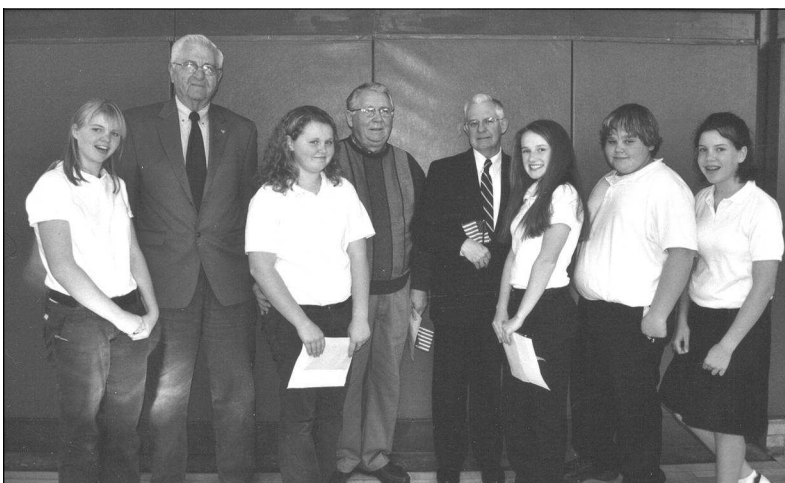
Kiefer served as a chief gunners mate from 1939 to 1945. He was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma during the attack at Pearl Harbor. Tom Lounsbury of Woodstock was aboard the USS Arizona and was killed during the attack on Battleship Row.

Kiefer's experience at Pearl Harbor is worth recording here for the sake of those in future years who want to know more about those first minutes on December 7, 1941. Some of Kiefer's memories are recorded in Joy Aavang's first book about veterans, Fly the Flag for Me.

Kiefer told Joy he was five decks below when the loud speaker revealed the attack, with this addition to the announcement, “This is no drill, this is the real McCoy.” The men made their way topside. Wilbur said the ship had been damaged and he literally walked on the side of the ship into the water. He swam around the USS Maryland to Ford Island.

Survivors were sent to the naval ammunition depot and spent several days loading incoming ships with ammunition. Two weeks later Wilbur was assigned to the USS Louisville and took part in 14 major South Pacific campaigns.

Wilbur recalls they were often under attack by kamikaze pilots. His ship was once damaged by a Japanese airplane that



St. Mary's School carries on a tradition of honoring veterans with an all-school assembly Friday, November 3.

Students were invited to bring in family members or friends who served in the

Armed Forces.

From left: Therese Narusis with her grandfather, Bernard Narusis, WWII and Korean War veteran; Kelsey Harding with her grandfather Norm Streveler, Army veteran assisted at Fort Story, Virginia with public relations and tours of the area for visiting civilians and dignitaries; Ed O'Brien, St. Mary's principal, Army instructor during the Vietnam war; Stephanie Carran, who read about her Uncle Rick Berndt, Vietnam War veteran, who was unable to attend; Matt Stahl, who read about his Uncle Larry Pfeiffer, deceased World War II veteran; and Clare Dhom, president of St. Mary's student council. (Don Peasley photo).

crashed into the Louisville. He recalled one example of bombarding the shore before the U.S. invaded Saipan.

“U.S. planes and ships bombarded the island 24-hours-a-day for an extended period,” Kiefer recalled during his conversation with Aavang.

He was discharged November 1945 from Great Lakes, the base he went February 14, 1939 to enter boot camp.

The Wilbur Kiefer family was active in Woodstock Little League for many years. His wife Jean, who he married September 2, 1950, was a devoted Little League mother with four sons, all active in the Little League and Teen-er League. When the Little League started an Auxiliary, Jean was one of the prominent leaders.

Wilbur managed the Woodstock Elks Lodge from 1950 to 1965. He left that position as steward to take over ownership and management of the Budweiser Café located at East Jackson and Benton streets. He operated the restaurant from 1965 to 1977. He was a lifetime member of the Woodstock VFW and the Woodstock Elks Lodge.

His four sons and his wife Jean and 11 grandchildren are survivors. The four sons include Phil, 54; Jim 53; Paul, 51; and Tom 48.

**Merry  
Christmas  
and  
Happy New  
Year  
VFW Post  
5040!**

# Marine Corps League turns 231

By Don Peasley

The McHenry County Marine Corps League chose the Woodstock VFW as the setting to celebrate the 231<sup>st</sup> birthday of the founding of the U.S. Marine Corps. The Marine Corps was founded November 10, 1775 at Tun Tavern in Philadelphia.

It is a long-standing tradition for Marines to observe this birthday on November 10 annually. The ceremony at the VFW was conducted under the chairmanship of Dick Aston and Joe Binder. Becky Gillespie, VFW manager, was in charge of arrangements for the dinner which featured prime rib. About 100 people attended the celebration, dinner, dance and auction. Music was provided by Mobile Mix DJ.

The evening began with the Cadet Civil Air Patrol McHenry County Squadron 263 presenting the colors. Following tradition, a large cake was cut with a sword. The oldest and youngest Marines present assisted in cutting the cake.

William Tegtmeier, 83, was the oldest Marine present. He enlisted in August 1942. During his tour of duty he saw action on Guadalcanal, New Guinea, New Britain, Pelelui and Okinawa. He was awarded the Purple Heart and was discharged November 5, 1945.

The youngest Marine present was John Veugeler, 36, grandson of Tegtmeier. He was on active duty from 1993 to 1999, serving in California and Japan.

Dancing, followed by a silent auction rounded out the birthday celebration. Just before serving the first course the audience stood and burst out with "From the halls of Montezuma. . ." the start of the Marines Hymm.

Proceeds from the silent auction will go to help fund the Heart of A Marine Foundation and League community activities.



Dick Aston is master of ceremonies for the Marine Corps League's 231st birthday celebration November 10. Aston is a Trustee and Acting Adjutant. The event was held at the Woodstock VFW with 100 guests at the dinner, dance and auction. (Don Peasley photo)



Members of the Cadet Civil Air Patrol McHenry County squadron 263 retire the colors at the opening ceremony for the McHenry County Marine Corps Leagues 231st birthday celebration. (Don Peasley photo).



Woodstock VFW members prepare to take this electric wheelchair to the home of Kenneth Korst, 1965 Post Commander. The wheelchair was donated to the VFW.

Charles Mathey is seated in the wheelchair holding the battery charger. Behind Chuck are (from left): Howard Engstrom, Bob Gibson and Bill Lyford. (Don Peasley photo).

# Memorial Day 2007

By Nyda Fogarty, President 2006-2007

May be too early to be thinking about Memorial Day in 2007, but planning usually starts the first Monday in October for the program and parade.

The Committee has always been made up of appointed members of each Veterans Organization: VFW, American Legion, Amvets, Marine Corps League, and VFW Auxiliary.

All the events of last years program did not turn out as planned. Ray Benoy had been chosen to be Parade Marshall and unfortunately he was hospitalized shortly before. The dinner was not as we had planned as well as several other things.

Richard Schroeder of the American Legion was Chairman for last year and at the May meeting he turned in his resignation for this coming year. Some committee members show up for meetings now and then, but it seems that the different organizations have not been appointing members to serve on the committee to help in the planning. Now Mr. Schroeder has decided to stay on the Committee due to the urging of Dwayne Raney. Mr. Schroeder believes that some changes should be made regarding the program.

I think the community appreciates and looks forward to attending the observance in the city square and the parade. I would strongly urge other Veterans organizations to appoint some of their members to become a member of the Committee which has eight meetings.

The committee meets the first Monday of the month at the VFW at 7:00 pm.

# Winter in Florida! Home for rent...



For rent, 2 bed 2 bath + Florida Room. Doublewide coach home in Palm Hills Country Club, Largo, Florida.

You will enjoy 2 club houses, three swimming pools, 2 hot tubs and golf course. Great location, 5 miles to beaches on the Gulf of Mexico. Friendly neighbors, tennis courts, biking, shuffle board, and many restaurants to choose from. **\$1,295 a month includes utilities.** One occupant must be 55, with three months or more stay.

Forty-five minutes to Busch Gardens, and a little over an hour to Disney. Six miles to St. Petersburg International Airport. Club house offers many outings, including cruises, and day trips.

**Call Roger Klemme at: 815-338-0216.**



VFW Rifle squad fires rifles during Veterans Day ceremony at Post 5040. (Matt Klos photo).

VFW members, friends, family, and local residents gather in the VFW 5040 parking lot for Veterans Day. (Matt Klos photo).



VFW 5040 Member and Crystal Lake American Legion member Don Rhodes plays the bugle during Veterans Day ceremony. (Matt Klos photo).



VFW member Bud Porter, cast iron tractor seat collector (website: www.castironseatclub.org), brought in this tractor seat in honor of Veterans Day to display at the Post. Sunshine Mayer, employed by the Post a while back, painted the raising of the US flag at Iwo Jima on the seat. (Matt Klos photo).

## Concern for Legion Oratorical Contest

By Dwayne E. Raney  
Americanism Chairman, Woodstock American Legion Post 412

For over a month now, copies of the American Legion's High School Oratorical Contest brochures have been placed in both local high schools in Woodstock. Julie Diamond, secretary in Marian's guidance department, as well as Laurie Kaminski at Woodstock, are coordinating searches for students interested in participating in their respective schools.

For too long of a time now, students interest in the program has been continuously waning. Some times only a few ever participate in the program whatever the year the program is conducted.

But, why?

Several years ago, Marian Central Catholic High School even hosted the state competition.

The program was conducted as a national contest in 1938 with 11 departments (that's what the American Legion refers to as its state competitions). In recent years, about 30,000 contestants have participated each year, representing 52 departments (states and territories).

The scholarships awarded here in Illinois to the state winners may be used to attend any college, university, junior college, or vocational educational institution, within four (4) years after graduation from

high school, unless interrupted by service in the U. S. Armed Forces. Funds for these scholarships awarded are provided by the membership dues sent to the Illinois American Legion in Bloomington, IL.

Each year, \$15,225 in scholarships are awarded to the department (state) finalists, and the five divisions. The national organization provides \$128,000 in scholarships to the national finalists, the semifinalists, and the winners to the national finals annually held on the first Saturday in March.

There are many other cash prizes and scholarships, plus gold and silver citations. Certificates are awarded in the district contests and are usually scheduled for the first full week in February and also in the division contests held usually the third full week in February.

National scholarships are worth \$18,000 for first place, \$16,000 for second place, and \$14,000 for third place.

For more information, see the Legion website at: [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)

## VFW member Fred Wallis dies

By Matt Klos

Another member of our Post has passed away in recent weeks. Although I did not know Fred personally, I did know of his contribution to the Post regarding the *VFW News*.

Fred served as an Infantryman in Korea and Operation Intelligence in Vietnam. He served in the Army for 22 years.

Fred became involved with this newsletter when Gerry Beckus was in office as Jr. Vice Commander in 1993-1994. Gerry asked Fred to print the labels for the *VFW News*.

Harold Irwin and Fred prepared the labels for many years, Fred keeping the master list of names and addresses up to date.

Fred's obituary as published in the *Northwest Herald*:

Frederick "Fred" H. Wallis, 75, of Woodstock, died Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2006, at Woodstock Residence. He was born June 17, 1931, in Swan Creek, to Irwin and Nola (Wright) Wallis. He married Betty Collen on Jan. 10, 1976, in Woodstock. He graduated from Abingdon High School in Abingdon. Upon finishing a four year stint with the U.S. Air Force, he made a career in the U.S. Army, retiring in 1974 as a sergeant first class. He retired from McHenry County College on Dec. 31, 2000. The memorial service will be at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at Woodstock Free Methodist Church.

Thanks to all of you,  
Post members, that  
helped to make 2006  
a successful year.

# Area schools honor veterans for Veterans Day

By Don Peasley

Leaders of three Woodstock schools helped students become more familiar with the service and sacrifice of veterans by conducting personalized ceremonies a few days before the traditional November Veterans Day observance. Veterans were invited to visit the school and take part in the activities—everything from talking to students during the morning to being recognized for notable achievement in combat. Appropriate music was the highlight of the observance. Northwood Middle School (NWMS) devoted morning and afternoon activities honoring veterans on November 7. Throughout the morning, veterans met in classrooms with students, first outlining their own military career and then fielding questions from the students.

All 780 NWMS students gathered in the gymnasium with over 50 veterans as distinguished guests of honor.

Joy Aavang, who has written three books after interviewing McHenry County veterans, was the keynote speaker. She told the students, “We must never forget the sacrifices of veterans and we must continue to guard our freedoms at all costs.” Aavang, who was born in England, remembers German V-bomb attacks on an airfield near her home.

An audio-visual montage, “God Bless the U.S.A.,” was presented by Jim Cooper, NWMS teacher and U.S. Navy veteran. A melody of great American songs was presented by the seventh and eighth grade concert choir, directed by Duane Peiffer, accompanied by Paul Rausch.

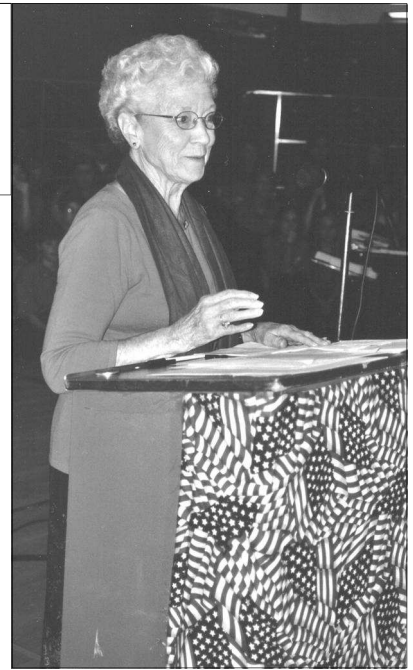
The McHenry County Sheriff’s Department presented the colors at the start of the program. At the close Sergeant Ken Neilsen played “Amazing Grace” on his bagpipes as a tribute to those who died in service

Barry Mishler, NWMS staff member, honored his father, Dean Mishler. He had received confirmation from military officials that his father had never received a Prisoner of War pin or a Purple Heart so he made that presentation during the afternoon program.

Dean Mishler was a member of the 254<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineers attached to the First Army. This was the first unit to land on Normandy Beach in June 1944 and built the first bridge used in the invasion.

SEE SCHOOLS HONOR VETS, page 7.

Joy Aavang, featured speaker at the Northwood Middle School program honoring veterans, told the student assembly that they live in a country “with opportunities only dreamt of by others because of the service of veterans to protect freedom in the United States.” (Don Peasley photo).



Barry Mishler pins a Prisoner of War Medal on his father’s shirt following his recollection of Dean Mishler’s capture during the Battle of the Bulge on December 17, 1944. He also presented his father with a Purple Heart which he had never received. (Don Peasley photo).

Robert Hackbart, Northwood Middle School principal (second from left), welcomes veterans to the school’s Veterans Day program honoring veterans at an all-school assembly. From left: Robert Birchfield, Hackbart, Dick Schroeder, Army Reserve Captain Anne Brophy and Don Perkins. (Don Peasley photo).



State Senator Pam Althoff participates in recognition given Barry and Dean Mishler during a Northwood Middle School Veterans Day ceremony. Dean Mishler was a Prisoner of War during World War II. Dean Mishler obtained military records and was able to present his father with a Prisoner of War medal and a Purple Heart at the ceremony. (Don Peasley photo).

## Schools honor vets

Continued from page 6.

He was taken prisoner December 17, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. He escaped the same day but was recaptured the following day.

On the 11th day he escaped once again but was recaptured and returned to a prisoner of war camp in Germany. Prisoners were released when the Allies closed in on the Germans. This was April 10, 1945. Dean was held prisoner a total of 115 days.

Dean Mishler's wry observation: "We accomplished what we set out to do. It was worth the effort to live in the best country in the world."

Each class at Clay Street School chose a branch of the military to study and discuss as part of that's school's Veterans Day tribute. Gail Perkins, principal, welcomed veterans and said many are family members of students and staff.

"Many of you veterans are friends of Clay Street School, and this annual tribute is special because this is the last year for this 100-year-old school," said Perkins.

She called attention of the gift of a poppy to veterans as they arrived before the program. She explained the poem "In Flanders Fields" speaks of those who died but also challenges those who come after to carry on.

Quoting Colonel John McCrae from the poem, she said the challenge is to "take the torch and hold it high." She said that is for today's and future generations to uphold the crusade to protect freedom in the United States.

She introduced each class presentation honoring Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard veterans with individually creative vignettes.



Gail Perkins, principal at Clay Elementary School, welcomes veterans to the school's annual tribute honoring all veterans on November 8. With her are Don Perkins, her father, Ben Rigby and John Rigby, 4th-5th grade teacher at Clay Elementary School. (Don Peasley photo).



Taylor Aellig, Clay Elementary School student, welcomes her grandfathers to the Clay School Veterans Day program November 8. From left, front: Tom Aellig, Navy; and Rex Litchfield, Army. Back: Taylor Aellig, Jake Aellig, Taylor's brother and student at Verda Dierzen; and the children's mother, Jennifer Aellig. (Don Peasley photo).

Each class at Clay Elementary School represented one branch of the service and dressed in keeping with their military branch. These first and second grade students chose Marine blue uniforms and presented a discussion on services of the Marine Corps. In the back row are their teachers, Kelly Harrington (left) and Crystal Christensen. (Don Peasley photo).

## VFWS member Fiske chairs 60<sup>th</sup> reunion of Merchant Marine class

By Don Peasley

Ken Fiske, World War II veteran with service in the U.S. Merchant Marine as well as the U.S. Navy, had a busy spring and summer preparing for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion of his graduation from the Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, Long Island.

Fiske, a lifetime member of the Woodstock VFW, was asked to serve as chairman of the reunion and was placed on active status so he could enjoy some financial help for out-of-pocket expenses to attend meetings in anticipation of the event.

"The reunion October 11-14 at the Academy was a grand affair," says Fiske, but adds quickly, "I was helped greatly in the smooth operation by my wife Darlene and our daughter Jennifer. Jennifer is a professional convention planner. She took a leave of absence from her work to help."

Fiske's graduation class has 350 members surviving today. Fifty-five members of the class attended the reunion. "For 80 percent of our class members, this is the first time they have returned to the Academy since graduation and they enjoyed seeing the changes," said Fiske.

Fiske listed some changes that brought smiles. Men, only two to a room; women, as members of today's class; no hazing; no marching to each meal; and freshmen are not required to serve meals.

Fiske was pleased to note that the 55 class members joined in the march to the football field for appropriate ceremony as a group.

"We're the only class with no relatives marching with us and we marched in step," declared Fiske. After the football game on the final day each of the graduating classes had reunions individually.

Fiske was honored at this reunion by being presented the Merchant Marine Academy "Outstanding Professional Achievement Award." Fiske was recognized for his service over five decades to agriculture and the conservation of natural resources. He was recognized for developing the first computer program for the Natural Resources database and for establishing procedures for wetland evaluation and restoration planning with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Fiske operated the family farm in Bull Valley in 1943 before joining the Merchant Marines. After basic training in Mis-

issippi for three and half months he was a cadet aboard a tanker. His battle station was to man a 20 mm gun. The ship was transporting aviation fuel and airplanes to such dangerous areas as the D-Day landings in mid-1944 and the Mediterranean Sea area.

"One benefit we had was our ship had a turbo electric tanker and we could go 22 knots to outrun submarines," said Fiske.

Fiske recalled one time (there may be others) when his tanker was loading fuel at a South American port and immediately anchored nearby was a German submarine, also loading fuel at this neutral port.

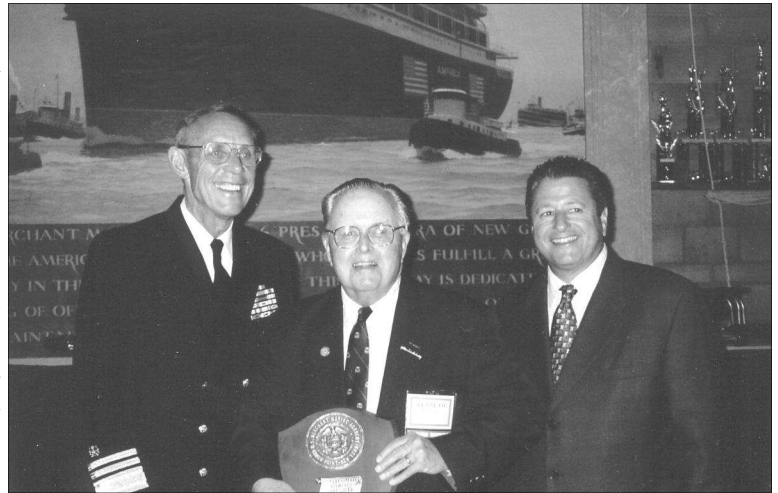
Fiske returned home after his discharge in October 1946, returned to college while still managing the family farm. He obtained a bachelor of science degree in agricultural engineering in 1950 and was a member of the Naval Reserve for several years.

Fiske continued to manage the family farm until 1954. In 1952 he was recognized as Illinois Conservation Farmer of the Year. For two years (1954-1956) he conceived and directed a national television program, "Out on the Farm." It was a live weekly telecast from a DuPage County farm, and Fiske was the heart of that interesting program about life on a working farm.

Fiske also worked with the National Safety Council, Northeast Illinois Service Center as director, and as the first director of the McHenry County Conservation District. He served in that capacity from 1971 to 1985.

Meanwhile, he worked closely with the McHenry County Soil & Water Conservation District serving on its board and as an adviser. Ken holds several patents in agricultural chemical applications. He applied his knowledge early in his career as director of field operations at Velsicol Chemical Corporation on a farm northwest of Woodstock.

Fiske is still active in conservation work. He was named Volunteer of the Year by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/National Wildlife Refugee Association in 2003 and was elected to the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame in 2005.



Ken Fiske, Woodstock VFW lifetime member (center), receives the Merchant Marine Academy's "Outstanding Professional Achievement Award" from Vice Admiral Joseph D. Stewart, superintendent of the Merchant Marine Academy (left). At right is Mike Blecher, chairman of the board of directors of the Merchant Marine Academy Foundation.



Ken Fiske's training at the Merchant Marine Academy included actually sailing on this square-rigger tall ship named the Joseph Conrad, a writer who wrote many sea novels. Training included climbing in the sails and crow's nest. Fiske revealed he fell from the lower sails on one occasion into the ocean!

His training included six months at school and six months as a cadet at sea. Note: Square-rigged means rigged with square sails as the principle sails. (Don Peasley photo).

Fiske has been associated with the McHenry County Fair since it was revived in 1949 and is a familiar voice as master of ceremonies for the annual tractor pull. He's also an active member of the McHenry County Historical Society and is a founding director of the McHenry County Historic Barn Preservation Association.





Commander Bill Lyford stands in front of a gingerbread house that was created by family members of VFW member Matt Klos. The gingerbread house was raffled off at the Turkey Raffle on November 18 with all proceeds going to the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Michigan.

A total of \$48 was raised. Winner of the raffle was VFW member Jerry Burtz of Huntley. Front (L): Sarah, Jessica. Back (L): Aidan, their mother Kim Klos, and Commander Bill Lyford. (Matt Klos photo).

Ed Lumpp (right), Vietnam Veteran and VFW 5040 member, presents a \$50.00 donation check to VFW 5040 Commander Bill Lyford at the Annual Turkey Raffle held on November 18. The money will be used in purchasing picture frames that will display memorabilia on the Post home walls. Ed's son, Gary (not pictured) wanted to make a donation in his father's name for Veteran's Day. (Matt Klos photo).



Woodstock VFW leaders greet Woodstock Mayor Brian Sager before the start of the annual November 11 Veterans Day program on Throop Street. From left: Bill Lyford, Commander; Howard Engstrom, chaplain; Mayor Brian Sager and Thom Gillespie, VFW Quartermaster. (Don Peasley photo).



## Special note for advertisers in the VFW News

By Matt Klos, VFW News Editor

This is the last issue of 2006 and I want to personally thank each of the advertisers for your continued support throughout each month by keeping an ad published in this newsletter.

In the month of December each advertiser will be receiving a renewal letter and questionnaire based on your ad in the VFW News as well as on the Post 5040 website. Please be sure to return the questionnaire with your renewal payment to the Post. Detailed instructions will accompany each letter sent out.

I have one thing I would like to mention that is changing in 2007. Since taking over as editor of this newsletter in 2002, advertiser rates in the VFW News have remained unchanged. For 2007, rates are going up from \$100 per year to \$125 per year, an increase of \$2.08 per month.

Our Post values your support in helping to defray newsletter costs and we hope you will continue to advertise with us in the coming year. Any questions on this, please contact me: (815)-382-4593.

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The books & records of the Quartermaster & Adjutant of POST 5040 5TH DIST.				
Department of ILLINOIS for the Quarter ending Dec 31, 2006				
FISCAL Quarter >>>		Oct-06		
POST 5040				
	Start of Qtr	QTR In	QTR Out	End of Qtr
1. Admin or App Fees	-1,055.00		230.00	-1,285.00
2. Nat & Dept Dues	1,267.00	61.50		1,328.50
3. POST Gen Fund	-1,174.73	1,125.00	1,183.71	-1,233.44
4. POST Relief Fund	4,302.68		179.73	4,122.95
5. Post Dues Reserve Fund	372.00	62.00		434.00
6. New Building Fund	16,594.80	198.00		16,792.80
7. Fly Flag Book Fund	1,687.81			1,687.81
8. Memorial Day Fund	2,306.11			2,306.11
9. Other in Post Account	-808.61	1,607.00	335.49	462.90
10. Color Guard	500.00			500.00
11. Honor Guard	2,325.49	50.00	85.00	2,290.49
12. Post Bar / CANTEEN Acct.	2,647.50	7,707.50	9,181.47	1,173.53
13. Post HOME Fund	-6,799.93	165.00	1,855.26	-8,490.19
14. Pull Tab Account IL. LISC. P-0839	2,583.61	200.00	275.00	2,508.61
15. Savings Account Interest	58.68			58.68
16. Raffle Account	1,413.84	2,338.00	47.03	3,704.81
Totals:	26,221.25	13,514.00	13,372.69	26,362.56
Post AND Savings Total	19,517.62	3,268.50	3,869.19	18,916.93
Operations				
Reconciliation of Fund & Account Balances				
Have required payroll deductions been made?	Yes	Savings Acct	18,237.49	18,237.49
Tax Payments been made to ST. & Fed?	Yes	Canteen Bar	3,258.69	1,890.45
Sales Taxes collected & PAID?	Yes	Post Acct	1,468.12	661.20
Club employees bonded?	some	Pull Tab Acct	2,508.61	2,508.61
Amount of outstanding bills?	\$ -	Raffle Acct	3,064.81	3,064.81
Value of Real Estate?	\$ 657,000.00	Uncleared checks	2,175.16	0.00
Amount of Liability Insurance?	\$ 2,000,000.00	-\$ 0.00	Quicken Total	26,362.56
Owed on Mortgages & Loans?	\$ -	\$ -	Bank Total	26,362.56
Trustee's & Commander's and Certificate of Audit				



## From the editor's desk

By Matt Klos, *VFW News* Editor

This is the last column I have to write for this newsletter for 2006 and it is usually the hardest. I have a whole blank page in front of me and I am thinking "what should I put in here." Well, something will come to me as I write.

As I reflect on the last year at our Post, there is a lot I have not seen because I have not been to a meeting since April. However, I have heard about things going on at the Post from officers and talked with people on how things are going in general.

For the most part, I think our Post is on track and getting back on solid ground. From comments I have heard and members I spoken with, it sounds like Becky Gillespie (Quartermaster Thom Gillespie's wife) is doing a superb job in getting the kitchen in order, booking hall rentals, and dedicating a lot of time to the Post. One side of me says this is great for our Post, but the other side of me says that we should not be dumping everything on Becky and bogging her down with more than she can handle. From kitchen to managing books, Becky has taken on responsibilities that, as a Post, should have been fulfilled from our own membership. But, with membership as it currently is, we did not have this luxury and lucky for us, Becky had the skills, the knowledge, and heart to help our Post out. I personally want to acknowledge and thank Becky for this past year of hard work and dedication to VFW Post 5040. You have done a wonderful job.

Our Post reached a wonderful milestone this year, celebrating 60 years since our Post was chartered. We had a very nice celebration dinner and a lot of people took advantage of rekindling old friendships when seeing an old VFW member for the first time in many years. This event took a lot of work to put on and we had a great group of people that put in time and effort to pull it off. This coming year, the Auxiliary will celebrate their 60 year anniversary as well.

I am looking at each months *VFW News* in front of me from this year, remembering month by month what went on and was taking place at the time. I see the pictures and stories of events that have taken place and who has written them. Many of these stories I have put together, yet there are quite a few that have been put together by the *VFW News*' first editor, Don Peasley.

There are probably more columns by Don than any other contributor, including myself. Same goes for the pictures. We are so fortunate as a Post to have a member like Don who is able to document, through words and pictures, events that have taken place in our community relating to veterans. Since taking over this job as editor for the *VFW News* in 2002, Don really never "left" our little Post newsletter. He basically wanted someone to do most of the legwork in putting it together so he could concentrate on what he does best, creating stories, covering events, and taking pictures.

What he creates about our Post events and veteran related material he often gives to me for use in the *VFW News*. Some of his stories that he provides me may have been published in the *Woodstock Independent*, or *Northwest Herald*, but some of us don't get these newspapers. A lot of his pictures may not make it into these newspapers either, so they are great assets that end up in our newsletter for all our membership to enjoy.

Even in this issue, you will notice that Don created many stories as well as took a lot of pictures covering Veterans Day. I could have cut this issue down by several pages, left out some pictures here and there, but I felt that they were important. They showed that the community was involved in learning about Veterans Day, what the day means, and learning from those generations that experienced what it meant to be a veteran first hand. I had to include most of what Don had sent me because it just wouldn't seem right not using it.

So once again, thanks to Don this past year for your continued contributions to this newsletter. It is very much appreciated by all who read the *VFW News*.

From a readers point of view, there are things that don't make it into this newsletter because they are not covered by Don or myself, or it was something that happened at the last moment and details of the event were not readily known. This is where I wish I could make an improvement to this newsletter if I could.

Every day, there are people dedicated to

maintaining our Post, cleaning, bartending, etc. A lot of this is volunteer work and goes unnoticed. The people we don't see and read about are the people that we really need to thank. They do their job and help our Post home to function, be a meeting place for community groups, and be a place for VFW members to care about.

So, for all of you that have not made it into the newsletter by name or picture, but have helped the Post in some way to keep functioning, thank you for your hard work over this past year.

As I look forward to 2007 and what is to come in this next year, I hope that we as a Post will continue to serve our community and fellow veterans in a positive way.

We will be faced with challenges over this next year, dealing with everything from money issues to finding volunteers to help out in fundraising events. One major challenge that gets tougher each year that affects our WWII members is just the basic health of these members. A significant part of our membership belongs to this group. The younger groups of veterans that exist within our Post need to step up a little more and help out when needed, even if only for a few times a year. It would really make a difference.

Finally, drawing membership from the new groups of eligible veterans will be tough hurdle that we all face on a daily basis. How can we, as a Post, draw in new membership from our community from the veterans of Iraq and other conflict areas of the world? How can we make our organization appealing to them to make them say "I want to join the VFW"? If I had the answer, I could help out a lot of VFW Posts across the country.

Well, I am just about out of space and I think I am done writing. Next month I will have some details on the Turkey Raffle that took place on November 18. I didn't have all the numbers at the time I wrote this, but then again I will probably need some material for next month.

By the way, if any of our membership has a change of address (snow birds, this means you) and wants this newsletter delivered/stopped/redirected somewhere other than your current address, please let me know. On the last page is my contact information. Please use it if you have a change.

To all of the VFW and Auxiliary membership, I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Please be safe over the holidays and I hope that 2007 turns out to be a wonderful year for you.


*Editor, Matthew Klos*

# December 2006

☆☆☆☆☆☆ Post Normal Operating Hours (unless noted otherwise - closing times vary depending on patronage) ☆☆☆☆☆☆

Closed	4:00 pm - 9:00 pm	4:00 pm - 9:00 pm	4:00 pm - 10:00 pm	4:00 pm - 9:00 pm	4:00 pm - 10:00 pm	3:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1 Friday Dinner Special: Salmon Loaf (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	2
3 Memorial Day Committee 7 pm  Little League 7 pm  Girls Softball ?? pm	4	5 Dirtt Group 7 pm	6 Wednesday Dinner Specials - BBQ Ribs (\$10) or Fried Chicken (\$8) 5 - 8 pm  Cub Scouts - ?? pm	7 VFW Ladies Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm	8 Friday Dinner Special: Meat Loaf (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	9
10 VFW Officers Mtg. 7 pm  American Legion 7:30 pm	11	12 VFW Board Mtg. 7pm  Dirtt Group 7 pm	13 Wednesday Dinner Specials - Prime Rib - 10 oz cut (\$10) 5 - 8 pm	14	15 Friday Dinner Special: Salmon Loaf (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	16
17	18 VFW Meeting 6:30 pm - Dinner (VFW Members Only) 7:30 pm - Floor mtg.  Deadline for January 2007 VFW News items	19 Dirtt Group 7 pm	20 Wednesday Dinner Specials - BBQ Ribs (\$10) or Fried Chicken (\$8) 5 - 8 pm  Veterans Assistance Commission of McHenry County 7:30 pm	21 Marines 7 pm  Marines Auxiliary 7 pm	22 Friday Dinner Special: Lasagna w/Garlic Bread (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	23
24	25  <b>Merry Christmas</b>	26 VFW Board Mtg. 7:00 pm  Jaycees 7 pm  Dirtt Group 7 pm	27 Wednesday Dinner Specials - Pork Chop (\$8) or Seasoned Chicken Breast (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	28	29 Friday Dinner Special: Chicken Teriyaki (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	30
31  <b>New Year's Eve - 2006</b>	1  <b>Happy New Year - 2007</b>	2	3 Wednesday Dinner Specials - BBQ Ribs (\$10) or Fried Chicken (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	4 VFW Ladies Auxiliary Meeting 7 pm	5 Friday Dinner Special: Salmon Loaf (\$8) 5 - 8 pm	6

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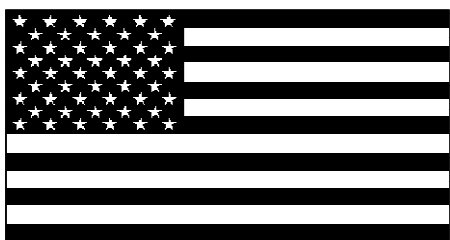
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