



**MADRAS
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
POST 12141
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December 2014 Newsletter



WELCOME TO OUR VERY FIRST NEWSLETTER!!!

The Madras VFW Post 12141 was chartered in July of 2014. Many things have happened during those few short months. This issue will attempt to highlight our progress, accomplishments and our plans for 2015.

We will attempt to publish this newsletter quarterly. If you have any items (photos, articles, events, etc.) you would like share with our comrades in future editions of this newsletter please contact the editor Len Parsons at: lenp49@gmail.com

July 2014 Chartering

At the July 2nd meeting we achieved the minimum requirements of 35 individuals becoming charter members or Post 12141. Our sincere appreciation to VFW District 10 officers John Wrinkle and Judith Burger for their efforts in cultivating interest within the Madras community. Without them we would not have a post in Madras.

From the Commander

I would like to say thank you to all members that have made it possible for post 12141 to be here now. Already we have done so much as you can see in this news letter, and our post is just getting started. I am very impressed with how dedicated our members are. There are three ideas in the near future I would like our post to explore. First one being volunteer opportunities with Jefferson county kids club. The second idea is fund raising for the post. And third is fund raising for care packages for troops, and the cost to send the packages. Any ideas would be greatly welcomed and discussed. Let's keep this great momentum going as we come into the new year.



What is the VFW all about?

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is a national association of men and women who as soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen served this Nation in wars, campaigns, and expeditions of foreign soil or in hostile waters.

The purposes of our corporation are fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational, and are:

- To preserve and strengthen comradeship among our members;
- To assist worthy comrades;
- To perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their widows and orphans;
- To maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States, and the fidelity to its constitution and laws;
- To foster true patriotism;
- To maintain and extend the institution of the American freedom; and
- To preserve and defend the United States from all enemies.

If you would like to join our post and help us achieve our goals, please contact one of our officers noted above (or any one of our members).

Examples of what we do in the community are discussed throughout this newsletter. In addition to the specific events and activities noted we continue to support our local veterans in many ways including:

- Assisted veteran with plumbing issue
- Transportation to the Bend VA clinic for multiple veterans

- Encouraged multiple veterans to apply for hearing loss compensation from the VA – one ended up with a 100% rating!

Air Show of the Cascades

In August VFW District 10 set up a booth at the air show. Post 12141 members manned the booth and recruited several new members. Those of us who manned the booth had the opportunity to interact with veterans and the general public and discuss what the VFW does in the community. Trust me, it was FUN!



Metolius Spike and Rail Day

In September Post 12141 set up the booth for the day and recruited more new members. A beautiful day to mingle with the crowd and talk about the VFW! And a great little parade as well!



Voice of Democracy & Patriot's Pen

In September we kicked off the scholarship committee and started visiting all the schools encouraging participation in both of these programs.

The Voice of Democracy program for high school students requires entrants to write and record a three- to five-minute script on a patriotic theme. "Why Veterans are Important to our Nation's History and Future"

The Patriot's Pen essay writing contest for middle school students is a worldwide competition that gives students in grades 6, 7 and 8 the opportunity to write a 300-400 word theme-based essay expressing their views on democracy.

After many hours of hard work by all committee members we selected one Voice of Democracy and one Patriot's Pen winner for advancement to District 10 competition. Madras High School Junior Joshua Hocker and Redmond's Elton Gregory Middle School 8th grader Austin Welsh will receive \$200 (Joshua) and \$100 (Austin) scholarships.

Teacher of the Year Award

Along with the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen scholarship contests we also encouraged all of the Madras, Metolius and Culver schools to nominate teacher's for this award. The Teacher of the Year award goes to an outstanding teacher who promotes citizenship and leadership in the classroom. Anyone (parent, pastor, neighbor, etc.) can nominate a teacher for this award so keep that in mind for next year's competition.

This year's winner was Tina Wagonblast, a 5th grade teacher from Madras Intermediate

School. Tina advanced to District 10 competition and placed first and now will advance on to Department level competition.

If Tina advances on to National level competition she will compete for up to \$1000 in awards for her and her the school. We wish her luck!

Yellow Ribbon Program

In October we participated in the Yellow Ribbon Program at Eagle Crest near Redmond. The Yellow Ribbon Program is an Oregon National Guard program designed to connect the family members of deployed guard unit with support groups here at home. The VFW is among MANY organizations providing support and assistance to those family members.



Skin Cancer Screening

Dr. Oliver Wisco (Lt. Col., Oregon Air National Guard), dermatologist, from the Bend Memorial Clinic has offered to provide skin cancer screening at no cost to our members. If you are interested, please contact Len Parsons.



Veterans Day Tribute

Soon after the Erickson Aircraft Collection opened their doors in August, I (Len Parsons) visited with the management team to enquire about the possibility of some of our members volunteering at the museum. Unfortunately, they cannot use volunteer labor due to the fact they are a “for profit” organization and cannot (under IRS rules) use volunteer labor.

However, they asked if the VFW would be interested in developing a Veterans Day program in the museum. Needless to say, we could not turn down the opportunity!

Within seven weeks we managed to pull together a tribute to our veterans with participation by the Madras High School Band, JROTC and three distinguished speakers.

Over two hundred people were in attendance and enjoyed patriotic music by the band, intriguing speakers and a beautiful rendition of Taps by Kyle Yeager to conclude the POW/MIA segment.

In addition we had hot dogs and cake for everyone after the ceremony was complete.

Thanks to all who helped with this program. Let’s do it even better for 2015! Special thanks to comrade Ken Keeton and his wife for having the magnetic VFW emblem made as well as making an emergency run to the store for more hot dog buns – all at their own expense!

If you would like to help us make next year’s Veterans Day Tribute an even bigger and better event, please contact one of our post officers (or any one of our members) and let us sign you up! Membership is only \$35 per year.



Cmdr. Ellis Skidmore



JROTC Color Guard



LTC Renfro



Eugene Brick



The Cake tasted pretty good too!

Membership GROWS!

At our meeting on December 3rd we voted to accept a total of eleven new members into our ranks. We have now grown from the original 35 members to 62 members – quite a leap from the original 35!

If you or someone you know would like to join our organization, please contact one of our officers (or any one of our members) or send us an email at the address noted on page one.

The post thanks our comrades from District for their efforts in helping us achieve this tremendous growth. Specifically John Wrinkle and Judith Burger recruited over half of our new members for us! Additionally the following post members contributed to our growth as follows:

Floyd Leach – 4 new members

Len Parsons – 3 new members

Wayne Krueger – 2 new members

Ben Keeton – 1 new member

John Wrinkle (Dist. 10 Cmdr) – 10 new mbrs

Judith Burger (Dist. 10 Qtrmstr) – 1 new member

Keep up the good work!

Troop Support

During the months of October and November the post solicited donations for “care packages” to send to our deployed troops. The program was a HUGE success with nearly 500 pounds (15 large boxes) of food, cloths, games, batteries, etc. being collected.

These items were delivered to the Caring for Troops organization in Bend on December 6th and will be much appreciated by our deployed troops.

Caring for Troops solicits names of Central Oregon service members currently deployed and mails care packages directly to them. If you know of anyone currently deployed, get their name and address to Caring for Troops and they will send them a package! Please see their website at:

<http://www.caringfortroops.com/>



Over Fifteen Boxes and Nearly 500 Pounds



Warm Socks



Three Boxes of Books



Three Boxes of Snacks and Food



Games, Playing Cards, Movies and Batteries

From the Quartermaster

Thanks to everyone who actively recruited new members. We nearly doubled our membership in five months! Imagine where we would be if we continue at that rate! Congratulations!

Unfortunately, several of the applications were missing some critical information. Specifically:

- Dates of Service
- Recruiter information
- Conflict the veteran served in
- Membership fees were not collected
- IF paying with a credit card – the card expiration date
- AND don't forget to have the applicant sign on the back of the application

Your help in getting all the information AND collecting their membership fees is appreciated. Speaking of fees – if you remember correctly at our October meeting we voted to add \$1.00 to the initial (first year) membership fee to cover the “Admission Fee”. Therefore, the correct amount to collect is \$36. Subsequent annual membership renewals we be \$35.

Remembering Robert Kelly

Robert joined the post at the Veterans Day Tribute in November. He passed a few short days later. We posthumously welcome him to the post. Our thought and prayers are with his loved ones.