

The American Legion

Renton-Pickering Post # 79



The North Bend-Snoqualmie Legionnaire

P.O. Box 359 38625 SE River Street, Snoqualmie, WA 98065

February 2024 Issue



WEBSITE: <https://www.waalpost79.org/>

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY 2024

FEB 2-4th Department Midwinter Conference. Rebuilding our Department one conference at a time!

FEB 3rd (SAT) FOUR CHAPLAINS DAY (See Article Below)

FEB 7th (WED) Shelter Vacating Our Post. We will be announcing any work parties by Email and expect to be renovating and refurbishing the Post.

FEB 8th (THURS) Post 79 Monthly Meeting at the Post - 38625 SE River St, Snoqualmie, WA with beer and pizza afterwards at the Post.

FEB 14th (WED) Tahoma National Cemetery Duty Day for Honor Guard

THE FOUR CHAPLAINS 80TH ANNIVERSARY



Feb. 3 is Four Chaplains Day. The day commemorates the events 80 years ago on Feb. 3, 1943 when the troop ship United States Army Transport Dorchester sank. Dorchester left New York on Jan. 23, 1943, carrying four chaplains and about 900 others as a part of convoy of three ships.

Four Chaplains Day will mark the **80th anniversary** of the sinking of the Dorchester and the selfless acts of four Army chaplains aboard. The Dorchester tragically sunk on Feb. 3, 1943, while crossing the north Atlantic, transporting troops to an American base in Greenland.

A German U-boat fired a torpedo that struck the Dorchester, killing 672 of the 902 officers and enlisted men, merchant seamen and civilian workers aboard. Many of the survivors owe their lives to the courage and leadership exhibited by four chaplains of different faiths, who, in sacrificing their lives, created a unique legacy of brotherhood.

As soldiers rushed to lifeboats, Reverend George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reverend Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic) comforted the wounded and directed others to safety. One survivor watched the chaplains distribute life jackets, and when they ran out, they removed theirs and gave them to four young men. As the Dorchester sank, the chaplains were seen linked arm in arm praying.

American Legion posts nationwide remember Four Chaplains Day with memorial services that pay tribute to the courageous chaplains and the brave young men who lost their lives on that fateful night.

Ask your mayor or governor to issue a proclamation designating the first Sunday of February "Four Chaplains Sunday."

No Greater Glory: The Four Chaplains' Sacrifice and the Legacy they Left Behind



ATTENTION ON DECK FROM THE COMMANDER

Here we are in February 2024, in eight days Post 79 will starting to move back into our Home. This will be a process and will take time to get the post to where we may want it. This is going to take all hands-on deck to help. My hope it to have us at level where we can open our door to host some level of events and start raising funds to go forward to go on to bigger and better services for our community Veterans and their families.

Our volunteer Community Resource Coordinator, **Rachel Johnston** has already been talking to companies about renting our post for events. We can help here by doing our part by telling people about us.

This is an important time for us to come together both as Legionnaires in Post meetings and a place to relax, tell old war stories to ears that will understand. I have a goal, in reaching to young people who may need direction, do our part to lower Veterans suicides. I see great things happening for Post 79, but it will take all of us together.



Lets try this idea. Those of us that are over 70 to 80 yrs old help those of us that are 40 to 60 years old, and then all of us help the younger ones. Well, it's an Idea.

I hope to see as many of you at our next meeting. Beer and Pizza will be served at the Post, lets start with a bang. The next meeting is on Thursday, February 8th, at 1900 hrs.

We have retaken the high ground. P.S. bring your spouse.

Michael Pollina, Commander, AL Post 79



THE ADJUTANT'S CORNER

The Adjutant's Corner

The January Executive Committee meeting, held on January 9th discussed a number of issues and proposals which I'll summarize here.

Rachel Johnston outlined her new appointment from our Post Commander as the new "Community Relations Coordinator". This role would involve a number of activities and actions that will surely benefit our Post in the following ways:

- Recruiting and coordinating volunteers to perform service and support at Post functions, research projects, technical projects and other activities on behalf of the Post.
- Assist in marketing Post 79 issues online and to maintain a social media page
- Contribute relevant articles to the monthly Post newsletter Assist with financial and material donor outreach efforts on behalf of the Post.
- Assist with coordinating the annual Poppy Fund drive and staffing multiple booths sponsored by Post 79 to maximize our Poppy Fund donations for maximum giving Attend and even organize community networking events on behalf of Post 79

Rachel Johnston also detailed a survey she conducted alongside Johnny (South Fork Café) which revealed our need to outfit our Post kitchen with a new gas stove that can handle 2 turkeys at a time, 6 burners along with a possible venting hood if required. We also need a mobile prep table, oil disposal box and commercial utensils for cooking and serving. We also need 2 refrigerator/freezers to hold food to be prepared and to freeze meats and cooked food, along with an ice maker machine.

Commander Pollina presented his proposal to paint our Post interior with a red, white and blue color scheme, and circulated paint chips which represented his vision of the shades that would make our Post an outstanding example of patriotism and décor. All members are going to be welcome in helping us paint the Post interior in the coming months.

Other items of business were conducted regarding fire codes and alarms, floor repairs which involve sanding and varnishing the base wooden planks, and a host of other topics involving reclaiming our Post building after a 3 year hiatus. All hands are requested to pitch in over the next few months to turn our building into a warm, welcoming and inviting place for fellow Legionnaires to meet and promote our continuing fellowship.

George Townsend, Adjutant/1st Vice Cdr.

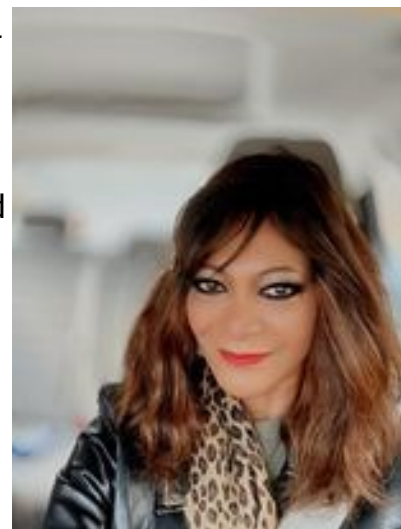
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

I am Rachel Y. Johnston, the new Community Relations Coordinator for American Legion Post 79, Snoqualmie, Washington. I will serve as a liaison between Post 79 and the community at large. We are so excited that Post 79 will move back into their post building in February! We look forward to reaching out as we recruit volunteers and solicit donations when we transition back and plan for upcoming events! If you want to serve our veterans and make a difference, we invite you to become a volunteer! Please email me for information:

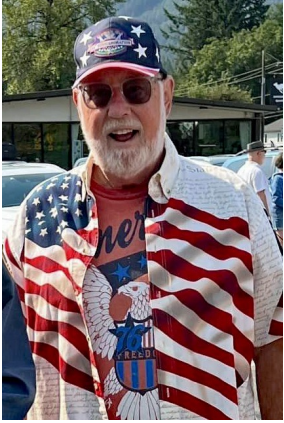
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Rachel Y. Johnston, Community Relations Coordinator

American Legion Post 79, Snoqualmie, WA



RECENT APPOINTMENTS OF OUR 2ND VICE CDR



In addition to my recent appointment by District Commander Carrol Stripling as District Judge Advocate, I have also been appointed to these two important positions, which will help increase exposure and involvement between the Post, District, Department and National American Legion organizations:

1. As one of the 12 members from WA Departments' Districts I will be helping the National Advisory Committee re-write the Department's governing documents—the Constitution and By-Laws.
2. As the American Legion's national legislative liaison with Rep. Kim Schrier's Office in Issaquah and Washington D.C. I will be the Representative's main point of contact.

Both these new roles will be realized at the coming Department's Mid-Winter Conference Feb 2-3, 2024, in Olympia. During our next general membership meeting at Post 79 on February 8, 2024, I will provide a detailed report on the progress being made in getting needed veteran's-related legislation written and passed, and the Department's governing documents re-written to allow for new election of officers and reinstatement of the revoked charter, hopefully at the Summer Convention in the Tri-Cities.

The re-writing efforts by the Committee will use the Iowa templates (because they are the country's "average" model), seek relevant WA input, and avoid the pitfalls occurring with previous failed leadership, DEI violations, and operational dysfunctionality prompting the Department's charter suspension.

William "Bill" Cottringer
Post 79 2nd Vice Commander
District 11 Judge Advocate

TAHOMA NATIONAL CEMETERY HONOR GUARD

Cold wet day last month at Tahoma National Cemetery with just two services. One was for a Marine CPL with Vietnam service and the other one was USAF Retired MSGT with Vietnam service. Normally our 2nd Wednesday is the lightest day of the week with Fridays having 8 or more services. We had a full team with Chaplain Michael Pollina (AL 79), Bugler Berry Edwards (VFW 2995), and a 4-Man Rifle Detail with George Townsend and Alan Brown (AL 79), Brent Wilde and Jeff Starkey (VW 2995) led by Art Farash (AL 79).



Many of the volunteer groups are losing members due to age and attrition and younger volunteers are not stepping forward. Providing Military Burial Honors should be the primary duty of all VSO Honor Guards. At present there are VFW Honor Guards from Renton, North Seattle, Federal Way, Enumclaw and Kent; American Legion from Kent, Kirkland/Bellevue, Renton and Snoqualmie; the Kent DAV; Burien Elks; Muckleshool Intertribal Warriors; Gig Harbor Peninsula Vets; the USV/JSC; and the Marine Corps League. The Monroe Corrections Center HG augments the VSO's and the Washington Army National Guard. There are no VSO's from Pierce County.

COFFEE WITH COMRADES



Coffee with Comrades

All Veterans Welcome

EVERY SATURDAY 9:00 AM

SOUTH FORK RESTAURANT

Enjoy the fellowship of other Veterans and
a cup of coffee.

14303 436th Ave SE, North Bend
Near Exit 32
Drop in for a visit.






Our first 2024 "Coffee With Comrades" veterans meetup today at South Fork was a big success with a total of 15 attending including Members, Spouses and Guests. We took a poll to see if we want this to be a weekly Saturday morning get together or monthly if at least 5 or more show up. A majority voted to continue every Saturday morning. Come and enjoy a breakfast and the coffee is FREE. We had 7 at our second Meetup even with the icy roads and weather. Thanks to Post 79 Member **Johnny Blair** for being our host at **South Fork - A MEMBER OWNED BUSINESS!**

SHARING YOUR "WAR STORIES"



With this issue we are introducing something new - a place to share your very own war stories. We all have our own stories. Some of us are better "story tellers" than others. Don't be shy and share your own here. And as the logo says **"NO BS"** Our own "master" story teller George Townsend launches his first story for your reading pleasure. Art promises one next month.

How A Navy Frigate Gave A Frenchman And A Cow A Bath

In 1978, I was a junior officer on a US Navy Frigate (USS Pharris, FF-1094). We were assigned to a NATO ship squadron comprised of ships from England, Germany, Holland, Norway, Canada and other countries. We had just finished a 3-day port visit to the French city of Nantes, which is about 20 miles up the Loire River from the Atlantic Ocean. Upon our departure from Nantes, my ship was the last in line to shove off, so we all sailed downriver together at a speed of about 8 knots.

As the convoy was heading down the river towards the ocean, we found ourselves falling farther behind the other ships, as we were going slower due to the restricted navigation of a deep but narrow river. Our captain ordered up a temporary engine speed of 20 knots so we could catch up to the column and maintain our assigned spacing from the other ships. As Junior Officer of the Deck, my job was to look out for other ships, assist in the safe navigation of our ship, operate the radios and help the Officer of the Deck, who was actually driving our frigate. *(Continued on Page 6)*

As our ship picked up speed, our bow wave and stern waves started to build in height and volume. A 7,000 ton frigate displaces a lot of water, and the faster we went, the higher the bow and stern waves became. I used my binoculars to look downriver to ensure no other ship traffic would interfere with our transit, and happened to notice the classic Frenchman with a black smock and beret sitting on the riverbank with a fishing pole in his hands and a pipe in his mouth...his feet dangling into the river as a cow quietly grazed in the bucolic pasture where he was sitting. This gentle Frenchman was watching and waving



at all the foreign warships steaming past his position at a leisurely 8 knots, and not pushing up much in the way of a bow or stern wave. His attention was fixed upon the ships downriver, and he had no notice of the American warship bearing down on his position at an increasing level of speed.

As my ship drew abreast of the fisherman, he noticed us and gave a friendly wave, whereby I returned his signal and muttered under my breath, "standby for heavy waves and a refreshing fresh-water bath". Our ship was well-past his riverbank fishing spot when our bow wave, now the size of a small tsunami, came curling over the riverbank at about an 8 foot elevation, which would be about 5 feet above the Frenchman's head. He became totally overwhelmed in the maelstrom of water that flooded over him, and the same wave caught the cow grazing beside him with a full-on broadside of water, knocking her down like a strike in a bowling alley. After the deluge, the soaking-wet Frenchman stood up, shaking his fist at our ship as the stern wave crept upon him unseen as his attention was directed downriver at our fleeing ship. Again, he was knocked to the grass along with the floundering cow who was pretty much fed up with this river water nonsense.

As our ship closed back up to its assigned station in the flotilla's column, I looked behind us with my binoculars, and I can only recall a very wet and soaking Frenchman waving his arms and mouthing unintelligible insults (I assume in French) towards the American Navy. And that, my friends, is how a US Navy frigate gave a Frenchman and a cow a bath on a sunny, Spring day along the River Loire.

George Townsend

Lieutenant Commander, US Navy Reserve (Retired)



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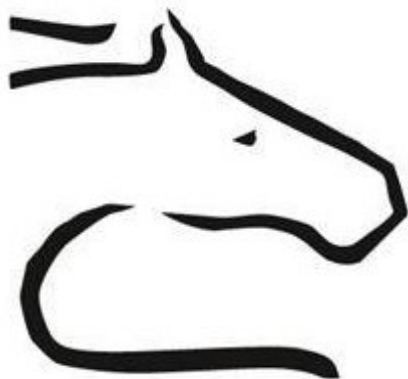
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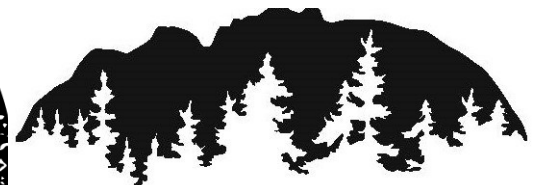
NWNHC

Family Fund

**POST 79 PROUDLY
SUPPORTS VETERANS
REHAB PROGRAMS**



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ROAD - MEMBER OWNED
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The North Bend - Snoqualmie Legionnaire is the Monthly E-Newsletter of American Legion Post 79, the Department of Washington. Its purpose is to keep Members and well as the Local Community informed about our activities and events over the past month and information about upcoming events. Nothing is copywrited and can be forwarded and shared with others. We are on social media at #<https://www.facebook.com/groups/legionpost79>. Comments and articles with photos may be sent to the Editor at artfarash@gmail.com Thank you for reading and sharing.