

The American Legion

Renton-Pickering Post # 79



The North Bend-Snoqualmie Legionnaire

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

March 2024 Issue



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

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MARCH - APRIL 2024

- March 13th (Wed) Tahoma National Cemetery Duty Day for Honor Guard**
- March 14th (Thurs) Post 79 Monthly Meeting at the Post - 38625 SE River St, Snoqualmie**
- March 29th (Friday) National Vietnam War Veterans Day**
- April 10th (Wed) Tahoma National Cemetery Honor Guard**
- April 11th (Thurs) Post 79 Monthly Meeting - Nominations for 2024-2025 Officers**

FROM THE POST COMMANDER



Exciting times are ahead of us. We moved back into our post, but there is much to do to be a fully functional post. The good news, we are starting out right. We recently purchased a new dishwasher and freezer for the post, leaving a need for a refrigerator.

Hopefully, you have already shown up for the work party and we have completed that need. For our post to be successful, we must be able to hold events to meet our monthly expenses, which have now increased since we have fully taken back the post. I may have beaten this drum before, but if no money comes in, then we can no longer keep the post open.

Grants have become available, and we are presently applying for them. We also have groups that are talking to us about renting our post for their events.

We are working on creating a contract for these events and getting our name out there through media advertising.

Our Community Resource Coordinator Rachel is already working on all this.

Coming up in March is the 50th anniversary of the close of the Vietnam conflict. I would like to see a plan to honor our Heroes who never left the battlefields and those of us who made it home. A simple service would be nice. All ideas are welcome.

On Feb. 20th, I met with congressional representative Kim Schrier to discuss Veteran Suicides; Veteran DoD retirees are losing some of their retirement pay, and VA community care delays. I know there are far better qualified people than I talking to Congress, but I am talking from the street level. This is where the veteran lives.

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In closing, my goal is for us to have a grand opening in May, maybe for Veteran's Day or a little sooner. We can start discussing ideas for this.

There is an opportunity for us to create a positive impact on our community. Let's all be active participants in our local post, going beyond just being paying members.

Michael Pollina, Commander
American Legion Post 79

THE ADJUTANT'S REPORT

The latest Post meeting was held on February 8th at the Post building with a total of 16 persons attending. The Adjutant report updated our members on our ongoing efforts to secure government and private grants to fund our expenses and operations. Other officer reports detailed recent attendance at the District Convention, Service Officer duties which include more than just VA claim assistance, but also cover burial arrangements, emergency cash distribution, job hunting and other activities in support of our veterans in need. Our Honor Guard continues to provide burial honors at Tahoma National Cemetery every 2nd Wednesday of the month, and recently received \$460 from the Washington Army National Guard to help defray our expenses for such services.

Our Commander had a full bag of items to cover, including:

- Planning to recognize Mt. Si HS seniors who are entering military service upon graduation
- Possible acquisition of kitchen and serving equipment from the Snoqualmie Casino
- Planning for our annual Poppy Fund drive this coming Memorial Day weekend
- Donation of \$500 to the Seattle USO (Airport) to help fund their veterans services
- Actions to raise funds through the use of our Post building for community services through the efforts of our new Community Relations Coordinator, Rachel Johnston.



Overall, now that we've reclaimed our Post building from the homeless shelter, we are in need of just about everything to furnish and decorate our Post so it once again looks like a Legion Post and provides a welcoming and inviting space for our meetings and ongoing functions. If you have couches, tables, chairs, lamps, rugs or any other furnishings that are in good shape and would complement our Post, please contact any Post officer or me, the Adjutant, at "gntownsend@yahoo.com". At the conclusion of our meeting, we enjoyed pizza and refreshments in our own Post building!

George Townsend
Adjutant/1st Vice Commander

WA DEPARTMENT'S MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

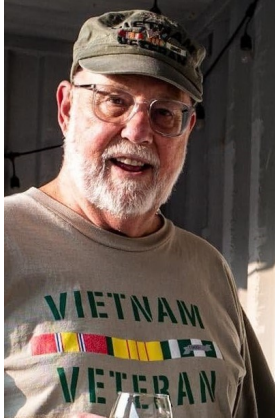
I previously gave our Post Executive Committee (PEC) and Post 79 General Membership a much longer report of all the news, training opportunities, officer duties and information gained from the two days at this conference, so this is just an executive summary. The last couple of meetings we've had regarding the process of re-installing the Department's charter, involved these highlights:

- One of the main problems prompting the earlier suspension of the Department's Charter was the combining of the Constitution and By-Laws into one governing document. They must be separated into two distinct documents and a small committee is re-writing these from the Iowa template, with local Washington State input.

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- This first draft will be presented for approval to the National Executive Committee (NEC) overseeing the reinstatement process.
- A final draft of these new documents will be the basis for a Constitutional Convention where they are ratified. This will then set the stage for a summer Convention to elect new Department officers.
- The only caveat to the post Constitution and By-Laws is that they can't violate the National governing documents.



There is no set prescription in place for doing this, so it is likened to the Department advisors and administrator building a new airplane while still flying the old one in the skies. It has been made clear, that the new governing documents will reinforce the local Post autonomy and the power will remain with the people and not "owned" by the Department. Also, the Districts will be strengthened in their conduit purpose of offering information and support to the posts, rather than providing leadership, with additional training. The Department is reinventing itself and going in the right direction, and deserves support from the Posts. Thank you.

**William "Bill" Cottringer, 2nd Vice Commander
American Legion Post 79**

THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Comrades, it is hard to believe it is already March!

The Military History of March holds several significant milestones, especially for those among us who served in the Vietnam conflict.

On March 8th, 1965, the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade landed at Da Nang, Vietnam, marking the start of large-scale US involvement in the Vietnam War. Likely with that date in mind, the month of March also commemorates National Vietnam War Veterans Day, observed annually on March 29. The day is set aside to remember the hardships and sacrifices endured by some 2.7 million Americans who served during the Vietnam War. This significant day honors the sacrifice of not only those who fell in harm's way but also those who returned, often with injuries and calamities not realized for many years after their return. The Vietnam War, which spanned from November 1, 1955, to April 30, 1975, On March 29, 1973, U.S. President Richard Nixon officially withdrew American combat forces, ending American involvement. The first Vietnam Veterans Day was held a year later, honoring those who served and remembering the sacrifices made during this grueling 19-year conflict. On this day, take time to remember the many who served, and say a prayer for those who are still affected by the service they provided to our great nation.

March also heralds a change in the seasons, and slowly increasing amounts of sunlight as the days lengthen. Hopefully, you can enjoy the breaks in the weather as we get ready for the coming Spring and Summer. For those inclined, This March also provides an opportunity for us to remember the significance of the events at Calvary, commemorated by Easter, which arrives for many on March 31st.



You are all in my prayers, and I pray that this month finds you well. Remember that we are a band of brothers and sisters, and there is no reason for any of us to be alone. I am an email away, as is the leadership. I, and they, stand ready to listen and help.

**For God and Country
Jim, Post 79 Chaplain**

OUR COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Post 79 is back in their post building and stronger than ever! We are recruiting veterans and volunteers. If you would like to become a volunteer, please email me:

info@CovenantEagleEnterprises.com

We host a Coffee Time event at the South Fork Restaurant in North Bend every Saturday at 9 a.m. Veterans and spouses are invited to enjoy a complimentary cup of coffee as they socialize in a relaxed environment. As you may know, we are increasing awareness of our Post 79 through our social media efforts within the Community!



Post 79 members are attending networking events within the community. The members are working as a team to renovate our building interior by cleaning, priming and painting our walls and finishing our floors! We are especially proud of our Commander Mike Pollina who has done so much for the Post as we transition! We are truly the American Legion Post 79 Reimagined!!

Thank you, Rachel Y. Johnston

Community Relations Coordinator

American Legion Post 79 – Snoqualmie, WA

OUR HONOR GUARD

On Feb 14th the Eastside Veterans Honor Guard today Feb 14th another light day with only two services for two Vietnam Veterans. Post 79 was represented by Chaplain Michael Pollina with George Townsend and Art Farash as the Rifle Detail plus two riflemen from Redmond VFW Post 2995. Thank you to our Members and those from Redmond VFW for volunteering each month to Honor our departed Veterans with full military honors. Shown here is Chaplain Pollina addressing the next of kin and family members.



Our Honor Guard serves one duty day each month at Tahoma National Cemetery always on the 2nd Wednesday. If interested in the Honor Guard please contact Art Farash at artfarash@gmail.com

NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY



March 29 is designated as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. This is a time to pay special tribute to the 9 million Americans who served during the Vietnam War era, to the 58,000 names memorialized on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., and to those who never received the recognition they deserved when they returned to America from war.

March 29, 1973, is the day U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam was disestablished and the day the last U.S. combat troops departed Vietnam. In addition, on and around this same day, the U.S. Vietnam War Commemoration stated that Hanoi released the last of its acknowledged prisoners of war.



NO B.S. WAR STORIES

This month our "war story" is from Art the Editor. Its impossible to have any stories equal to George's last month but here's his attempt.

Here's a "NO B.S." story from Vietnam that comes to mind. In 1968 I was assigned to the 4th MI Det, 4th Inf Div at Camp Enari in the Central Highlands in Pleiku Province. One day while at the Messhall one of the cooks, an older SP5 who was in WW II, showed us an M-14 rifle that he said was left there in the rifle rack for several weeks and asked if we wanted it. I was there with SP6 Mike Bertram my buddy who was a former WW II German Wehrmacht soldier.



A few days later we were invited to go with an older SSG from Civil Affairs to visit a nearby French plantation manager. After a few drinks we gave the Frenchman the M-14 to use as a hunting rifle which he gladly accepted. A week or so later I went to the Division HQ NCO Club where there was a pig roast and when I asked where the pig came from was told it came from the Frenchman who donated it to the NCO Club. This story itself is not so unique – what is unique are the friends I made in Vietnam who had unique backgrounds. We probably would have been in deep trouble if found out.

Mike Bertram was a 45 year old SP6 soldier who fought in the German Army in WW II in France and Eastern Europe, was captured and incarcerated by the British as a PW and later emigrated to the US where he was promptly drafted in the US Army and sent to Korea which he described as worse and colder than the East Front. He stayed in the Army and had almost 20 years of service. He was the most kindhearted guy I ever met in the Army and actually had tears in his eyes if he saw you know who doing hard interrogations. Photo shows Mike at a "liaison" visit to the ARVN MI Commander but that's another story.



The photo at the plantation above shows another interesting guy who was an older SSGT with Civil Affairs who was one of the last active duty "Farriers" in the Army and had been shoeing horses at Ft Riley, KS. Working as a Veterinary Specialist he visited villages and gave emergency care to animals like treating bloated water buffalos. We were sort of a "band of brothers" of older "lifers" in a sea of younger recruits and draftees at the Division who hung out and took care of each other.

THE WORK HAS ONLY STARTED

There is still much more to be done and the job of washing down the walls and applying primer paint started on Feb 24th with the help of many volunteers. There is still a lot of work to do like cleaning and painting the ceiling, sanding and refinishing the wood floors and much more. We hope to be done for Memorial Day.



What you are seeing here is the Post 79 Family in action all working together to remake the Post building into a center for not just Post 79 activities but also as a rental facility for the community and to provide income for the needs of our Post.



POST 79 ELECTED OFFICERS 2023-2024

POST COMMANDER
Michael Pollina
michaelpollinz@gmail.com
214.796.7072



POST ADJUTANT
1st VICE COMMANDER
George Townsend
arttownsend@yahoo.com
206.913.9199



2nd VICE COMMANDER
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206.914.1863



FINANCE OFFICER
Marty Smith
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SERVICE OFFICER
Dave Waggoner
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425.221.2503



JUDGE ADVOCATE
Chad Magendanz
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425.246.3782



HISTORIAN
Chad Tietje
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425.466.1879



SGT AT ARMS
Art Farash
artfarash@gmail.com
425.295.5309



APPOINTED OFFICERS

Armorer: George Townsend Honor Guard: Art Farash Newsletter: Art Farash



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 LOCAL PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



The **helpful** place.
VETERANS GET A 10% DISCOUNT ON ALL PURCHASES

FLINTOFT'S

Funeral Home and Crematory

Family owned and operated since 1938
SUPPORTING MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCES AND POST EVENTS

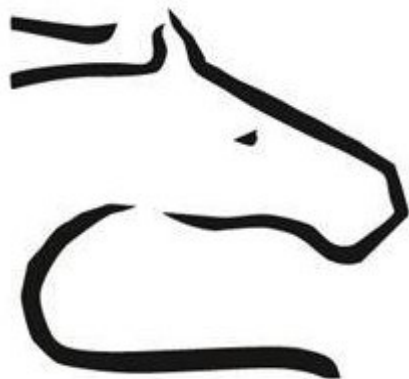
SNOQUALMIE VALLEY

Chamber of Commerce

We Help Your Business Succeed!



MT SI BARBER SHOP
FREDDY RUIZ MEMBER OWNED BUSINESS



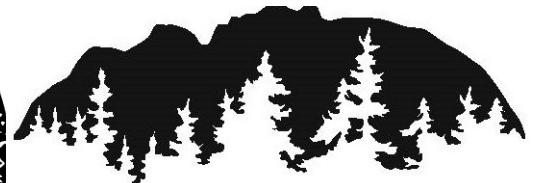
NWNHC

Family Fund

POST 79 PROUDLY SUPPORTS VETERANS REHAB PROGRAMS



SOUTH FORK RESTAURANT ON CEDAR FALLS ROAD - MEMBER OWNED BUSINESS - HOSTING OUR SATURDAY VETERANS MEETUPS



WATSON FAMILY

TREE CARE

MEMBER OWNED BUSINESS
KEVIN WATSON
(425) 615-5922

WFTC23@outlook.com
Providing expert tree care to the Snoqualmie Valley and surrounding area.

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.