



*Ballard Eagleson Patriot*  
Post 3063, Ballard, WA  
July-August 2015

### Upcoming Events

- July 2, 7:00 PM Business Meeting
- July 16, 5:30 PM Social Evening/Dinner
- August 6, 7:00 PM Business Meeting
- August 20, 5:30 PM Social Evening/Dinner
- September 3, 7:00 PM Business Meeting
- September 17, 5:30 PM Social Evening/ Dinner
- October 1, 7:00 PM Business Meeting
- October 15, 5:30 PM Social Evening/Dinner
- November 5, 7:00 PM Business Meeting
- November 19, 5:30 PM Social Evening/ Dinner
- December 3, 7:00 PM Business Meeting
- December 17, 5:30 PM Social Evening/ Dinner (Christmas Party)

### Gail Engler Retirement Party

On Saturday, June 13, a host of friends, relatives and compatriots from Ballard Eagleson VFW Post 3063 and the Leif Erikson Lodge of the Sons of Norway gathered for a party at our post to wish Gail Engler congratulations and many good wishes on her retirement from the U.S. Army Reserve. This month Gail completes an incredible 40 years' service with the Reserve. Many guests shared their compliments and obviously heartfelt appreciation for Gail, citing a multitude of examples of her wonderful caring nature and countless instances of volunteerism both at the post and for the Sons of Norway group and the community.

Gail comes from a military family—her father was a Marine in World War II. Upon graduation from high school in Montana, Gail enlisted in the Army, going on active duty in September 1974. Like many army veterans Gail had Basic Training at Fort Jackson, SC. After this, she was posted to the Signal Corps School in Fort Gordon, GA, where she received training in radio communications.

During her active duty service, she earned the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and the Iraq Campaign Medal from a year at Camp Victory in Baghdad, qualifying her for membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars. After three years on active duty, Gail remained in the Army Reserve for the next 37 years, ending with the rank of Master Sergeant.



She also attended college, earning an Associate Degree in Great Falls, MT, a BA in Sociology in Bozeman and a Masters in Counseling in California. Gail worked with Civil Affairs units in the Army reserve as a liaison between the military and civilian community. She spent 12 years working for the U.S. Navy as a civilian, did a stint with the U.S. Post Office and was a summer forest fire lookout in Montana during her college years. All told, besides her

lengthy Reserve time, these jobs added up to 34 years of civil service—a wonderfully varied and adventurous career!



When asked what she planned to do after retirement, Gail said she planned first to do some

travel, especially to Hawaii and Costa Rica and possibly revisiting Germany where she was stationed at one point. After that, her options were open, but she was looking forward to many wonderful possibilities.

### VFW and VA Programs

If you've served on active duty service within the past six years, you may now qualify for a VFW Unmet Needs grant. The VFW announced eligibility expansions in an attempt to aid as many service members, veterans and their families as possible. To see if you or someone you know qualifies, click [here](#) or call 1-866-789-6333 .

The **Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program** is provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This program allows degree-granting Institutions of Higher Learning in the United States (colleges/universities) to voluntarily enter into an agreement with VA to fund tuition and fee expenses not covered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill for out-of-state students or those attending a private institution. For more information click the [map here](#) or contact the VA.



## Officers for the New VFW Year

By Harold Rodenberger

Our VFW year runs from July through June. These are the officers holding the positions of authority in our Ballard Eagleson Post for the coming year. Their duties are outlined in the National VFW By-Laws and Manual of Procedure so they sound a little formal but their main mission is to operate our post in a manner outlined in the National, State and our own by-laws and for the good of our members.

If you have ideas for improving our post you are encouraged to speak to one or more of these officers.

If you would like to volunteer to take part in any of our many activities, these officers welcome your help, whether it is visiting the patients at the VA Hospital, distributing Buddy Poppies on significant days, visiting local nursing and retirement homes, participating in ceremonies at graveside services or any number of other activities.

**Commander Aaron Stoltz** served in Iraq and among his duties as Commander he is charged with responsibility for the overall operation of the post. He presides at meetings, oversees the financial affairs, ensures reports and forms are completed as required and assures that the Post Trustees examine the books and prepare the Trustees Audit Report.

**Senior Vice-Commander Nestor Tamayo** served in Bosnia and his duties are to assist the Commander, preside in the absence of the Commander, serve as Chairman of the Membership Committee and perform such other duties as may be required by proper authority.

**Junior Vice-Commander Robert "Rich" Richardson** served in Iraq and his duties are to assist the Commander, preside in the absence of the Commander and Sr Vice-Commander and provide such advice and assistance and perform other duties as may be required by proper authority.

**Quartermaster Harold Rodenberger** served in Vietnam and among his duties as Quartermaster are to secure bonds for himself and other accountable persons, to have charge of all funds and securities and to be the accountable officer of the post and treasurer of all committees handling funds. He also handles dues, maintains financial records, maintains dues reserve and relief funds, reconciles and verifies all financial transactions, maintains financial books and records of the post and assures they are available for audit by the Trustees and other lawful authority. In addition he reports on financial transactions at meetings of the post and files appropriate forms with governmental agencies

**Adjutant Pete Krawitz** served in Iraq and Afghanistan and among others duties he is the official corresponding officer of the post. He maintains books and records, records minutes and maintains minutes of each meeting after correction and approval. He also maintains a file containing proof of eligibility of all members and the original application of every member admitted to the post.

**Chaplain** performs such duties as are incident to the office and files a monthly report to Department summarizing his activities. **Jon Guncay** was elected to this office but has recently been assigned to a swing shift and will be unable to attend meetings for at least six months. **Bill Griffith** will be our Chaplain pending election at the July business meeting.

**Judge Advocate John Hoglund** served in Vietnam and performs such duties as are incident to the office or as may from time to time be required of him by proper authority.

**Surgeon Justin Mamallo** served in Iraq and performs such duties as are incident to the office or as may from time to time be required of him by proper authority.

**Officer of the Day Al Simpson** served in Korea and performs such duties as are incident to the office or as may from time to time be required of him by proper authority.

**One-Year Trustee Gail Engler** served in Iraq.

**Two-Year Trustee Russ Seelig** served in Vietnam.

**Three-year Trustee James Williams** served in Kuwait/Iraq.

The trustees are responsible for auditing the books of the Quartermaster and submit a Post Trustee's Report of Audit within thirty days from the end of each quarter. They also perform such other duties as may be incident to the office or as may from time to time be required of them by proper authority.

**Service Officer John Hoglund** served in Vietnam and as Service Officer assists members of the post, their widows and orphans and other worthy cases brought to his attention in obtaining rightful entitlements from federal and state governments. He performs his work in accordance with the instructions contained in the VFW Guide for Service Officers and performs such other duties as may be incident to the office and as may from time to time be required of him by proper authority.

**Guard Mike Mahar** served in Iraq and is the door guard for our meetings. He screens visitors and admits such as may be worthy.



## WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS

By Harold Rodenberger

Our post is blessed with many volunteers who keep this place running. When I say running, it's not only the physical plant, although that is important, but it is the many optional, volunteer activities that make us an important part of the community.

Volunteers arrange visits to the VA Hospital and there are many volunteers who go along to visit and give out treats to the hospitalized veterans.

Volunteers go to flag raising ceremonies at retirement homes where it means so much for our veterans to interface with veterans of times past who now are living in nursing homes or retirement centers and are unable to join us in more active ways. Sometimes it's a spontaneous visit to interface with older veterans and sometimes it's more formal but whatever the occasion our volunteers meet a need in the community.

One of our volunteers plays his pipes while others attend ceremonies at local cemeteries. It means so much to next of kin and other interested members of the local community to see us participating in remembrances of veterans of other wars.

Ladies of our Auxiliary and others visit the VA Hospital for Bingo Nights where they serve food and call bingo for those veterans confined to their rooms for most of the day. Those patients so much appreciate us coming to visit them and giving them something to participate in besides just sitting in their rooms watching TV.

We have wonderful volunteers who help during our meeting and social nights by helping to serve food and drinks to our members and guests. Without them our evenings would be more chaotic and unorganized.

I mentioned our building. Most people don't realize the many tasks that are required to keep the building and grounds up and maintained. Everything from changing burned out lights to cutting the grass and spraying the weeds requires volunteer hours.

The ongoing battle with the graffiti artists requires time and a seemingly endless supply of paint. Again volunteers are critical to keeping our building and grounds looking good.

Then there are our webmaster and newsletter editor and Facebook manager who volunteer many hours to keeping our best profile facing the public in our community.

And finally, I've saved the best for last. Many people don't realize it but our officers don't receive compensation for serving in their many positions. Our commander and the other chair officers are all volunteers who give up their spare time to serve in those positions. The Adjutant and Service Officer and Officer of the Day and Historian and Trustees and committee members and the others who occupy positions of authority at every meeting are all unpaid volunteers doing their part for the good of the post and their community. BRAVO to our volunteers.

### 2015-2016 Post Officers

Commander—Aaron Schultz  
 Senior Vice-Commander—Nestor Tamayao  
 Junior Vice[Commander—Robert Richardson  
 Quartermaster—Harold Rodenberger  
 Adjutant—Pete Krawitz  
 Chaplain—(Pending Election)  
 Judge Advocate—John Hoglund  
 Surgeon—Justin Mamallo  
 Service Officer—John Hoglund  
 1-year Trustee—Gail Engler  
 2-year Trustee—Russ Seelig  
 3-year Trustee—James Williams

### Birthday Greetings\*

Armstrong, Gary D.	Mc Daniel, Michael D.
Egaas, Berent L	Mc Millan, Delvin M.
Frank Sr, Lawrence G.	Richardson, Robert L.
Hansen, Barney A.	Sanderson, Glen R.
Hoglund, John A.	Schultz, Larry L.
Jandl, Michael P.	Seelig, Russell J.
Knudsen, Thomas C.	Wennerlind, Donald C.
Lindjord, Harald O.	Wilson, Roger D.

#### In Memoriam

Lloyd Brown, U.S. Navy

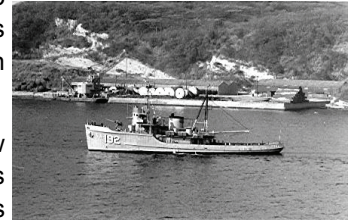


## **USS *Tillamook* (ATA-192) & the Gulf of Tonkin Incident**

By Clark Silliman

I served as Executive Officer of USS *Tillamook* (ATA-192), an ocean-going tug, from July 1963, to July 1965. The XO's billet was one I had really coveted, having rejected RADM Rickover's invitation to become a part of the Navy's nuclear power program (an interesting story in its own right).

*Tillamook* arrived in Subic Bay, Philippines in September 1964, having completed an ocean tow from Sasebo, Japan in company with USS *Tawasa* (ATF-92). *Tillamook* had towed a barracks barge, and *Tawasa*, her big "sister," two similar barges in tandem. The harbor at Subic Bay was jammed with naval vessels of all kinds—the big buildup for the Vietnam war was underway in earnest. *Tillamook* had to anchor out in the main harbor with the big ships, as our usual dockside moorage was already claimed by other vessels.



A day or so after what came to be known as the "Gulf of Tonkin Incident," USS *Turner Joy* (DD-951) (now a museum ship at Bremerton Naval Shipyard) steamed into Subic, passing close aboard *Tillamook* as we lay at anchor. I recall scrutinizing *Turner Joy* carefully through binoculars looking for signs of the damage supposedly inflicted by the North Vietnamese gunboats—I saw nothing!

Nevertheless, the powers that were decided that our Navy's night gunnery skill against high-speed surface targets could stand immediate improvement. *Tillamook* was elected to play a major rôle in that effort. Within a day or so of *Turner Joy*'s arrival in Subic, *Tillamook* was ordered to tow the target sled for a hastily organized night high speed surface gunnery shoot.

We had only our 2-inch ocean tow wire on the towing machine, having left our 1-inch gunnery sled tow wire back home in Yokosuka. (Our towing machine could accommodate either the 1-inch or the 2-inch wire, but not both.) Our 2-inch wire was only about 1,000 feet in length, less than half the length of our 1-inch wire. This meant, of course, that we could stream the gunnery sled only about half the usual distance astern for the upcoming night shoot (our first-ever).

We steamed out of Subic as night fell, heading for the gunnery shoot op-area. The temperature was in the 90s, so many of crew not on watch had brought their mattresses topside to sleep on deck to avoid the stifling heat below.

To simulate the conditions *Turner Joy* was reported to have encountered just days before in the Gulf of Tonkin, *Tillamook*, with the gunnery sled streamed less than a thousand feet astern, proceeded at maximum speed (probably all of 8 knots, if that) on a designated course. The destroyers and cruisers participating in the shoot steamed at flank speed on a reciprocal course more than 20 miles away over the horizon. The relative speed between the target sled and the firing ships was therefore in the range of 35-45 knots.

I was stationed on the boat deck, operating the "rake," ready to spot the fall of the shot once the firing began. Our skipper, Capt. Dick Carson, was on the bridge.

We were notified over the radio when the destroyers and cruisers commenced firing by fire control radar. As the first salvos arrived, all hell broke loose! Instead of bursting astern of the target sled as they should have (and as we were expecting), the incoming projectiles were bursting all around *Tillamook*, raining shrapnel all over the place! Carson immediately got on the radio, screaming, "Cease fire! Cease fire, goddammit!" Meanwhile, everyone topside, including those sleeping on deck, scrambled for cover, some injuring themselves as they literally dove headfirst down the ladder to get below deck. Of course, the projectiles still airborne from 20 or more miles away couldn't be called back in midflight! The fire control radars obviously had locked on *Tillamook* instead of the gunnery sled, which being closer astern than was normal for gunnery shoots, presented a radar target indistinguishable from *Tillamook* herself.

Miraculously, no one aboard *Tillamook* was seriously injured. We feared for a time that one of the panic-stricken sailors sleeping topside might have jumped overboard, as getting an accurate muster in the confusion that followed seemed to take forever, even though our entire crew numbered fewer than 35! However, eventually, and thankfully, all hands were accounted for.

A minute or two after Carson had shouted "Cease fire!" on the radio, the gunnery shoot commander (a rear admiral if memory serves) got on the radio and demanded to know by what right a mere lieutenant (Carson) was ordering a cease fire. Carson replied to this effect, "You're shooting the hell out of my ship, we have undetermined casualties and we are returning immediately to port. This shoot is over! Out!"

In daylight the next day, after returning to Subic Bay, *Tillamook* showed more topside damage from the exploding shrapnel than *Turner Joy* ever did from supposedly having been struck by hostile North Vietnamese gunboat fire!

[A slightly different version of this article was originally published in *Towline*, the quarterly journal of the National Association of Fleet Tug Sailors (NAFTS).]