

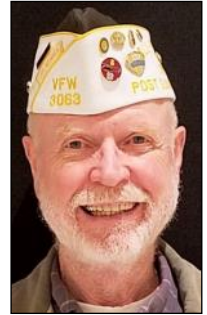
## Quartermaster's Update

*By Harold Rodenberger*

Comrades,

December is the end of a year, but this year also marks the end of a decade. Turning this corner reminded me of the end of decades past. For people my age these are vivid memories. For young people, they are history.

At the end of 2009, we saw 17,00 more troops sent to Afghanistan, the end of the Great Recession and the death of Michael Jackson.



Twenty years ago, at the turn of the century there was the Y2K scare, the beginning of the euro and a U.S. President impeached. Thirty years ago, the fall of the Berlin Wall was the big news.

In 1979 there was the big gas shortage, the Hood Canal floating bridge that didn't, and the Seattle Supersonics winning the NBA Championship. 1969 was the year of the first moon landing and "...One giant leap for mankind".

Sixty years ago, in 1959, I joined the Army and started on the path that led to Ballard Eagleson Post. The winter of '49-'50 resulted in many low temperature records still on the books.

The years pass quickly and can only be lived once. We need to remember to make the most of our time as the years flit by.

Speaking of, members of our post have been busy doing things for others to help our post fulfil its mission. We don't have a canteen or clubroom so we do things for our community and fellow veterans instead.

Recently we visited and revisited the VA Hospital to talk with patients and distribute special snacks and drinks. Our Honor Guard was central to the recent celebration of Wreaths Around America at Lake View Cemetery. Some of our members served at the Seattle Standdown. We selected winners and gave prizes in the VFW Youth Programs Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Youth Essay contests. Our Teacher of the Year was also selected as the winner at District 2 and now goes to the judging at the state level.

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The **Ballard Eagleson Patriot** is published by the newsletter editor for Post 3063, Seattle, WA. This official newsletter is an authorized publication for members of Post 3063. Editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the newsletter editor. Its contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the VFW.

This newsletter is published quarterly and submissions must be received by the editor five days before the last day of a quarter for inclusion in the next quarter's issue. We reserve the right to edit submitted articles for timeliness, clarity, and syntax. Be aware that newsletter images and/or text appearing on the website may be shared by readers.

Commander: Joe Tiffany

Sr Vice Commander: Joe Fitzgerald

Jr Vice Commander: Bryce White

Quartermaster: Harold Rodenberger

Adjutant: Alyson Teeter

Judge Advocate: Dan Stokke

Chaplain: Aaron Stoltz

Surgeon: Tiffany Cavin

Officer of the Day: Vacant

3-Year Trustee: Nestor Tamayao

2-Year Trustee: Dan Stokke

1-Year Trustee: Russ Seelig

Service Officer: Joseph Mesa

Guard: Vacant

Newsletter Editor: Alyson Teeter

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## NEW DECADE cont. from pg. 2

Our roving ambassador, Allen Schwerer, who now lives in Eastern Washington, donates time and money to VFW causes in that area. One of our local members spoke at a meeting of the Mercer Girls Chapter of the DAR during a ceremony honoring Vietnam veterans.

Around the Post Home, our Commander,

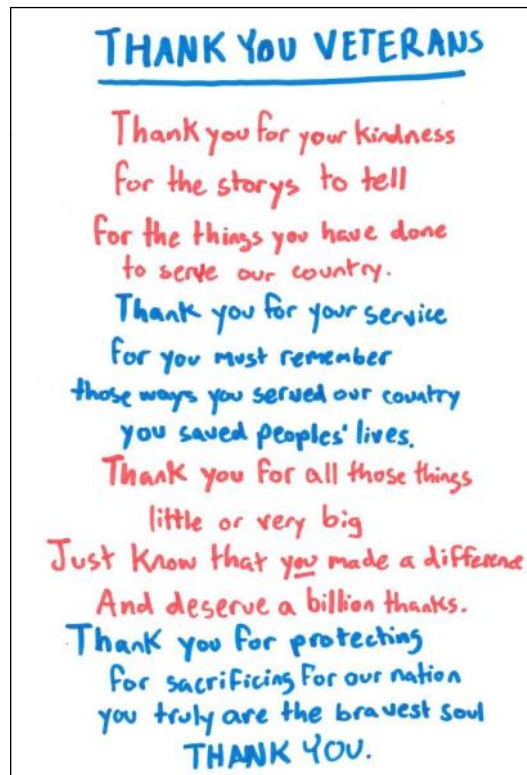
Joe Tiffany, volunteered to procure and install a new (much superior) sound system. Other officers gave of their time to perform their duties during meetings and outside the post. Many members fly the flag to honor our country and its veterans.

Looking forward to the second half of our VFW year, **we are still**

**well short of our membership goal. We value your membership, please take a minute to make sure your dues are current.**

Welcome to the new "roaring twenties" and may the coming year be kind to you and yours.

*Yours in Comradeship,*  
*Harold*



Thank you to the students in Dan Waldschmidt's classes at Hamilton Middle School for sending us Veterans Day thank you cards!

## Wreaths Across America: Remember - Honor - Teach

*One man's annual tribute to our veterans inspired a legion of volunteers who gave rise to the Wreaths Across America of today.*

*By Joe Fitzgerald, Post 3063 Color/Honor Guard Captain*

Merrill Worcester owner of Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington Maine was a 12 year old paper boy for the Bangor Daily News, when he won a trip to Washington, D.C and to Arlington National Cemetery, which left an indelible impression on him that followed him throughout his life and successful business career.

In 1992 his wreath company found that they had a surplus of wreaths left over from the holidays. Remembering his boyhood experience at Arlington he realized he had an opportunity to honor our country's veterans. With the help from Maine Senator

Olympia Snowe, arrangements were made for his wreaths to be placed at Arlington National Cemetery in one of the older sections of the cemetery that had been receiving fewer visitors with each passing year.

As plans were under way, a number of other organizations stepped up to help, including a trucking company as well as local volunteers, and the American Legion and VFW posts who helped with decorating and laying the wreaths that included a special ceremony and wreath placed at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The annual event went on quietly for several years until 2005 when a photo of the stones at Arlington adorned with the wreaths and covered in snow circulated around the internet.

Suddenly, the project received national attention.

Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country from people wanting to help with Arlington, to emulate the Arlington project at their own National and State cemeteries, or to simply share their stories and thank Merrill for honoring our nation's heroes.

In 2007, the Worcester family along with veterans and other groups who had been helping with this annual ceremony -- formed Wreaths Across America -- a non profit organization formed to continue expanding this effort.

December 2015, several members our post joined with members of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) to conduct the Wreaths Across America ceremony at Lake View Cemetery in the Capital Hill area of Seattle.

December 2016, Post 3063 formed an Honor Guard Rifle team. This was the first year we conducted a three gun rifle salute as part of the ceremony at Lake View cemetery.



Post 3063 Color Guard Captain Joe Fitzgerald and the Rifle team present arms while bugler Pam Wolfe plays Taps at the 2019 WAA Ceremony at Lake View Cemetery in Seattle Dec. 14.

December 2017, the Honor Guard was expanded to include a Color Guard as well, and a bugler to play taps at the ceremonies conclusion. Also added to the WAA ceremony is a two person Honor Guard salute as each Wreath is brought forward and posted on its respective stand.

Read more about WAA and the post's participation at <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/2019/12/15/waa/>.

*The Ballard Eagleson Post 3063 Color/Honor Guard conducts various memorial and flag ceremonies throughout the year. With each new year comes additional requests for our participation and as such we are in constant need of additional members to join us and be a part of this rewarding experience. Anyone interested in becoming a member of this team can contact either me or our Post 3063 Quartermaster Harold Rodenberger.*

## Post Announces Annual Essay and Teacher of the Year Winners

By Alyson Teeter

Congratulations to the following students who won the the annual VFW Youth Essay contests for Post 3063! They received a cash prize and also went on to compete at the district level.

The winning essays are linked to their names below and also linked at <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/2019/11/30/post-announces-youth-essay-winners/>.

**Voice of Democracy:** [Jessica Chacko](#) (also placed 2nd in District #2)

**Patriot's Pen:** [Chloe Sow](#) (also received honorable mention in District #2)

**Youth Essay:** [Luce Hart](#)

The Post 3063 **Teacher of the Year**, Dan Waldschmidt, placed first at the District #2 competition and will go on to compete statewide. Dan is an 8th grade social studies teacher at Hamilton Middle School in Wallingford.

Thank you to everyone who entered for supporting the VFW!



Adjutant Teeter presented certificates and prizes Dec. 13 to Hamilton International Middle School students who submitted essays for the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest.



On Dec. 13, Quartermaster Rodenberger also presented the Teacher of the Year certificate to Dan Waldschmidt, an 8th grade teacher at Hamilton.



Sr. Vice. Commander Joe Fitzgerald presented the first place Voice of Democracy certificate and prize to Jessica Chacko during the post holiday social Dec. 19. Her parents were also in attendance. (It was an exciting night – Jessica found out she was accepted to the Seattle University's Nursing Program. Double congrats, Jessica!

## Seattle Civic Band Partners With Post 3063

Bravo to the Seattle Civic Band for playing wonderful patriotic music at the post Nov. 10 in commemoration of Veterans Day. They also played a holiday concert at the Post Dec. 17. We appreciate their heartfelt thanks, beautiful music, and donations to the Post 3063 Relief Fund!



## A Different Kind of Unserviceable Flag Retirement

By Harold Rodenberger

As a community service, our VFW Post accepts worn and unserviceable flags for proper retirement. Frequently people drop by the office and hand us flags that are no longer fit to fly and ask us to retire them. I am always impressed with their patriotism, sincerely and concern for the flag of our country.

Two or three years ago, a man called and wanted to know if he could drop off a flag he had found in a dumpster. I assured him we would accept it and he later brought it by the hall. It turned out to be a coffin flag. He retrieved it from the dump, had it dry cleaned and brought it by folded on a hanger. When asked if I could reimburse him for the cleaning cost he refused saying that he only thought it his duty to rescue the flag and find a way to return it to ser-

vice.

In years past we have had retirement ceremonies in our parking lot where we properly disposed of the flags by burning. Last year we had complaints from the residents of the condos and apartments on the hill behind us so we stopped burning flags in our parking lot.



At the gravesite we dug a deep trench, said a few words and began placing the boxes of flags.

Over the past eighteen months we have accumulated over three hundred flags waiting for proper disposal. On Wednesday, October 16, 2019, we loaded up seven boxes of flags and took them north to my brother's farm near Blaine, WA, for burial.

For a gravesite, we selected a grassy knoll overlooking green pastures with woods on the north and a view east toward Mt Baker.

## New Member Spotlight: Justin Fitch

*This is a recurring column that highlights new VFW Post 3063 members. Comrade Justin Fitch joined the post in November 2019.*

**What motivated you to join the VFW?** I was referred to the VFW by an existing member who told me about the charitable work the organization does, that appealed to me so I wanted to become a member.

**What is your military background?** During my time in the military I served as an infantryman in the 75th Ranger Regiment. I deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

**Hometown, civilian job, education, family, hobbies, or anything else you'd like to tell us about yourself?** I was born and raised here in Seattle. I enjoy hiking, climbing, and spending time with my dog.

**What do you hope to achieve being a member of the VFW?** I would like to get more involved in some of the volunteer work that the organization does.



### Post 3063 New Members

**Brigitta Horton**

Air Force, Afghanistan

**John Ellingbough**

Army, Vietnam

**Robert Lehman**

Air Force, Afghanistan

**Justin Fitch**

Army, Iraq/Afghanistan

**William Ziebarth**

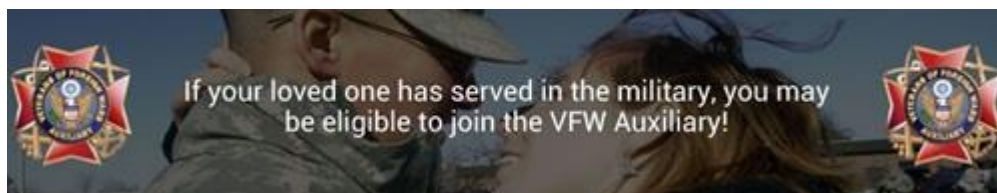
Army, Vietnam

**John Bright**

Army, Iraq

**Ralph Hundley**

Marines, Vietnam



## What's Happening Around the Post



Post members, families, friends and the community came together to celebrate the holidays Dec. 19, 2019 for our annual Post 3063 Holiday Social. Here the Seattle SeaChordsmen barbershop quartet entertains the crowd as our Santa, Anne Leake, waits to hand out gifts to children. Photo by Michael Patrick Ronan and Kaitlyn French.



New members Justin, John and Bill, swear in during our Dec. 5 business meeting. Thanks to a generous donation from one of our post members, the membership raised \$1,118 for the VFW National Home for Children that evening!



Thank you to Daniel, Linda, and Sheila from [A Touch of Light](#) for visiting us during our post social Oct. 17. They're doing inspiring work with incarcerated veterans and hosted an art gallery reception Nov. 2.



A small contingent of Post 3063 members volunteered on Veterans Day to hand out items and visit with veterans at the Seattle VA Medical Center. Thank you to Comrades Cavin and Hogle for keeping things organized and visiting with patients. A special thanks goes to Comrade Mamallo for donating so many snacks and Comrade Servey for rallying her Boy Scout troop to volunteer.

# Upcoming Events

**January 2, 2020, 7 p.m.** - VFW Post 3063 Business Meeting. Food is served at 6 p.m.

**January 16, 2020, 6:30 p.m.** - VFW Post 3063 Social Dinner. Open to post and auxiliary members, families, friends, and the community. \$5 suggested donation.

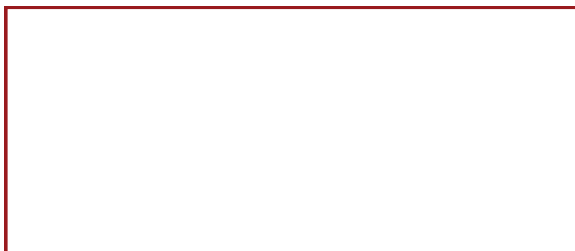
**\*Auxiliary meeting TBD.** Contact Donna Limric at [auxiliary@vfwseattle.org](mailto:auxiliary@vfwseattle.org) for details.

*Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for business meetings and social dinners. Social dinners are free for members who have birthdays in the same month. Additional events are listed at <http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/event-calendar/>.*



*Ballard Eagleson VFW Post 3063 is located in the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle at 2812 NW Market St. The office is open Thursdays and Saturdays 1-5 p.m.*

*We're on the web and Facebook! <http://www.vfwseattle.org> | <https://www.facebook.com/vfwpost3063>*



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