

**Inside this issue:**

- Quartermaster's Update **2**
- Day of Service **3**
- Memorial Stadium **3**
- JAG Event **4**
- In Memoriam **5**
- Service Officer **6**
- Service Throwback **7**
- Event Calendar **8**

## From the Commander



SPRING IS IN THE AIR and we're jumping into it with both feet! Hopefully Covid won't be coming with us and will continue to fade away. Even though it doesn't appear it'll totally disappear, we're starting to learn to live with it.

So, what does that mean for us?

- It means that we all can fully return to our post business.
- It means that we can have in-person business meetings and socials. We started this last month.
- It means that for the first time in two years the nominations and voting for the incoming board will also be in-person.
- It means that we can finally interact face-to-face at our meetings and upcoming post projects.
- Finally, it means that all of us who are physically able can attend and participate in our post meetings and functions.

As all this comes together, we begin to realize that yes, we can carry on with our lives despite Covid and its variants. Therefore, please jump in with us! Sunny days are here again!

This upcoming VFW year promises to be one of our best, with a fantastic mix of both old and new officers! Come find out who they are, meet them and watch them in action! See you on April 7th!

-Commander Joe

*We're on the web and Facebook!* [vfwseattle.org](http://vfwseattle.org) | [facebook.com/vfwpost3063](https://facebook.com/vfwpost3063)



**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

Ballard Eagleson Patriot  
VFW Post 3063  
2812 NW Market St.  
Seattle, WA 98107  
206-782-8618

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Sr Vice Commander: Alyson Teeter  
Jr Vice Commander: Bill Griffith  
Quartermaster: Harold Rodenberger  
Adjutant: Shennae Curtis  
Judge Advocate: Dan Stokke  
Chaplain: Joseph Mesa  
Surgeon: Robert Lehman  
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3-Year Trustee: Aaron Stoltz  
2-Year Trustee: Joe Tiffany  
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Service Officer: Joseph Mesa  
Guard: Jesse Basher  
Newsletter Editor: Alyson Teeter

**Contact Us:**

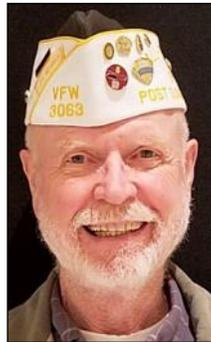
Ballard Eagleson VFW Post 3063  
2812 NW Market St.  
Seattle, WA 98107  
206-782-8618  
[editor@vfwseattle.org](mailto:editor@vfwseattle.org)

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## Quartermaster's Update

By Harold Rodenberger



Top of the news (at least our news) this month is the relaxation of Covid protocols. Beginning with our April business meeting we will be following state and local guidance with masks optional, proof

of vaccination not required, social distancing and hand washing encouraged, and common sense required. One big lesson learned during the pandemic was, **"If you're sick, stay home."** Please don't come to the post with a cold, flu or Covid symptoms, or any other sickness, just so you can make an appearance. Please stay home, protect the rest of us, and get well soon! Our **business meetings will be in person with a Zoom option** for those who prefer not to attend in person and those in remote locations.

Speaking of remote locations, we have many members who live in outlying areas or other states and countries. Some people who move away from our local area transfer to other VFW Posts, but others prefer to remain members here. I've spoken with many of those who enjoy our newsletters, website and other communications. Here's a hearty **"Thank You" to each of you remote members** who maintain your membership here in Ballard. If there's anything we can do for you, let us know. Meanwhile, please Zoom to our meetings when you have a chance.

"Thank You" to each of our members for maintaining their membership in the VFW. In addition to the benefits, your membership benefits millions of other veterans as our National officers work to obtain and maintain benefits veterans

have earned by their sacrifices in service to the country. **There's strength in numbers;** your membership adds to it.

Our post has drawings at business meetings for **free life memberships**. The rules are simple: Once you attend two meetings you are eligible for the drawing, but you need to attend either in person or on Zoom to participate.

As we get back to normal, we will be doing more of our community service activities. In May there will be a **"Day of Service"** and May 24th is our community **"Shredder Day"** when we bring a shredder truck to our parking lot to shred personal papers. In June we will have a **booth at the Ballard Seafood Fest** to engage with the community by passing out Buddy Poppies and membership applications. When the **VA Hospital** allows we will resume bringing good cheer and conversation to veteran patients. We also will be holding a **"clean up" day at our post**. Be on the lookout for details – we will need volunteers! During the past two years, many of you have participated in our Social take-out program. During the height of the pandemic we had no choice, but now that things seem to be returning to normal, it would be good to make the Social Night more social by getting together in person for dinner, camaraderie, etc. I'm wondering if you feel strongly about in-person dining or about continuing the "take-out" option. If you have feelings one way or the other, please let me know. You can reach me at email [quartermaster@vfwseattle.org](mailto:quartermaster@vfwseattle.org), text or phone 206-972-3135.

Thanks for being a member of our VFW Post, **count your blessings**, and enjoy Spring.

## VFW Day of Service Coming Soon, Tentatively May 21 for Post

Courtesy of VFW.org

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is proud to announce the inaugural VFW Day of Service – a dedicated day of service led by VFW members throughout the country and the world.

VFW Day of Service is an outgrowth of the organization's #StillServing campaign launched in 2020 to recognize the ongoing dedication of veterans and service members who continue to serve their communities. VFW Day of Service, led by veterans and in concert with other organizations and civic groups, is open for anyone to participate. The inaugural VFW Day of Service kicks off the first Saturday in May (May 7), marking the start of veteran-led community service projects to take place throughout the month.



"The positive feedback from VFW members and the communities we serve tells us the stage is set to expand our #StillServing initiative," said Fritz Michelcic, VFW national commander. "We have already seen how the campaign amplifies the volunteer efforts and camaraderie of America's veterans. The time is now to take its visibility to the next level."

Veterans are more likely than civilians to volunteer in their communities, according to a recent civic health survey of veterans.

The same study showed veterans donate to charities, register to vote, and are involved in their communities and local government at a greater rate than their civilian counterparts.

**Post 3063 leadership is tentatively scheduling May 21 as the post's Day of Service**, which is also in conjunction with the City of Seattle's [Day of Service](#). We are open to ideas! Perhaps a clean up at Memorial Stadium? We'll discuss at the April 7 business meeting but send ideas in the meantime to [editor@vfwseattle.org](mailto:editor@vfwseattle.org).

## Comrade Calls Attention to Neglect at Memorial Stadium

Comrade Bob Kettle has called attention to the neglect of the World II Memorial Wall at Memorial Stadium on [Facebook](#). The wall includes nearly 750 names of Seattle Public Schools alumni etched in stone to honor those young servicemen who in WWII gave their last full measure of devotion to our country.

According to Bob, "Now blighted memorial sits at the site. A run-down parking lot abuts it, with fountains and lighting long neglected, and trash strewn about. Graffiti covers the ticket stand that serves as a 'welcome' to the area."

He is in touch with Seattle Public Schools as they are responsible for maintaining the wall. The SPS facilities representative, who is also a veteran, said he'll inspect the area and schedule any work that needs to be done. This may also be a suitable project for the Post 3063 Day of Service project but more coordination is required. More to come.

Bob is also researching what the plans are for the wall since the Seattle Public Schools levy passed a couple months ago. He will report back to the post leadership and membership his findings.



## Back At It: Post Returns to “Normal” Ops After 2 Covid Years

After a roller coaster two years of trying to flatten the curve, Post 3063 leadership is asking members, families and friends to return to attending business meetings and socials.

If you are new to Post 3063, normally the post hosts a monthly business meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., with a light dinner and refreshments served at 6 p.m. We will continue to offer a Zoom option for attending since a virtual option works better for some members with or without the threat of Covid.



Folks attend the post social on March 17, 2022.

In addition, the post hosts a monthly social the third Thursday of the month cooked up by Chef Kay. Often the meal is aligned with the month's holiday but regardless it's always a high quality meal that includes a heaping side of camaraderie. The meals are free but a donation is encouraged if you're financially able.

The post's Auxiliary is also trying to re-institute monthly meetings with the help of district and state Auxiliary officials. Meetings usually occur the same time as Post 3063 business meetings. If you know someone interested in joining the Auxiliary, see more details at [vfwauxiliary.org/join-us/become-a-member](http://vfwauxiliary.org/join-us/become-a-member).

## Ft. Lawton Murder Case Sets the Scene for Army JAG Lesson



U.S. Army Judge Advocates, paralegals and other personnel gathered at VFW Post 3063 Jan. 28, 2022, for a professional development opportunity that involved more than simply reading a leadership book. I Corps Office of the Staff Judge Advocate members spoke with Jack Hamman, author of *On American Soil*, a book about a World War II era murder involving a POW at Ft. Lawton. After discussing the case with Hamman virtually at the post, the group bussed to Ft. Lawton for an in person look at the scene of the courts martial and the murder. Even though it's a case dating back to World War II, the lessons learned relating to race, the media, and the law were relevant to the soldiers, making for a rich and immersive professional development opportunity. Post 3063 leadership were proud to host and provide a venue for these active duty legal professionals.

## In Memoriam: Orville Anderson and Chuck Tuft

**Comrade Orville Anderson**, age 95, of Seattle, passed away on Friday, December 17, 2021. Orville was born March 7, 1926. He served in the Army in World War II, European theater.

**Comrade Charles (Chuck) Wesley Tuft**, age 89, of Seattle, passed away March 20, 2022. He qualified for VFW membership through service in Korea (KSM) 1953-54. Chuck was living away from home when his mother called in late summer of 1952 to tell him his draft notice had arrived in the mail. He didn't want to be drafted so went to the U.S. Air Force recruiting station. When they asked if he had received his draft notice, he answered (truthfully) that he hadn't seen it.

He joined the USAF in October of 1952, went through basic, Radio Operator Fundamentals School and graduated from Ground Radio Operator School in August 1953. In a strange coincidence, he was assigned to an Army unit in Korea as a liaison radio operator. The Army unit said they didn't need him since they had their own radio operators. Chuck said the Army First Sergeant told him to make himself scarce, especially when inspectors or other higher

ranks came around. Chuck was successful at that and served his year in Korea playing sports on the Army teams. After Korea he was assigned to a real USAF unit in Japan, where the personnel sergeant wanted to know why he hadn't received the normal promotion for his time-in-grade. Upon hearing Chuck's explanation, they promoted him, and he served out his time in Japan and Texas.

For many years, Chuck bowled on the Ballard Post-sponsored team. He was an active member of the post until Covid hit in March 2020.

At our next business meeting, the post charter will be draped with a black cloth for 30 days in their honor. Rest in peace, comrades.



## New Addition to Post Library Shelf, Need for Library Volunteer



Did you know that our post has a library specializing in military history and other military subjects? Our library started in 2014, with a donation of books by Comrade Bill Hoeller, who served as Post Librarian for several years. Comrade Pio Park donated the fancy bookcase pictured and the books on its shelves were donated by Comrade Ed Westing. Besides this book case, we have many other book shelves full of military history books up for grabs.

If you are interested in mili-

tary subjects, feel free to stop by during office hours or during our monthly meeting or social nights to discover the perfect book. We also accept donations, not only of the military subjects but others as well.

Interested in helping out? We need a new Post Librarian. Please contact QM Harold (206-972-2135) or Post Commander Joe Fitzgerald (206-777-5364) if interested.

## From the Desk of the Post Service Officer: VA Benefits Update

By Joseph Mesa



Here's a VA benefits update courtesy of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Regarding Burn Pits: **VA**

**intends to propose 9 rare respiratory cancers as presumed service-connected conditions.**

When the proposal becomes final and rule making is complete, VA will conduct outreach to impacted Veterans and survivors to inform them about potential eligibility. VA intends to focus its rule on the rare respiratory cancers in Veterans who served any amount of time in the Southwest Asia theater of operations and other locations. The Southwest Asia theater of operations refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the air-space above these locations.

Additionally, the Department of Veterans Affairs is proposing changes to the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities specifically pertaining to the respiratory, auditory and mental disorders body systems. The proposed updates to the rating schedule for these conditions will enable VA to incorporate modern medical data and terminology to provide Veterans with more accurate and consistent decisions.

Veterans who currently receive compensation for a service-connected condition in these body systems will not have their disability rating impacted when the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities is updated. Updating the rating schedule allows Veterans to receive decisions based on the most current medical knowledge relating to their condition. By incorporating modern medical data in the assessment of disabilities and how they impact earning capacity, Veterans will receive evaluations which more accurately compensate them for their service-connected disabilities. Proposed updates include:

- Modernizing the evaluative rating criteria for sleep apnea, using developments in medical knowledge to evaluate it based on its responsiveness to

treatment, bringing the rating criteria for sleep apnea more closely in line with the stated purpose of the rating schedule.

- Evaluating tinnitus (ringing in the ears) as a symptom of the underlying disease which causes it, rather than as a stand-alone disability.
- Evaluating mental health conditions based on a more robust and holistic approach that assesses how impactful the disability is to cognition, interpersonal relationships, task completion, life activities and self-care. Additionally, the proposed evaluation criteria include a 10% minimum evaluation for having one or more service-connected mental health conditions and will no longer require "total occupational and social impairment" to attain a 100% evaluation.

No change to a veteran's current rating would occur due to these proposed changes. If the proposed changes are finalized, Veterans who currently receive compensation for a service-connected condition can apply for increased compensation, but no reductions shall be made unless an improvement in the Veteran's disability is shown to have occurred.

If you need any help with your VA claim or benefits, contact me at [serviceofficer@vfwseattle.org](mailto:serviceofficer@vfwseattle.org).



Map of Southwest Asia with countries highlighted in which burn pits were a common practice

## Service Throwback: Comrade Gail Engler

Comrade Gail Engler served in the U.S. Army and is pictured right as an E-4 in southern Germany in 1975 or 1976. She was assigned to the Headquarters, 56th Field Artillery Brigade, as a Radio Operator. The photo far right is with her uncharacteristically serious looking mom in Washington, D.C. in 1997. Gail was then a Sergeant First Class who worked in Civil Affairs and she and her mother were attending the Women in Military Service for America Memorial dedication. Her qualifying service was in Iraq in 2004 (she needs to dig up these photos!) and in total she served in the U.S. Army, U.S. Army Reserve as a soldier and federal civilian from 1974-2015.



Have throwback photos from your military service? Send photos and who/what/where/when to [editor@vfwseattle.org](mailto:editor@vfwseattle.org).

## Mark Your Calendars, Ballard SeafoodFest Returning!



The Ballard SeafoodFest is back in 2022. We have reserved a booth so mark your calendar for July 16 and 17 if you'd like to staff the booth or visit. More details to come as we get closer to the event but we are in need of someone to be the onsite lead each day as post leadership will be attending the VFW National Convention that weekend. (Comrades Dan Stokke, Joseph Mesa and Joe Fitzgerald pictured at the 2019 SeafoodFest.)

## Welcome to Post 3063, New Members!

**Benjamin Joslin**

Army  
Afghanistan

**Harry Parent**

Army  
Iraq

**Alexander Salazar**

Army  
Kuwait

## Upcoming Events

**April 7, 2022, 7 p.m. – VFW Post 3063 Business Meeting.** In person at the post and via Zoom. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5057012075?pwd=K1ppc3RCNHRaYkhyNjFhb0w2dkdlQT09>  
Meeting ID: 505 701 2075, Password: Ballard306  
By Phone: 253-215-8782, Password: 064533

**April 21, 2022, 6:30 p.m. – VFW Post 3063 Monthly Social.** Reservations are required! To reserve, text/call or email at 206-972-2135 or [quartermaster@vfwseattle.org](mailto:quartermaster@vfwseattle.org).

**May 21, 2022 – Post 3063 Day of Service.** Details TBD.

**May 24, 2022 – Community Shredder Day** in post parking lot.



*Ballard Eagleson VFW Post 3063 is located in the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle at 2812 NW Market St.*



Your voice matters! Sign up for VFW legislative alerts at [vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts/vfw-action-corps-weekly](http://vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts/vfw-action-corps-weekly).

### **Reminder: Report Your Service!**

Do you volunteer, recycle, give blood, donate goods to charity, or any other activities that improve the community? The VFW needs to know this information! Submit community service info via the post's Community Service Reporting Form at [vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/community-service-reporting/](http://vfwseattle.org/index.php/resources/community-service-reporting/). The Post Surgeon also uses some of this information for monthly reports. Guidelines are available at [tinyurl.com/yy3udz8v](http://tinyurl.com/yy3udz8v).