



Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154

Rathdrum Idaho

Volume 1 Issue #11

December 2015

Commander's Message:

I want to thank you all of you for being a part of the best American Legion Post in Idaho. I hope everyone will be able to be with friends and family. This is such a great message that I wanted to share it with you all. It may be the old "ism". But there is a new "ism" that we should prepare for. Please remember that we are in the same fight of our lives. Again, I also want to say thank you to each and every one of you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. This is how it was during WWII. I copied this from Thomas Courtien.

It is not easy to say "Merry Christmas" to you, my fellow Americans, in this time of destructive war. Nor can I say "Merry Christmas" lightly tonight to our armed forces at their battle stations all over the world - or to our allies who fight by their side.

Here, at home, we will celebrate this Christmas Day in our traditional American way - because of its deep spiritual meaning to us; because the teachings of Christ are fundamental in our lives; and because we want our youngest generation to grow up knowing the significance of this tradition and the story of the coming of the immortal Prince of Peace and Good Will. But, in perhaps every home in the United States, sad and anxious thoughts will be continually with the millions of our loved ones who are suffering hardships and misery, and who are risking their very lives to preserve for us and for all mankind the fruits of His teachings and the foundations of civilization itself.

The Christmas spirit lives tonight in the bitter cold of the front lines in Europe and in the heat of the jungles and swamps of Burma and the Pacific islands. Even the roar of our bombers and fighters in the air and the guns of our ships at sea will not drown out the messages of Christmas which come to the hearts of our fighting men. The thoughts of these men tonight will turn to us here at home around our Christmas trees, surrounded by our children and grandchildren and their Christmas stockings and gifts—just as our own thoughts go out to them, tonight and every night, in their distant places.

We all know how anxious they are to be home with us, and they know how anxious we are to have them- and how determined every one of us is to make their day of home-coming as early as possible. And- above all- they know the determination of all right-thinking people and Nations, that Christmases such as those that we have known in these years of world tragedy shall not come again to beset the souls of the children of God.

This generation has passed through many recent years of deep darkness, watching the spread of the poison of Hitlerism and Fascism in Europe—the growth of imperialism and militarism in Japan- and the final clash of war all over the world. Then came the dark days of the fall of France, and the ruthless bombing of England, and the desperate battle of the Atlantic, and of Pearl Harbor and Corregidor and Singapore.

Since then the prayers of good men and women and children the world over have been answered. The tide of battle has turned, slowly but inexorably, against those who sought to destroy civilization. On this Christmas day, we cannot yet say when our victory will come. Our enemies still fight fanatically. They still have reserves of men and military power. But, they themselves know that they and their evil works are doomed. We may hasten the day of their doom if we here at home continue to do our full share.

(cont. [here](#))

2nd Vice-Commander:

November has been a month for veteran recognition and I've been busy spreading the word! Joan Genter and I attended the Women Veteran Recognition Day at the VA Center in Spokane Valley on November 5th. It was a wonderful experience attended by about fifty women veterans.

Al and I have participated in celebrations at two schools; Hayden Meadows in Hayden and Holy Family Catholic School in Coeur d' Alene as part of the Hayden Veterans Commission and Catholic War Veterans.

We joined the Kootenai County Honor Guard for two services at Garden Plaza in Post Falls and one in the Renaissance Assisted Living Facility in Coeur d' Alene.

We participated in city celebrations in Hayden and Rathdrum and at church service at St Pius X Church in Coeur d'Alene.

We participated as part of Post 154 Honor Guard at Real Life Ministry in Post Falls, the Greensferry Bridge Dedication in Post Falls, posting of colors at Woodland Middle School in Coeur d' Alene and in a flag raising ceremony at LaCrosse Assisted Living Facility in Coeur d'Alene.

We had requests for other participation, but couldn't work it into the schedule. Idaho is a great place to live as a veteran. We are so glad that we moved here 19 years ago!

– Margaret Ogram 2nd Vice-Commander

Finance Officer:

We continue to operate our Post in a prudent and responsible manner. As noted in the October financial report, although we continue to run a small deficit on a monthly basis, the Gun Raffle and other income items should allow us to finish out the year in the black with a small surplus plus a substantial savings account toward a day in the future when the opportunity to lease our own space becomes a reality.

There are some year-end capital items that the Honor Guard will need, and those expenses, if approved, will exhaust the generous "start-up" donation that we received at the first of the year from the City of Rathdrum. That was to be used for capital items needed to establish ourselves, and I think we have done a good job of not only spending that contribution prudently, but also giving the City a good return on their investment. We provided the City with an accounting at mid-year and we will provide them with a final accounting at year end.

The Budget Committee and the Officers have all provided me with their "wish list" for 2016, and a draft operating budget is being circulated for consideration by the Exec. Committee before being recommended for adoption by the Membership.

Hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving. As a very successful new Post that has grown tremendously over the past eleven months, we all have a great deal to be Thankful for.

– Len Crosby, Finance Officer

Service Officer:

It is that time of year to remember your gloves and to watch your step. Some of us are less stable due to age or injuries and falls can make our lives that much harder. The cold weather can quickly dry our skin, causing it to split. Our hands and feet are body parts to be especially careful of during the winter. Dress to stay warm, remember to take a coat and pair of gloves with you when you go out.

Following is some information about open enrollment. It's time to make health care decisions regarding your health care and supplemental Medicare programs.

Open Enrollment 2015-2016 and/or VA Health Benefits

If you're a Veteran, you may be eligible for additional Federal health options. Veterans who retire from the military are covered through TRICARE and all eligible veterans can choose to enroll in the VA health care program; they don't need to purchase additional coverage. If you're unsure if you or a loved one is eligible for health care through the VA, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

If you're a Veteran who does not have coverage through a Veterans' health program, you should visit HealthCare.gov. Or perhaps you know someone, like a family member or even a fellow Veteran, who isn't enrolled in VA's health care plan and doesn't have other qualifying Veterans' health coverage. In that case, you should let them know that the Marketplace is open for business.

Open Enrollment for the Marketplace started on November 1 and goes until January 31. People looking for coverage to start on January 1 need to sign up by December 15. It is easy to search through a clear list of private, affordable health plans, and this year we're continuing to put the customer at the center.

First of all, financial help is available to make health coverage more affordable. In fact, more than 7 in 10 returning Marketplace customers will be able to buy a plan for \$75 or less a month in premiums after tax credits.

Second, signing up is even easier than before. Once people have applied for coverage on HealthCare.gov, they can immediately see the type of coverage they qualify for and how much financial help they can get. A new Out-of-Pocket Cost estimator will help customers estimate the cost of their insurance based on their personal situation. We've also made it simpler to reenroll. Returning customers can view and compare their current plan to others without entering a 14-digit plan identification number.

Finally, no one has to shop alone. There are people available to help, whether in person or over the phone. So if you have any questions, you have a place to turn to get assistance. Our consumer call-line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-318-2596. And people can sign up right in their communities. In-person help can be found online at LocalHelp.HealthCare.gov.

– Charlie Till, Service Officer

Adjutant:

Thanks to all of you that have renewed your membership for next year! If you haven't had a chance to renew yet pay by December 31st and your dues are only \$35 for 2016. Pay them after that date and they will be \$40 as National has increased their portion by \$5. The Post still only retains \$7.50 out of your dues with the balance going to National and the Department of Idaho to fund their important veteran programs. – Bryan Bledsoe, Adjutant

Legislative Chairman:

For the second year in a row Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) and his staff have completed an excellent survey of Idaho Veterans seeking to secure input on how best to improve the service of both the VA Health system and the VA Benefits system. The 2015 survey can be accessed at the website below, and provides some excellent information that I strongly suggest you review. Satisfaction with the delivery of VA Health services improved between 2014 and 2015, but the processing of VA Claims for disability continued to be a problem for Veterans.

Please take the time to review this excellent study, and to send Sen. Crapo a letter or an e-mail complimenting him on this in-depth look at how the Veterans Administration is providing service to Idaho's Veterans. The website is http://www.crapo.senate.gov/documents/vet_survey_fall2015.pdf

U. S. House of Representatives: Representatives Esty and Costello have introduced House Resolution 2894, the Caregivers Access and Responsible Expansion for All Veterans Act, a bipartisan bill that would extend the support for Veteran caregivers that was recently approved for Veterans injured in combat after 9/11 to Caregivers of all living Veterans.

If enacted, this bill would responsibly and finally address the needs of Veteran caregiver families' on the same basis as those of veterans injured after September 11, 2001. Ultimately, when fully implemented, the bill would improve the lives of tens of thousands of Korean and Vietnam era Veteran families, and will save the federal government massive sums that otherwise would need to be spent to provide institutional solutions to these veterans' health challenges and health maintenance.

Therefore, this bill is both beneficial to these families and a taxpayer-friendly measure.

Please advise contact Rep. Labradore and ask him to fully support this bill!

- Len Crosby, Legislative Chairman

Veterans' Recognition Day Celebration:

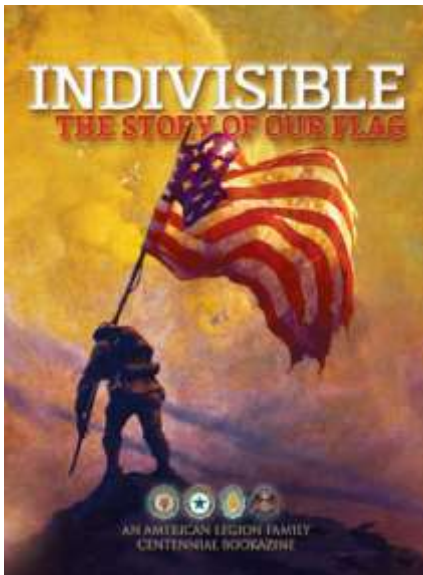
Almost 130 people – including 4 WWII vets – showed up at this event which Post 154 sponsored along with the City of Rathdrum and the Northwest Guardian Riders. The oldest identified vet was 96 year old WWII vet, Cecil Schertz. The youngest was 30 year old active duty Navy reservist Marcia McDowell. As Marcia was on her drill weekend and would be late arriving, her friend and also a Navy vet, Hannah Schoepp stood in for her. Mayor Vic Holmes read a proclamation making the month of November Veterans' Month in Rathdrum. The combined 143 & 154 Honor Guard presented the colors, while the National Anthem and entertainment was provided by the much appreciated acapella quartet, *Amore*. The generous businesses in and around Rathdrum donated over \$3400 worth of goods and services which were used as door prizes for the vets in attendance as well as filling 2 large baskets for the oldest & youngest identified vets in the Rathdrum area. As this event was a resounding success, it was decided that we should do it again next year. – Jean Bledsoe



Ceremonial Cake Cutting with Sword,
Cecil Schertz & Hannah Schoepp



View of the Audience.



The Post is taking pre-orders for this brand new book published by the American Legion called "INDIVISIBLE- THE STORY OF OUR FLAG".

An American Legion Centennial tribute to our nation's colors, exploring the flag's meaning, the price paid for all it symbolizes, and the special place it occupies in our culture and conscience.

This collectible bookazine, beautifully illustrated, succinctly tells the story of the U.S. flag from the American Revolution to the global war on terrorism. Includes unique facts, historical anecdotes, and more.

- 112 pages
- Approx. 8.5" x 11"

To order one or more copies just send an email and let us know how many you would like to rathdrum154@gmail.com by December 9th. Price is \$9.95 plus 6% tax = \$10.55 Total Cost

Mark Your Calendar:

Dec 4th - Christmas Carrousel (See flyer below)

Dec 8th - Family Programs Holiday Assistance Program (**applications due by the 8th!** See flyer below)

Dec 9th – Post 154 Christmas Party (See article below)

Dec 12th - Family Programs Holiday Assistance Program – donations due by the 12th. See Flyer below)

Dec 20th – DAV Christmas gift wrapping (See Article Below)

Dec 25th – Christmas!

Dec 30th - FREE Veteran Legal Clinic (See article below)

Bits & Pieces:

The North Idaho Military Legal Alliance & Partners are happy to announce our first FREE Veteran Legal Clinic. This clinic will be held on the last Wednesday of each month (due to the Thanksgiving Holiday November is scheduled for the 18th) from 3pm – 5pm at the American Legion Post 153 in Post Falls. During these clinics Veterans, Service Members & Dependents will be given the opportunity to meet one-on-one with an Idaho Attorney for preparation of a simple estate plan, which includes a simple will, durable power of attorney for health care, durable general power of attorney, and living will. Receive help with Family law matters such as filing for divorce or issues surrounding child support, or receive legal counsel on any other issues you may have.

Please bring necessary legal documents with you to the clinic.

To RSVP please contact Anne Solomon at [208-667-3561](tel:208-667-3561) or annesolomon@frontier.com

The Lion's Club Christmas Tree is up and they have two boxes for toys for the Marine's Toys for Tots program. If you would like to donate for the children you can bring a new unwrapped gift on Dec. 9th and put it in the box. Thank you for your willingness to help these underprivileged kids. – Lonnie Morse, Member Post 154 & new Assistant Webmaster & Newsletter Editor (Thank you so much for this early Christmas present Lonnie – Editor)

Memories of My Service

A CRAZY TRIP FROM SAN DIEGO TO WHIDBEY ISLAND

I was 17, a Navy Seaman (E-2), and recently out of boot camp from the Naval Training Center in San Diego. My orders were to report to the USS Sperry (AS12), a Submarine Tender at Point Loma.

For the six months that I was on this ship it only left port once. I remember two significant incidences during that trip. The first one was about two miles off the coast of San Francisco. The sea was rough with 30 foot swells. The cook was using a meat slicer when the ship took a hard hit with a swell. He fell against the meat slicer and cut his hand off. I was not in the galley when this happened. I just remember the sailors talking about it during the rescue. That's what I remember the most – the rescue. I don't remember the size of the Coast Guard vessel but it was big. The USS Sperry was 15,000 tons and the CG vessel was narrow and long. As I mentioned earlier, we were in 30 foot swells. The USS Sperry would be in the bottom of the swell and the CG vessel would be on the top and this was repeated over and over for about an hour of ups and downs, ups and downs. At one point the USS Sperry was able to shoot a 200 foot long line over to the CG vessel. They attached a rescue chair and the Sperry crew pulled it over. The injured cook was put in the chair and three attempts were made to get him over to the CG vessel. I don't know if he was conscious or sedated but that ride over would have made me pass out.

After the USS Sperry got back underway we continued to Whidbey Island for scheduled repairs. The ship was put in dry dock, placed on support braces and the water let out. As the work got under way, I was assigned the fire watch to a welder. We were in the bilges on the very bottom of the ship. An earthquake hit knocking us down and tossing us around. On the morning of April 29, 1965, at 8:29 a.m. PDT, an earthquake registering at 6.5 magnitudes went through the Seattle area. We had no idea what was going on. An hour later we finally made it up and out of the ship. It had rotated to where the bow was tight on west dry dock wall and the stern was tight on the east dry dock wall but was still on the supports.

I finally became a man on that trip. Just 11 months prior I was a punk kid riding a bicycle down to the lake in Coeur d'Alene - Lonnie Morse

Costs of Homelessness to Kootenai Health - Information provided by Director of Social Services, Kootenai Health

- In the last 30 days, Kootenai Health has written off \$255,000.00 directly related to providing medical service to homeless individuals.
- In the last year, Kootenai Health has written off \$1.2 million dollars directly related to health care services provided to just 7 homeless individuals.
- Of those 7 individuals, 1 person had 71 hospitalizations, 1 other person in that group had 41 hospitalizations.
- Both cases mentioned above did not involve substance or alcohol abuse or misuse - they were ALL health related hospitalizations.
- 'Health related' cases included pneumonia, serious infections, substantial wounds or breaks, severe coughs, and gastro-intestinal complications.
- Every dollar written off by Kootenai Health and other health care providers - who must serve anyone who comes in to their emergency room regardless of their ability to pay - must be made up by increasing the cost of health care in our Community.
- A number of those involved in providing services to the homeless believe that these types of hospital emergencies and visits could be greatly reduced, or treated earlier, before they get so bad as to require a hospital stay, with a much lower level of care, through a supervised 24/7 shelter/resource center.
- These figures do not include mental health treatment services or counseling.

Christmas 2015 at Post 154

Mark your calendars for December 9th, 2015....6pm...Lion's Club, Rathdrum, ID.

This is usually the day for an executive board meeting, but we are having our Post 154 holiday gathering and we would love to see everyone there....and not just American Legion members but invite your family members, too! For the potluck, bring a dish of your choicesee list below and fill in the empty spots with your favorites!

Our dinner ... right at 6pm (let's eat while it is hot) and coffee provided. There will be a **very short** meeting right after our meal to complete any *essential* business needing attention for the month of December (since we do not have a regular meeting on the 23rd).

Set up helpers (please be at the Lions around 5pm): turn on heat, arrange tables, make coffee, decorate, other.

Paula

Dee

Lonnie (open doors)

Maryellen

Tad

Clean-up helpers: hopefully that's everyonemany hands make light work!

Potluck items at this time include but not limited to:

Broadheads - smoked turkey

Sasse - paper goods

Atwoods - decorations

Fevolds - ham

Morse - homemade salsa/chips

Crosbys - salad

Ograms - deviled eggs

Bledsoes - dessert

Allerts - water

Tills - potatoes & green beans

Again, we hope to see everyone at our first Christmas holiday gathering.

Contact your Chaplin and this years' party coordinator, Paula Atwood if you have any questions/suggestions at [208-446-6293](tel:208-446-6293).

P.S. I'm going to wear a fun holiday sweater!

And we pray that that day may come soon. We pray that until then, God will protect our gallant men and women in the uniforms of the United Nations - that He will receive into His infinite grace those who make their supreme sacrifice in the cause of righteousness, in the cause of love of Him and His teachings. We pray that with victory will come a new day of peace on earth in which all the Nations of the earth will join together for all time. That is the spirit of Christmas, the holy day. May that spirit live and grow throughout the world in all the years to come. – *Franklyn D. Roosevelt*, December 24th 1944 in his Christmas message to the nation.

- Dee Sasse, Commander



FAMILY PROGRAMS HOLIDAY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2015

The Holiday Assistance Program's intent is to give Soldiers and leaders an opportunity to give back to Service Member Families who have fallen on hard times. The program has been blessed to experience the return of sponsors year after year which in turn helps insure the support to our National Guard Family continues.

JOIN THE CIRCLE OF SUPPORT TO OUR NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!



All sponsor, nomination, and application forms are due by December 8, 2015

All donations should be dropped off by close of business December 12, 2015

Questions or to turn in forms contact your local Family Assistant Center.

Boise: 4250 Cessna St., Bldg 270, 208-272-4355 or 208-272-4356

Caldwell: 1200 S Kimball, 208-272-7311

Pocatello: 10714 Fairgrounds Rd., 208-272-7188

Twin Falls: 1069 Frontier Rd., 208-272-7027

Idaho Falls: 575 W. 21st, 208-272-7774

Lewiston: 2707 16th Ave., 1-866-791-5041

Post Falls: 5453 E. Seltice Way, 208-272-7532



2015 Christmas Carousel

Join us at the Lost Carousel in
Riverfront Park for a night of
free family fun!

December 4th 5:30 to 8:30

Any questions contact Kim Cole @ 509-844-1115 or kim.l.cole.ctr@mail.mil



Sponsored by  And WANG Family Programs