



**AMERICAN LEGION POST 46
NEWSLETTER**

October, November and December, 2011

"In Memory of Those Who Served and to Honor Those Who Are Serving."

To All Fellow Legionnaires of American Legion Post 46

The last three monthly Post 46 meetings at Webers have all started with the serving of a dinner for all attendees compliments of Legionnaire and long time active Post 46 member, Tom Scott. Although Legionnaire Scott is very hesitant to take any credit for his generous contribution, there is no question that all those attending our meetings are very appreciative and it lends an air of hospitality and camaraderie to our Post 46 meetings. Whether or not we accomplish more at our meetings as a result is an open question but we surely have more fun doing it and attendance has increased substantially. Thank you, Tom, on behalf of all of us.

Our Post 46 American Legion baseball team completed another season and, although they did not make the state play-offs, all reports were complimentary and the young men playing on our team were a credit to both themselves and to Post 46. Commander Duncan continued to be heavily involved both in supporting and travelling with the team and the fact that Post 46 continues to sponsor a baseball team is due in large part to his energy and commitment. The opportunity of Post 46 veterans to support and meet with these young athletes should not be overlooked or ignored. As ever, the financing of a baseball team is one of our major undertakings and the baseball budget is always being stretched. If any Post 46 members are avid baseball fans and wish to see Post 46 continue to sponsor a team next year, please contact Commander Duncan and contribute whatever donations you are able to make in support of this effort. Thank you.

One of our sad duties is to mark the loss of Post 46 members and to honor them as best we can. We also make an effort to post the names of deceased members on our web site so that all other Legionnaires are fully informed. Please, therefore, if you learn of the death of a Post 46 member, please notify us either by telephone or email so that we can post the proper notice on our website, contact the family if appropriate and determine if military funeral honors have been requested. This newsletter contains a short item noting the passing of a couple of veterans (not Post 46 members) who were recently honored by their veteran brothers and sisters. Veterans come together and become united in many different ways!!

Please note that a number of events will take place in the next three months and all Legionnaires should make some effort to participate in and contribute to them. Veterans Day on November 11th is, of course, the grand daddy of them all. It is the one day of each year when veterans can commemorate and honor all of those veterans who have served before them. Although this date (marking the end of World War I) is not celebrated to any large extent by the civilian population, there is certainly no excuse for veterans to ignore it and sit on their hands. I hope each and every one of you will do your part. If you are unsure as to how and where you can participate, please contact us. Also note the dates of our monthly Post 46 meetings and our luncheons at Classic Cup Café. These gatherings are conducted for the benefit of our members and it makes no sense for Post 46 members not to take advantage of them and participate. Finally, believe it or not, a reminder about our annual Christmas Party at Webers. Please note the date,

put it on your schedule and let us know if you wish to hear a particular speaker or invite a particular guest. Commander Duncan has, as always, started to make arrangements for this annual festive event and any input or support from you will be cheerfully acknowledged.

If any Post 46 member feels that a particular news event might be of particular interest to our members and deserves some further attention in our newsletter, please let me know or send me a summary of the event which we can include in our next issue; however, remember that this is a family oriented newsletter! As the days continue to get shorter, darker and colder, I hope you all will have pleasant memories of this summer to keep you warm. Thank you for your support of Post 46 and its commitments to our community, our veterans and our military personnel on active duty.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| October 3 | Regular Post Meeting
Directors Room, Weber's Inn
Dinner served at 6:00 P.M. |
| October 16 | 2 nd District Meeting, 2:00 P.M.
Monroe, MI Post 40 |
| October 19 | Luncheon Meeting
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Road, 11:45 a.m. |
| November 7 | Regular Post Meeting
Directors Room, Weber's Inn, 7:00 p.m. |
| November 11 | Veterans Day
Celebrations at Concordia College and other locations |
| November 13 | Vietnam Veterans Christmas Packing Party, 3:00 P.M.
VFW Post, 3230 W. Wagner Road between Ann Arbor and Saline |
| November 16 | Luncheon Meeting
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Road, 11:45 a.m. |
| December 3 | Post 46 Christmas Party
Weber's Inn, 11:30 A.M. |
| December 5 | Regular Post Meeting
Directors Room, Weber's Inn, 7:00 p.m. |

December 21 Luncheon Meeting
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Road, 11:45 a.m.

December 28 Holiday Bingo, Veterans Hospital, 7:00 P.M.

LUNCHEON MEETINGS

As most of you know by now, our lunch meetings are held on a Wednesday each month at the Classic Cup Café on Jackson Road, Ann Arbor. The exact dates of these lunch meetings are listed above. It is an opportunity for all members to get together, relax, enjoy a meal and get to know other members of Post 46 in an informal setting. If you would like some speakers at these meetings (other than our stand-up comedian, Elmer White) please suggest what type of speakers you would like – snake oil salesmen, investment advisors, athletic coaches, veterans, etc.

HOMELESS VETERANS BURIAL PROGRAM

At our last Post 46 meeting, Legionnaire Karl Meyer brought to our attention the sad fact that literally thousands of our veterans are homeless and sleep on the streets. Although the reasons for such a disgraceful state of affairs may well be due to mental ailments and/or drug addiction, the fact remains that these men and women, who once served in the military, are often homeless with no place to go and, upon death, are virtually discarded and ignored. Karl introduced us to the services provided by Dignity Memorial regarding a Homeless Veterans Burial Program. This program is “proudly” run locally through both Muehlig Funeral Chapel in Ann Arbor and Hosmer-Muehlig Chapel in Dexter. Karl reports that the Veterans Administration does a good job of taking care of veterans under such circumstances but that the Burial Program is designed for those veterans “who fall through all of the safety-net holes.” The Burial Program is conducted in partnership with many veterans groups including the American Legion, VFW and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

One of the problems which this program faces is identifying those who are in need. Evidently, if a homeless shelter or tent-city can provide the social security number of a homeless veteran, his or her status as a veteran can normally be verified. I hope that knowing of the existence of this Burial Program will encourage Post 46 members to become involved if you know of any veterans who have fallen “between the cracks” so that we can assist them in receiving the burial honors in death that they earned by their military service to this country.

BINGO NIGHT AT THE VA HOSPITAL

Post 46 has continued the tradition of volunteering to sponsor Bingo Night at the VA Ann Arbor Hospital during the most difficult period for our hospitalized veterans – the holiday period between Christmas and New Years Day. A Bingo night is scheduled at the VA Hospital on December 28, 2011. If you can join us and help hospitalized veterans with their bingo cards, please let us know. If the creek don't rise, we are certain to see Steve Duncan assuming his regular role of calling out the numbers.

MARINES AND THEIR PROHIBITED WEAPON

The American Legion Post 46 Newsletter is a family oriented publication but I could not help but notice a recent article in the Marine Corps Times which dealt with the prohibition of the “passing of wind” by the troops in Afghanistan. Please move on to the next article if you are easily offended.

Apparently, the audible passing of wind is particularly offensive to the Afghans. For sure, it might also not be a welcome sound or encouraged by many of us here in the good ole US of A, but among a group of soldiers out on patrol, it might well be greeted with considerable amusement and some complimentary derision. There are a number of activities which military personnel in Afghanistan are asked to forego: cursing, because it could be misunderstood (try to enforce this one?); talk about politics, religion or girls because those topics could escalate into major disagreements (the language barrier obviously affords some protection); but the passing of wind? Alright, it should not escalate into becoming a contest but it could lead to some cross-cultural exchanges or other good-natured gallows humor. But the latest regulation is quite clear, so..... all Marines scheduled for deployment in Afghanistan should be forewarned to practice holding it in at certain times and places so that they do not create an international incident and face disciplinary action by relaxing a particular bodily function at the wrong moment. Semper Fi!

YPSILANTI AMERICAN LEGION, POST #282

A recent article in Ann Arbor.Com reported that the Ypsilanti American Legion Post 282 was “gearing up” to open its new building at 100 Ecorse Road in Ypsilanti. Almost three years ago, the former Ypsilanti American Legion Post on South Huron Street burned down and the membership of Post 282, which then numbered some 500 Legionnaires, has since steadily reportedly dwindled to less than 200. The Post has been holding most of its meetings since the fire at the Ypsilanti Moose Lodge.

The 4500 square foot building on Ecorse Road is being remodeled by contractors and Post 282 hopes to have a formal opening and dedication of the building on November 11, 2011. Al Ford, the post development chairman stated that there is a list of some 600 names of veterans in the Ypsilanti area and that Post 282 intends to “go to their homes” to let them know the Ypsilanti American Legion is back online and invite them to get involved. The new building includes a 4500 square foot basement that the post intends to utilize and will feature a club room, a meeting room for the ladies’ auxiliary, a meeting room for the sons of the American Legion, a kitchen, a rental and an internal café. The building will be handicap accessible although not all the rooms will be ready by the November 11th unveiling.

The Ypsilanti Post was founded in 1930 following the end of World War I. Ford is also quoted as saying “When its complete, we want to make that corner a showplace for the City of Ypsilanti. The building will be attractive from the outside and we are going to make it extremely nice on the inside.” Post 46 extends its best wishes to its fellow Legionnaires at Post #282 for the successful completion of its new building and for a significant increase in its membership.

HONORS TO DEPARTED COMRADES.

One of the most difficult experience every veteran must deal with is saying farewell to a departed comrade. A veteran must deal with these sad farewells more often than the average citizen not only because many of our veterans are older than the average citizen but also because military duty itself can often result in the premature death of military personnel. This mourning period is also more difficult for the veteran in many ways because of the sacrifices which we know were made by the deceased veteran on behalf of the country and the concern we have that our country and the general public do not properly honor these sacrifices. The one tangible way by which we often commemorate a deceased veteran and also bring some degree of comfort to ourselves is to gather together and include military tributes at his or her funeral as tokens of our respect for our common shared service experiences.

Two funerals recently took place for deceased veterans which illustrate such military tributes. One was for a Navy SEAL who was killed in action in Afghanistan while still a young man and the other was for a Vietnam veteran who returned to Ann Arbor many years ago and was killed by a car one night while walking back home.

Gary Lillie was a Vietnam Veteran, an active member of VVA 310, and was involved in assisting veterans in many different ways after returning from Vietnam. He established a successful career in Ann Arbor as a real estate agent but was a tireless advocate for the welfare of veterans whenever and wherever he could. He was cruelly struck down by a car while walking at night near his home in Ann Arbor on August 4th. His memorial service took place at the Ypsilanti Township Civic Center and it was the type of funeral service that Gary deserved and which he would have appreciated. The service included the military tributes and tokens of respect from his veteran comrades which reminded us all in attendance of our common bond of shared service.



Jon Tumilson and Hawkeye.

Petty Officer 1st Class Jon Tumilson was killed in Afghanistan along with other service personnel on August 8th. He was one of 22 Navy SEALs who were killed when a Taliban insurgent shot down a Chinook helicopter with a rocket-propelled grenade. As is customary, an American flag was draped on his coffin in front of a tearful audience of over 1500 people and one dog. I found the picture particularly moving and wanted to share it with you. It shows Tumilson's dog, a Labrador retriever named Hawkeye, lying by Tumilson's casket mourning the loss of his master.

These two very different examples of final tributes to veterans illustrate just a couple of ways that we can commemorate and honor our deceased veterans. Maybe they will come to mind as we approach Veterans Day on November 11th and remind us to pay appropriate tribute on that day to those veterans who have preceded us.

SHOULD MILITARY RETIREMENT BENEFITS BE UNTOUCHABLE?

The latest issue of our American Legion electronic newsletter began with this headline question. It has obviously been prompted by the deficit reduction planning which has taken center stage in Washington these past few months and has caused lively debate and pitted many groups against one another each of which is fighting to retain the benefits to which their members would otherwise be entitled. Not surprisingly, veterans organizations have strenuously opposed any reductions in military benefits whatsoever in the belief that, if you give just a little, it then opens the door to bigger cuts. The same is true, of course, for organizations representing teachers, firemen, police and others receiving benefits paid from the public purse. Immediately after such events as Pearl Harbor and 9/11, the military receives full support and attention from the general public and its politicians; however, as the years pass by, the attention of the general public returns to those on the public payroll who are more involved in their daily lives such as teachers and police and the military begins to fade from public view. Everyone seems to be in agreement that public expenditures must be cut because the current deficits are strangling the economic foundation of the country; however, who must bear the burden of these cuts often becomes a political decision rather than a carefully reasoned one. How and where these cuts are to be made will be the central issue in Washington for many months to come. Stay informed!!

POST OFFICERS

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Greta Krapohl, Sr. Vice Commander
Michael Malley, Jr. Vice Commander & Judge Advocate
John "Laurie" Howley, Sgt. at Arms
Robert Oxenger, Chaplain
Elmer White, Adjutant
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