



THE LEGION POST

OTIS SAMPSON POST 59 STOUGHTON, WI
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Volume 17 Issue 3

April 2015

Commander's Report

2014-2015 OFFICERS

Commander

Sonny Swangstu

1st Vice Commander

Vik Malling

2nd Vice Commander

Mary Lloyd

3rd Vice Commander

Larry Johnson

Service Officer

Bob Lloyd

Sgt. at Arms

Dale Seffens

Finance Officer

Jim Oler

Historian

Lenny Swingen

Adjutant

DuWayne Stellmacher

Judge Advocate

Terry McCardle

Chaplain

Rich Fries



Hello again,

The snow is melting fast and I hope we have an early spring.

Seems like I just finished my last article and here we go again. We have decided to have our news letter published monthly again. We felt our Post functions were overlooked a bit and the attendance was down. We are sorry for any inconvenience.

We are getting closer to having all the bugs worked out

on our Veterans Memorial Park plan so we will soon be out looking for support. This is going to be an expensive adventure, but I believe it can be done with all of your help. This is not going to happen overnight. This is something that the Stoughton community, along with the Legion and VFW, will be proud of for years to come. There are smaller towns around that have a veteran's memorial park, so I hope we can master one also.

It will not be long before election time again for Post officers. If you would like to nominate a person or be considered yourself please do so. We will be forming a

committee to accept your name. All are welcome to be part of our great organization. It is your chance to meet new faces and learn what we are all about.

We will continue to pray for those members and friends who are ill. Our hearts go out to Odean Teigen, Ron Lacy, Mel Christenson, Nick Bierman, and Carl Sampson. Hopefully I haven't left anyone out. If so, please let me know. We miss you.

Thank you to all the volunteers who work so hard.

Commander continued on page 2

Auxiliary

President

Marlene Bierman

873-7397

1st Vice President

Elvera Phelps

873-5154

2nd Vice President

Linda Swangstu

873-9428

Secretary

Linda Schmidt

205-2517

Treasurer

Alice Moen

444-7320

Chaplain

Sharon Silbaugh

873-3927

Sgt. at Arms

Pat Christensen

873-7479

Historian

Sherry Leick

873-6687

Auxiliary News



Hello American Legion Family,

Hey! The days are getting longer, warmer, and sunny. Won't be long before the white stuff will be gone. Get out and enjoy.

I haven't been involved in the Auxiliary too much lately on account of Nick being ill. He is home but can't do much. Does walk with a walker but needs help—can't go far. He sleeps most of the time. Would like to thank everyone who has sent him cards. He enjoys them.

The Auxiliary will be sending three girls to Badger Girl State this year—don't have the names yet. We have received scholarship donations from the Lioness, Rotary, and Knights of Columbus. Thank you to our donors.

On March 7 Amy Hermes, Bonnie Kenney, Cathy

Rigdon, and Linda Schmidt attended a national training session in Portage. It was fantastic and they learned a lot. Linda Schmidt plans to host leadership training by Department in Stoughton, August 10 for the 3rd District Auxiliaries.

Lisa Olson reported that the Auxiliary received our 100% membership goal and has earned the Department CHORUS award. We have 139 members at this time which makes it 102%. Thanks Lisa for getting our members to pay their dues and doing all the hard work you do for membership.

On Thursday March 26, the Dane County Meeting will be held in Stoughton at the Legion. Dinner will be at 6:30. Please bring a dish to pass, salads, casserole, etc. We will furnish the BBQ and buns. It would be nice to have a lot of members attending. You get to hear what other Auxiliary members are doing.

At our last meeting, the members approved our donations from our general fund. We gave to the community: \$200 each to Senior Center, Seniors in Need, Personal Essential Pantry and \$100 each to the Stoughton Food Pantry and the Methodist Food Pantry and Veterans—Madison VA Hospital, Badger Honor Flight, ALA Support Military Families, \$200 each and \$1,000 to the Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial fund.

President continued on page 2

CALENDER OF EVENTS

March 15 - Legion Breakfast –7:00 – 11:00 am
March 21 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
March 22 - Country Jam with Mikey Fuss
2:00 – 6:00 pm
March 24 - Legion Dinner – 6:30 pm
March 26 - Dane County Council Birthday meeting
and potluck – 6:30 pm
March 27 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
March 28 - Bret t Peterson Band – 8:00 – midnight
April 4 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
April 5 - Happy Easter!
April 18 - Denise Rohan for National Commander
fund-raiser – 4:00 – 7:00 pm
April 18 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
April 19 - Legion Breakfast – 7:00 – 11:00 am
April 24 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
April 26 - Country Jam with Mikey Fuss
2:00 – 6:00 pm

Event Pricing

Post Dinner: 6:30 pm \$11.00

Breakfast: 7:00-11:00 am
\$8.00 adults, \$4.00 children

*For upcoming Legion entertainment, call the Post
at 205.9090 for a recorded message.*

Thank You

A big Thank You goes out to Sonny Swangstu for his efforts in acquiring the property, for our all important, Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park project. Without his efforts and relationship with Oscar and Shirley Linnerud, this would not have happened. A big Thank You goes out to VFW Post 328 and its members for their vital role and participation in this project, as well. Also, a big Thank You to SAL Squadron 59 for having the first fund-raiser for this project, which sparked the interest and got this project off the ground. A Thank You to all the community members who have stepped up to participate in this great project, as well. Remember our purpose: this is not about any of us as individuals, but all of us, collectively, to honor our veterans. Thanks to all.

Jim Oler
Finance Officer

Commander continued from page 1

Remember to drop off a food item in the box by the front door for our food pantry as they can always use help. Also, if you have any used up ink cartridges, we have a box in the front window where you can drop them off. The Auxiliary earns a little by sending them in for recycling.

Thank you,

Commander Sonny

President continued from page 1

Please, please get your time sheets in by the end of March. Mark your calendar for April 18. The Legion is having a fund-raiser for Denise Rohan who is running for State Commander. It will be a wine and beer tasting. Also the District Conference which will held April 25 in Gays Mills. I hope some of the new members will attend.

You can rest at ease, we have a new president. Lisa Olson will be our next Auxiliary President. Thanks Lisa. You will do great. She knows the ins and out of the Auxiliary. Lisa and Linda Swangstu will be sharing the duties of membership.

At our April meeting we will stuff the poppy in the envelopes for mailing out to the Legion and Auxiliaries members. If you would like to help, please come.

If you are able to help at funerals or bring food, please let Linda Swangstu or me know. We would like to have more members help, so we have don't need to call on the same people.

I want to thank everyone who has stepped up to the plate to help me out with things at the Auxiliary and funerals while I am needed at home with my husband.

Hope everyone has a nice Easter with your families and friends.

Marlene Bierman
President

Membership

The Post has about 25 folks who still haven't paid their \$35 annual dues for 2015. We have enjoyed having 100% membership awards for the past 12 years and we need these last members to do their part in keeping our award streak alive and well.

Vik Malling
1st Vice Commander

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

If you know of anyone who is hospitalized, or in need, please contact Rich Fries at 608.273.8758.

No One Told Them They Were Heroes

On June 2nd, 1968, the USS Valley Forge LPH-8 was engaged in helicopter flight operations a few miles off the coast of Vietnam. Army and Marine helicopters routinely used the ship as a safe haven from VC and NVA night attacks in and around Da Nang.

Such was the case of an Army CH-47 preparing to return to its base that afternoon. The pilot was not familiar with Navy takeoff procedures and began lifting off while the helicopter was still tied down. The following is an excerpt from my private log entries that day:

"The starboard tie down held but the port one snapped, sending the bird over on its nose. Smith and Edlund hit the deck and Lee fell running from it as it flipped over, splitting open. All 13 passengers spewed out unhurt. One crewmember ran from the plane, his clothes on fire and jumped over the port side (56 feet down) into the water. Another crewman jumped from the plane and into the forward safety net. He was cremated." (My friend and shipmate Andy Wang, who was directly in front of the helicopter and signaling the pilot, never had a chance and was decapitated by a rotor blade as the helicopter tipped over.)

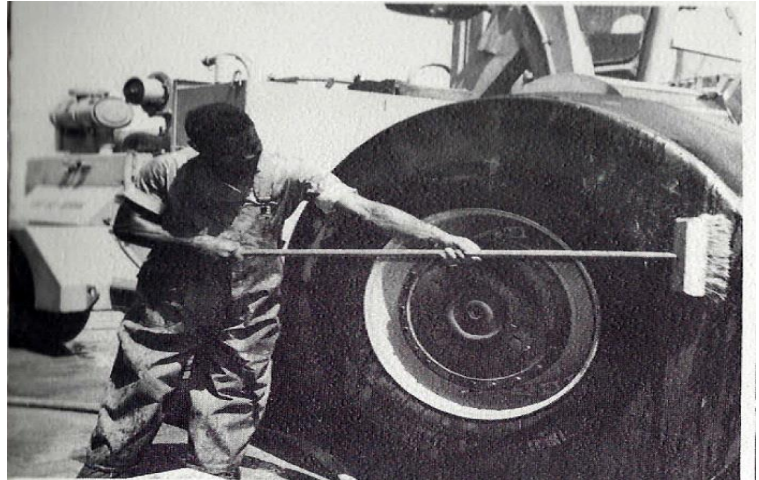
"Because of the ammo going off, the tilley was brought up with the hose teams behind it. They were led to the fire by Valdez and Freeman, the hot-suit men. Tanner drove the tilley when they pushed the bird over the starboard side."



The tilley was equipped with a bulldozer type blade and with hundreds of gallons of fuel burning and various ordinance exploding (50 cal. shell casings were found on the flight deck, 400 feet from the fire.), there was no other option but to push the helicopter over the side. Crash Crewmen Bob Valdez and Joe Freeman, wore hot-suits with no body armor, well aware that they may take a bullet at any second and placed themselves only a few yards from the burning helicopter to guide the tilley and also ensure that it didn't go overboard with the

helicopter.

Twenty feet below the fire, on the hangar deck, were tons of ammunition, rockets, flares, etc. so, in part, due to the heroism of men such as this, happenstance and possibly just dumb luck, the USS Valley Forge escaped the fate of the USS Forrestal, the year before, in which a fire killed 134 and injured 161 sailors. The next day, it was back to business as usual.



Submitted by Doug Olson
V-1 Division, USS Valley Forge 1967-1968

Purple Heart Display Case

The family of Marvin Thorson has loaned to Post 59 two of his Purple Hearts for display. One is in its original box with the ribbon and the medal.

Also new in the display case are two garrison covers of the Military Purple Heart, the Louven Jerdee Chapter 355, Stoughton, WI. Louven Jerdee was the first person from Stoughton to give up his life in battle in WWII.

At the end of WWII there were TWENTYNINE Purple Heart Stoughton servicemen who returned home. I know of only two who still live in Stoughton.

Submitted by Steve Grady

Hall Rentals

Call Julie Nygaard at 608.333.9577

Fund-raising for the Veterans Memorial Park

The fund-raising drive for the Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park is now underway. Individuals are encouraged to order their bricks (pavers). Randy Robertson and Roger Nitzsche, co-chairmen of the drive, state that the fund-raising team will utilize both one-on-one contacts as well as the media. The team consists of members from the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion, as well as members from the Stoughton community.

According to Duane Broughton, general chairman of the project, there are four major components to the park design. First is the entrance that will have a wrought iron sign supported by two six-foot-high red granite pillars. On the sign are the words: "Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park."

Next is the educational section consisting of 12 red granite pillars. On each of the pillars will be notable quotes/speeches such as the Gettysburg Address and the Pledge of Allegiance. Above each quote will be an etching depicting significant military events such as Iwo Jima and the Battle of the Bulge. Near the bottom of each pillar will be a bronze plaque showing the name of the donor.

Gray granite benches will be placed throughout the educational section. The walkway in this section will be made of various sized bricks (pavers) with the inscription of the donor's choice. Most of the bricks will be placed in the educational section.

The third section will be black granite monuments with the names of all Stoughton area men and women that served in the U.S. military dating back to the Civil War. This

includes all those who served in the National Guard and Reserves. The name collecting committee, chaired by Roger Kleven and Basil Sadler, anticipate between 4,000 and 4,500 names will be placed on these monuments, each containing 300 names. Lining the educational area will be the flags of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines.

The centerpiece will be the main feature of the park. This gray granite structure will have a 10' x 10' base in the shape of a pentagon. On the faces of the base will be the names of the 150 Stoughton area veterans who were killed in action. A special bronze plaque will be attached for Truman Olson, who was killed in action in Italy during World War II and posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. The granite wall on the inside of the structure will have a painted 3' x 5' U.S. flag.

On top of the base will be a 6' x 6' cap that holds five round columns with another 6' x 6' cap. On top of that cap stands a bronze eagle with a five-foot wing span.

Directly in front of the centerpiece is the American flag. On each side are the flags of Wisconsin, VFW, American Legion, and POW/MIA.

Bronze plaques depicting the names of the respective donors will be placed on all pillars and flag bases, as well as on the centerpiece and entrance. Trees, shrubbery and flowers will adorn the site.

For further information, call Randy Robertson at 608.764.5881.

Monthly Post Meeting Schedule

Legion – 2nd Monday – 7:00 pm

Auxiliary – 2nd Monday – 7:00 pm

SAL – 2nd Wednesday – 7:00 pm

Meetings are held at the Post.

All members are encouraged to attend.



AMERICAN LEGION BAR 803 N. Page St. Stoughton, WI

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Friday: 3 – 10 pm or later

Saturday: Noon – 10 pm or later

Sunday: 11:30 am – 6 pm or later

Wednesday Ladies Night

\$.50 off any Ladies drinks





Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park Brick Order Form



Help the Stoughton area honor its past and present veterans. By purchasing a Memorial Brick to be placed at the new memorial, you can create a permanent tribute to our heroes.

There are three sizes available at corresponding levels of donation.

☐

8x8 Brick - \$150

4 lines of text max.

12 characters per line max.

☐

16x8 Brick - \$250

4 lines of text max.

24 characters per line max.

☐

16x16 Brick - \$550

8 lines of text max.

24 characters per line max.

PLEASE NOTE: SPACES AND PUNCTUATION COUNT AS CHARACTERS.

Please use the reverse side of this form to order your brick. If you have questions about this process of the memorial please contact Randy Robertson at 608-764-5881 or by email at randy.tshirtguy@gmail.com.

Please complete one order form per brick.**

Please make all checks payable to the: **Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park, LLC**

Please mail all checks and order forms to:

**Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park, LLC
PO Box 16
Stoughton, WI 53589**

For all inquiries regarding the fundraising bricks please contact Randy Robertson at 608-764-5881 or by email at randy.tshirtguy@gmail.com.

Purchaser _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

**** If you are ordering more than one brick, and would like them placed together please fill out information on back. While we cannot guarantee that they will be adjacent based on sizes and patterns, we will do our best to accommodate these requests.**

Order Blanks on Reverse Side

Stoughton Area Veterans Memorial Park

When filling out this order form, please use one character, space, or punctuation per box.

When filling out form please use the first line & first box; it will be centered on the brick automatically.

8x8 Brick - \$150 - 4 Lines, 12 Characters Each Line

16x8 Brick - \$250 - 4 Lines, 24 Characters Each Line

16x16 Brick - \$550 - 8 Lines, 24 Characters Each Line

For general questions or concerns, please contact Randy Robertson at 608-764-5881 or by email at randy.tshirtguy@gmail.com.

**** Please list the brick(s) you would like placed together . We will do our best to accomodate these requests ****

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Swiss Steak
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Editors Cliff Maerz and Tim Carter: C_Maerz@msn.com