



Hayes-Velhage Post 96 The American Legion

45 Raymond Road
West Hartford, CT 06107-2211
860.233.9029

Newsletter

Commander Andrew Battistone
anjoba30@aol.com

Sr. Vice Comdr. Jeffrey Cole
topjeffc@aol.com

Adjutant Charles Berry
cberry1@comcast.net

Finance Officer
PPC Raymond Gmeindl
rgmeindl@snet.net

Judge Advocate Robert Hyland, Esq.
rehyland@travelers.com

Chaplain William Quigg
wtq@sbcglobal.net

Exec. Cmteman PPC Ronald Cady
rcady@ntplx.net

Trustee Christopher Conlin
cjconlin@gmail.com

Trustee John Farrell
Phone 860-678-0307

Trustee Francis X. Gallagher
Phone 860-521-3634

Trustee PPC Richard Hennessey
richardhennessey@sbcglobal.net

Trustee David Lutz
david_r_lutz@sbcglobal.net

Trustee William Reardon
jreardon0719@sbcglobal.net

Trustee Robert Walsh
semperfirtw1@aol.com

Newsletter Staff

Publisher: Andrew Battistone
Editor: PPC Richard Hennessey

★★★ FALL 2010 ★★★

Wednesday, Sept. 8, '10 – 7:30 p.m.	Monthly Post Meeting
Wednesday, Oct. 13, '10 – 7:30 p.m.	Monthly Post Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 2, '10 – 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.	Election Day
Wednesday, Nov. 10, '10 – 7:30 p.m.	Monthly Post Meeting
Thursday, Nov. 11, '10 – 11:00 a.m.	Veterans Day Ceremony W. Htfd. Veterans Memorial
Wednesday, Dec. 8, '10 – 7:30 p.m.	Monthly Post Meeting

Commander's Message

In the past few months I have been asked: "At your age why did you agree to serve as Post Commander?" I have usually responded that I welcome the challenge and the honor.

Previously I served on the Post ad hoc committee that was charged with the planning and constructing our new Post Home. I take great pride and satisfaction for having been part of this committee. However, bricks and mortar do not make a legion post. It's members who are dedicated to the core values of The American Legion that do!

In this regard, we need an infusion of "new blood" from younger members who are willing to accept the challenge of serving Post 96. We have a great legacy to pass onto the next generation of veterans. I am confident they will accept their charge in the same manner and enthusiasm as their predecessors did in the past.

Last but not least, thank you for the honor of electing me Post Commander.

Respectfully yours in comradeship,

Andrew J. Battistone, Commander

★★★★ THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION ★★★★★

A Strong National Security ★ Taking Care of Veterans ★ Mentoring Youth ★ Promoting Patriotism and Honor

NEW PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE CONNECTION PROPOSED FOR AGENT ORANGE

For Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange the VA has proposed expanding the presumption of service connection for three additional illnesses. The illnesses are B cell leukemias, such as hairy cell leukemia; Parkinson's disease; and ischemic heart disease. Senator Jim Webb (D-Va.), a former Secretary of the Navy and decorated Vietnam War veteran succeeded in getting Congress to block implementing these changes, at least temporarily, to allow Congress time to study the VA decision and examine more closely the link found between these diseases and the herbicide exposure from Agent Orange. According to one Congressional source, what worries Webb is that, based on modest scientific evidence, VA could be paying claims on diseases that a large proportion of any population will contract through normal aging.

As a point of information, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Erik K. Shinseki's decision to add these three new illnesses was based on the latest evidence of an association with widely used herbicides such as Agent Orange during the Vietnam War, as determined in an independent study by the Institute of Medicine. (The Institute of Medicine is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 1970, under a congressional charter).

Additional information on these new presumptions, or filing a VA claim for service-connected compensation, can be obtained from the Post Service Officer, 860-233-9029.

POST 96 COLOR GUARD HONORED

A new and rejuvenated seven member Post Color Guard, under the direction of Legionnaire Chris Conlin, had the honor of leading the West Hartford Memorial Day Parade. The color guard received resounding cheers from a crowd estimated in excess of 15,000. Riding behind the color guard in a bright red Corvette was the Honorary Parade Marshal, PPC Richard Hennessey who was chosen for this honor in recognition of his 20+ years as the past administrator of the parade.

POST 96 LEGION BASEBALL

Both our Senior and Junior Baseball teams are inflicted with a type of an "Avis Syndrome" as both teams ended their regular seasons in second place. But they try harder! The senior's record of 19 wins and 5 losses and the juniors with 13 wins and 7 losses are commendable records. We are proud of our legion teams! They have brought great credit to Post 96 from legion baseball fans throughout the state. We salute and thank Chairman Jim Ellis, Coach Rick Sanford and their coaching staffs for another successful legion baseball season.

THE POST BYLAWS

Bob Hyland is chairing a working committee to review our existing Post Bylaws. If changes are proposed, and are accepted by the Post Executive Committee, the membership will be notified, as all changes to the Bylaws require two readings at Post meetings before they are voted on.

NEED A COPY OF YOUR DD FORM 214?

Jim Tierney has informed us veterans can retrieve a certified copy of their DD Form 214 by going to the Web site <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html>. Jim cautions that you must follow the instructions explicitly and print out the request. You should have your DD Form 214 in two weeks. This is a lot faster than a few years ago when it took six weeks.

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"...Word to the Nation: Guard zealously your right to serve in the Armed Forces, for without them, there will be no other rights to guard." President John F. Kennedy

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60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN WAR

On the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War, the Republic of Korea wants to thank, honor and remember Korean War veterans for their achievement. A letter signed by the President of the Republic of Korea expressing that free nation's profound gratitude is available to each living Korean War Veteran and can be obtained on line at <http://eng.koreanwar60.go.kr/apply.asp> or by writing to: U.S. Branch ROK 60th AKW Commemoration Committee, 2450 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20008.

POST HOURS OF OPERATION

The doldrums of summer severely impacted our food and beverage operation to the point that the Board of Trustees found it necessary to scale back the hours of operation to opening at 4:00 p.m., thus eliminating our luncheon service. No decision has been made to adjusting these hours as of today, when this Newsletter "goes to press." The Hours of Operation posted to the right of the main entrance reflect the scaled back hours of:

	BAR	KITCHEN
Monday	4:00 pm to *11 pm	Closed
Tuesday Through Friday	4:00 pm to *11 pm	5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Saturday	4:00 pm to *11 pm	Closed
Sunday	12 Noon to *7 pm	Closed

*The closing time may be curtailed or extended if the Bartender determines that the evening's business warrants it.

THE "MOVING WALL" VISITS WEST HARTFORD

The half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington was on display on the front lawn of the Town Hall from June 17 - 20. Our Post Color Guard participated in the impressive opening and closing ceremonies. As in Washington, people visited the wall with flowers, photos and notes as they reflected on the names on the wall in an emotional way that produced tears from many visitors. We salute and thank the Town of West Hartford for bringing the Moving Wall to town. Serving on the town committee that made this possible were Legionnaires Jean Paul Berard, John Eselunas, Moe Fradette, Ken Hungerford and Pat Sinatro.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD OF THE POST AMERICANISM COMMITTEE

After more than a decade of chairing our Americanism Committee, and virtually single-handedly running our core programs of the Oratorical Contest, Boys State and our School Awards Program, PPC Ed Friedman has found it necessary to turn the reins of this elite committee over to his hand picked successor, PPC Ken Hungerford. Clearly, his services will be missed but to Ed's credit, he has chosen a dedicated legionnaire who assisted him with the school awards. Our deep and sincere appreciation and thanks to Ed for his outstanding service to the youth of West Hartford. - - An interesting note and side bar is that Ed, a veteran of World War II, "passed the baton" to Ken, a Korean War veteran. It begs the question: "Where are our younger members?"

PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Enclosed to this newsletter is a letter asking for information to update our membership records. While all the information requested is important, the one significant part of the information requested is your e-mail address. Why do we need your e-mail address? To inform members on legion activities, etc. We might use the e-mail list as a means of marketing evening dinner specials, i.e. a Prime Rib Dinner for \$11.95, etc. The privacy of your name and e-mail address will be protected. For your convenience, a postage-paid envelope is enclosed.