

ARLINGTON VFW POST 981

Meetings: 7:00 PM 1st Weds. Of Each Month – Arlington Heights Am. Legion Post #208



Website – vfwpost981.com

WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

POST VETERAN OF THE YEAR

At our December Holiday Party Commander Mike Smogor named Pat Hickey as the Post 2023 Veteran of the Year.

Pat served in Vietnam and is currently our Post Officer of the Day. Previously he was Commander (2014-15), Sr. and Jr. Commander, Service Officer and Trustee since he joined the Post in 1989.

Pat's true value to the Post is his community outreach work. Pat is there selling hats, receiving donations, and recruiting at all our various public participation opportunities including farmers' markets, suburban festivals, and veteran celebrations. This involves many hours outside in sometimes very inclement weather. He directs his profits from the hat sales to paying for new member membership dues. In addition to his work for our Post he is also active in American Legion Post 208 and AMVETS Post 66.



COMMANDER

'Tis the holiday season - but it will soon be past and we'll be into the January deep freeze! Our Post has been busy this past Fall recruiting, performing Color Guard duties, and hosting community activities. We still need more active members - our Senior Vice Commander Tony has been aggressively pursuing new recruits and encouraging current members to participate in our Post meetings/activities.

Our Post and American Legion Post 208 stepped up to help support the Lutheran Home with its annual Veterans breakfast on November 4. They recently lost one of their sponsors and our Posts stepped up to fill the void.

Our Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen awards were presented by the Post at our December 6 Post meeting (see article below).

Our Scholarship Committee was happy to announce another \$3,000 scholarship contribution in memory of Bob Henderson. We also added a new member to the committee, Mary Bielski, wife of Tanker (aka Larry Bielski).

Sr. Vice Tony and our Poppy Chairman Henry Mueller are putting together a pamphlet to be used during our annual Memorial Day Poppy collections. This will be distributed as a handout to donors who ask what we do with our poppy funds. Hopefully it will increase our collections! Thanks to Trustee James Jones, we have begun once again streaming our Post meetings via Zoom. At our Holiday party on December 16 we honored Pat Hickey with our Post Veteran of the Year award - well-deserved and long past due! Pat also recently stepped up as our Officer of the Day staff position.

Kudos and thanks to our Junior Vice Commander Mike Kolbuk for organizing and coordinating our annual Post Holiday Party! A good time was had by all and over half of our attendees were Legion Post 208 members.

Just a reminder: about twenty-five of our VFW Post members are also American Legion 208 members - but ALL of our VFW members are ELIGIBLE to join the Legion. We (Post 981) have also recruited many eligible Legion members to join the VFW ranks. For information on how to join the Legion, see 208's Senior Vice Commander Stewart Abbink (who is also Post 981's Service Officer). Remember - both our organizations exist for the same reason! We are continually looking for ways to join and support our brothers and sisters from American Legion Post 208. Recently Legion 208 hosted 50 sailor recruits from Great Lakes for an all-day Thanksgiving event. Several of our Post 981 members were there to help out. I know the sailors were very appreciative!

Happy Holidays and a Happy and Healthy 2024 New year to all of our members! Here's looking forward to another successful year.

Smokey

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER

Membership is key and we need everyone's help in getting more members. We are hoping this major move will show our Post is active and looking for more members. Our Color Guard has been doing an outstanding job and is also looking for more members in it. Our Post must grow and will grow with your support.

Wear your military affiliation caps always it will advertise and get people to talk to you and possibly ask how to join the VFW Post 981. The more we show ourselves the better. We are the only ones who can show our military affiliation and YES we are proud of our service and have joined the VFW for the comradery of knowing what we have done and want to do to help other Veterans.

Please advertise all you can and YES talk it up as it is a great organization. Everyone is a recruiter

and I'm hoping we all can find new members this year. We have to be aggressive in getting new members in a nice way but we have to keep trying always. Post 981 HAS TO GROW NOW

Tony

JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER

There will not be a winter activity due to declining interest for the Wolves game and no immediate replacement on the horizon. Stay tuned for the summer Boomers skybox and the picnic. Hope you enjoyed the Holiday party.

Mike Kolbuk

UPCOMING POST EVENTS

- **Post Meeting** – Wednesday (02/07)
- **4th District Meeting** – Sunday (02/18) 1:00 PM, Niles VFW
- **Post Meeting & Officer Nominations** – Wednesday (03/06)
- **Post Meeting & Elections** – Wednesday (04/03)

TAPS



The members of Arlington Post 981, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America, pay their last tribute of respect to our departed comrades.

The following comrades passed away:

Rich Morbidoni

As brave men and women they marched away with abiding faith in their God, their country, and their flag.

As soon as is possible we request that family members **notify the Post via email** (listed on our website) if a comrade has passed away. Too many times we must rely on seeing an obituary in the newspaper which leaves little or no time for members to pay their final respects. If a family wishes a rifle salute, they should contact Dale Berg at the number listed in our Color Guard story.

POST HOLIDAY PARTY

The Holiday Party was held at the Legion Hall on December 16. Holiday decorations and an abundance of good food and entertainment made it a magical night for the 68 members and guests from the combined VFW and American Legion Posts who signed up to attend.

Upon arrival everyone was given a place card to choose a table, and a wrist band to get drinks from the bar. Appetizers included shrimp, cheese selections, vegetables and dip, and hot mini quiches and spinach pies.

Commander Smogor led us in the Pledge, AL Commander Dale Berg said a prayer, and Jr. Vice Commander Mike outlined the procedure to fill plates with Chicken Florentine or Steak Diane, Triple Cheese Au Gratin Potatoes, Grilled Vegetables, green salad and rolls and butter. Dessert was a sheet cake and holiday cookies, and both de-caf and regular coffee were available.

At 7:30 Sandi Haynes with 3 pieces entertained us for two hours with music, even taking requests that allowed us to give voice to old Animal's songs.



WALLY LUETTSCHWAGER/ BOB HENDERSON SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

At our October meeting Bob Henderson's daughter Lynn gave our Post another \$3,000 check to continue the scholarship in Bob's name. So, once again the Post is looking for TWO recipients of our Scholarship Grants for the Fall 2024 school year. Any veterans or children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren of veterans are eligible. Those living in the NW suburbs, especially the ones we serve, will have an edge over other applicants of equal credentials.

All the information and the application is available through our website:

www.vfwpost981.com.

POST 981 ELECTION NOTICE

At the March 6 2024 meeting nominations for elected Post Officers – Commander, Sr. Vice-Commander, Jr. Vice-Commander, Quartermaster, Chaplain and Three-Year Trustee – will be accepted. Additional nominations can be made at the April 3 2024 meeting. You do not need to be present (or Zoom) at either meeting to be nominated, but, if interested, must submit a letter to the Adjutant, Phil Nagle attesting that you will accept a nomination to a particular office. Only

those members present (or on Zoom) at the April meeting are eligible to vote in the elections.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY /PATRIOTS PEN

Our Post on December 6 presented our Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen awards to four deserving students:

The Voice of Democracy award was presented to Maurya Bonu, a senior at Stevenson HS in Lincolnshire, IL.

Patriot's Pen awards were presented to:

- Emily Rynne, 8th grade, representing Lake Zurich Middle School North.
- Jessica Lutz, 7th grade, representing St. Theresa school in Palatine, IL.
- Luke Martinez, 8th grade, representing St. Mary school in Buffalo Grove, IL.

Our Post had a total of 102 Patriot's Pen entries this year!

Our Post members were treated to the students reading of their essays (except for Jessica, who was ill and we will hear her essay at our January 3 Post meeting).

All of our winners have had their essays advanced to the VFW 4th District where district awards will be presented on January 14, 2024, at the 4th District Awards Banquet.

Congratulations to all of our winners!

Smokey



POST CLUB COORDINATORS

Here are the people to contact if you are interested in joining clubs where expenses are reimbursed by the Post:

Breakfast – Dale Berg (847) 636-1479

Golf – Mike Smogor (847) 915-9926

Beer – Mike Kolbuk (847) 520-9390

Investment and Sportsman's – Don Luken (847) 910-4964

FRANK FABIANSKI HONORED IN EUROPE

As a member of the 104th Timberwolf Infantry Frank helped clear Nazis from Belgium and Holland in 1944. He received the Purple Heart during his campaign. Frank returned to Belgium at age 101 in October with his daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter. They had breakfast with the U.S. Ambassador and participated in numerous local festivities honoring Frank and other veterans who made the trip.



POST SUPPORTS NOV. 4 LUTHER VILLAGE VET CELEBRATION

For years Post members have been attending the Veterans Day breakfast in Arlington Heights at the Lutheran Church and more recently at Luther Village. In previous years Humana was a major sponsor of the event.

This year Humana ended their sponsorship and our Post along with American Legion Post 208 agreed to split the cost. Here is the thank-you sent from Luther Village Executive Director Rick Remington:

“Thank you for your service and on behalf of Luther Village I would like to sincerely thank you for the generous donation from your VFW Post towards the Veterans Breakfast at Luther Village on November 4th. This is an important event for our veterans and our community. I sincerely hope that you attend the breakfast so I can personally thank you for your contribution. If I can ever be of service to you at Luther Village please do not hesitate to contact me.”



NEW POST MEMBERS

Jim Kott joined our Post in November. He served 27 years in the Air Force with duty during Desert Storm.



Tom Rakowski transferred into our Post in December. Tom spent 20 years in the Navy from 1984-2004 and served during the Gulf War.

If you see Jim or Tom at our meetings introduce yourself and welcome them to the Post.

POST RECEIVES A DONATION

Dr. John Rana, a member of the Sons of the Legion, Legion Post 208, donated \$500 to our Post. Another benefit of our close association with the Legion.

COLOR GUARD

The Color Guard Past events:

Nov 11 Buffalo Grove Park District – Veterans Day Celebration

The Color Guard performed a flag folding (Dale Berg and Stewart Abbink) and playing of taps (Mike Smogor) as part of a memorial service for Korean War Veteran Norman Kono in December. Even if you cannot march you can participate in wakes and funerals. In addition, there are many other activities that we are involved in that you could participate.

If a veteran has passed away, as soon as is possible we request that family members notify the Post via my telephone. Too many times we must rely on seeing an obituary in the newspaper which leaves little or no time for members to pay their final respects. If a family wishes a rifle salute, bugle and/or flag folding, they should contact Dale Berg at the number below.

Those interested in joining the Color Guard please contact, Dale Berg at 847-636-1479 or email bergda@comcast.net.

Dale Berg

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS®



ARLINGTON VFW POST 981

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TO: