



THE GRAF-O'HARA MESSENGER

3230 S. WAGNER ROAD PO BOX 2509, ANN ARBOR, MI 48106

Post: (734) 662-3972 - Commander: (734) 994-0444

Post Web Site: www.vfw423.org

Meetings – 2nd Monday Each Month at 8:00PM

September / October 2009

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AND AUXILIARY POST 423

Commander's Report - John Kinzinger

Fall is upon us, at this time of year our VFW Post is most beautiful, as the Fall color change moves through our area. Hope you can make one of our coming events and see what I mean. Check the article giving details of the coming events, especially the Pot Luck Dinner this weekend September 20th.

Four members of our Post attended the 2009 VFW National Convention in Phoenix in early August. Horace Frazier, Bob London, myself and Matt David. It was a busy few days attending the business meetings and workshops. There were more workshops than we could possibly attend. There were many highlights of the convention. It was a very busy few days. This was my first VFW convention. It was great to meet VFW Comrades from all across our country and hear their concerns and their work in their areas. Next year the 2010 convention will be in Indianapolis. More information will be made available at the membership meeting.

It is with much sadness that one of our lifetime members, Paul Dumsch, and an old friend of mine passed away this past month. We have had several members pass the past few years. Be sure to let us know of any members who are in the hospital or seriously ill at home. Just call the post and let us know. We would want to send our best wishes and a prayer their way. So, please keep that in mind. We have a wonderful Post Chaplain in WWII Veteran Murl Eastmann. Murl leads our illness and bereavement activity. He does volunteer work at the Ann Arbor VA Medical Center every week day. And he does special calls for members and



John K. Vietnam 66-67

spouses to other hospitals, homes, etc. Murl your involvement in our Post is very special. We all thank you.

So until our next edition, be sure to try to come out to our meetings and special events. I hope you all have a most blessed of days.

John Kinzinger, Commander

Membership

Our Post needs more new members to keep our membership count up. We are still at about 215 members. We do need members to get their dues in, so we can keep our numbers up. We do not want to eventually have our Post go by the way of many who have folded. We can keep that from happening by bringing in more new members. Our Post policy has been to offer a new member free membership for the first year. So when you run into a qualified Veteran, try to get them to join. If you do not have a membership application handy, please get their information and we will get an application to them and do a follow-up. I know we have had just a few of us who have brought in new members the past couple years. I would like to challenge everyone to get at least one new member to join our Post in the next year. It would be terrific to have our numbers double. It is possible, if we all try to help our Post grow. Thank you in advance.

Just today after I visited one of our members in St. Joseph hospital, I ran into a WWII Veteran who lives in Saline. He would be a good new member. He knows where our Post is and he said he would seriously think about coming out to a meeting. He has a real story to tell. He was with the Army Air Corps and was a belly gunner in a bomber in Europe. They were on their 34th flight, just one shy of getting to come home, when they were shot down, captured and held in a German POW camp.

He said he remembers well how happy the German guards were during the Battle of the Bulge, saying that it was going to be another Dunkirk for the Allies. He talked about the forced marches they went through as the Allies advanced. I hope he comes out to a meeting and joins our Post. I worked on him for quite a while. And that is how I get new members. - Commander Kinzinger

Salvation Army Bell Ringers

The local Salvation Army office recently contacted us about ringing bells again this year. Since members of our Post have been doing this for decades, I naturally said yes. We just need to request a date and if we do it early, we could most likely get the locations of our choice. We usually do businesses on the west side of Ann Arbor. This is a fun thing to do and it helps people in need. So, I hope you will join us this year and ring for a couple of hours. I will pass around a sign-up sheet in our meeting to get volunteers. Or you can call me at 734-994-0444 and I will put you on my list of ringers. If you want to ring, let me know what days are good for you, otherwise I will choose the dates. Thank you in advance. Commander Kinzinger

2009 Post 423 Sponsored Baseball Team

Our VFW Post 423 sponsors a wood bat hardball team in the Ann Arbor Rec. and Ed league. This was our second year of sponsorship of a team in this very competitive league. I manage the team and am proud of our players, team and performance. We finished the season with our best record so far. This past season was tougher all around with higher caliber ball players. Our team was better too. Our record was won 6, lost 9 and tied 1 and won our first tournament game. We were competitive in every game. A couple of breaks in a couple games would have given us a winning season. But that is baseball. I want to thank all the Post members who came out and cheered us on at many of our games. I personally appreciated it and I think you all would say that our team plays pretty good baseball.

From the members of our team and myself, we

appreciate and thank VFW Post 423 for sponsoring our team this past summer. John Kinzinger, Commander

Upcoming VFW Events - Milt Davis Post Potluck

The post will be having a potluck on Sept. 20th at 1 pm. We will eat at 1:30. The post is providing Sloppy Joes, Hot Dogs, and Corn. Please bring a dish to pass. Come out and enjoy a day with friends.

Past Commanders And Past Presidents Dinner

The post will be having its PC/PP dinner on Oct. 18th. Refreshments will be at 5 pm with dinner at 6 pm. Dinner is free to post members and a guest. You may invite two guest at \$10 per person. Door prizes and 50/50 drawing proceeds to cancer fund.

Come out and enjoy dinner and maybe win a prize. Please call Kay Davis @ 428-7874 or Marilyn West @ 971-4567 before Oct 11th.

Post Christmas Party

The Christmas party will be Dec. 6th at 1 pm. The Post will be providing a ham and turkey luncheon. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there to give each child a gift. Please call Kay Davis @ 428-7874 before Nov. 20th with children's names, age and gender so we may get each one a gift.

This is one of the events all families can enjoy. All Post members are invited to the Christmas Party. Hope to see you there. It is a very rewarding and joyful time.

On Aug. 2nd the Post hosted a picnic for Ann Arbor area veterans. We had about 170 people visiting the Post. Thank you to all who made this possible. The cooks, the cleaners and helpers. Thanks to the Boy Scouts who helped with people having a hard time getting around. A good time was had by all.

On Aug. 19th the post had a picnic for some VA Hospital patients who could not make it to the vets picnic. Murl Eastman performed his magic tricks. Murl also put on a show at the vets picnic. Thanks Murl. Thanks again to all who helped. This is some of the things the VFW does. If you have not been out lately, it is time to pay a visit. You can be proud to be a member of VFW Post 423.

Milton J. Davis - Post Quartermaster

We have formed a committee with the purpose of seeing what it takes to receive *All State Honors*.

Our first meeting was last month and we asked the former District Commander, Matt Davis, what it is that we need to do to achieve *All State Honors*. His first recommendation only had three words: *Report your activities*. Seems we have not been doing so and will in the future. That's the easy part. That doesn't mean that by reporting our activities to the District we will automatically get us *All State Honors*. There are other areas that need attention and we will be addressing those in the future. But, the critical one is Membership.

To compete for *State Honors*, we need to be 100 percent in Membership. Example, if a member fails to pay their dues, they are still carried on the rolls as a member for two years but not as a paid in-full member. This is not a local Post rule. This is a National VFW rule that affects all Posts. Members that fall into this category are a negative point in our quest to achieve *State Honors*. For each past-due member, we would have to enlist two new members. Currently we have some 40 plus members who fall into that category. It would be nice if we could at the drop of a hat gather 80 plus new members to balance the 40 who are not current with their dues. But, that isn't going to happen. So, please check your membership card. If you are behind on your yearly dues, please try to get your membership up to date.

If you have a hardship issue, please contact Commander Kinzinger (734.994.0444) or Quarter Master Milt Davis (734.428.7874). They will in strict confidence assist you in getting your dues up to date.

If you haven't been to a meeting in a while, plan on attending one in the near future. The Post looks great with the new paint job and the grounds are looking better each year. The Home Board is doing a great job keeping our Post one of the finest in the nation. We have something to be proud of so pay us a visit and bring a possible new member. We all know someone who qualifies.

The Vietnam Veterans of America Washtenaw County Chapter 310 who meet at our Post on the second Thursday of the month are having their 7th annual Pig Roast Sunday, October 4th from noon to 4 PM here at the post. They will have live entertain-

ment, with fun and food for all. The cost is very reasonable.

Adults \$10.00

Children 6 to 12 years \$5.00

Youngsters under 6 are free.

Grab the family and grandchildren and enjoy the afternoon at your Post.

Below are some pictures of our Packing Party where we pack care packages for the troops serving anywhere in the world.



Our next packing party will be October 12th at 6:30 PM at the post just prior to our meeting. All are welcome to participate in this worthy project as we continue to support our troops deployed in harms way.

GRAF-O'HARA
VFW Post 423
PO Box 2509
Ann Arbor, MI 48106



VFW Post 423 Calendar of Events

September 20th Post Potluck 1 PM

October 12th VFW Membership meeting 8 PM

October 18th Commander and Past Commanders Dinner 6 PM

December 6th Post Christmas Party 1 PM

See page two for details on the above events.