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December 2022

PO BOX 568 - 106 S. MAIN STREET, KITTITAS, WA – 509-968-4004

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WEB SITE: [www.vfw683.org](http://www.vfw683.org)

FACEBOOK: [www.facebook.com/VfwPost683](https://www.facebook.com/VfwPost683)

Next Business Meeting Tuesday December 13th, 2022 @ 7:00 PM



Kristin Ashley **Commander**

Al Bragg  
**Senior Vice Commander**

Carl Vickers  
**Junior Vice Commander**

Melanie Morin  
**Quartermaster**

Norman Hansen  
**Chaplain**

Charles Lavelle  
**Judge Advocate**

Dr. Olav Opedal  
**Surgeon**

Dr. Olav Opedal  
**1 Year Trustee**

Norman Hansen  
**2 Year Trustee**

Charles Lavelle  
**3 Year Trustee**

Ron Ness **Adjutant**

Dr. Olav Opedal  
**Service Officer**



This year the Veterans Day parade kicked off in a big way as hundreds arrived to show their support for those who have sacrificed so much for them.

Fewer and fewer veterans are marching each year in the Ellensburg Veterans Day Parade.

Many WW II and Korean War veterans are no longer with us. Those who were able were riding in the many military vehicles.

We encourage all of our younger veterans to participate in this very important parade to give the opportunity for the community to thank and honor to all who have served.

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[vfwrodeopost@fairpoint.net](mailto:vfwrodeopost@fairpoint.net)

Commander	Kristin Ashley	760-957-5051
Quartermaster	Melanie Morin	509-929-0580
Chaplain	Norman Hansen	509-710-9959

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*Commander's Corner*

**Hello all and Happy Holiday Season!**

I hope that you had an excellent Thanksgiving and look forward to celebrating with a Beef Giveaway and White Elephant Gift Exchange Dinner on December 21st at 6 pm with you. Please see the attached poster in this newsletter and RSVP if you are interested in the Beef giveaway as there are limited supplies available. Thank you to Dr. Olav Opedal for the generous donation.

We will be collecting canned goods and nonperishable foods throughout the month of December to donate to the local Kittitas County Veteran Coalition or FISH food bank for those in need. Feel free to bring canned goods or nonperishable items to any VFW lunch on Wednesdays 12-2 pm, to our post potluck and meeting Tuesday, December 13th beginning at 6 pm, or to the Beef Giveaway and White Elephant Gift Exchange Dinner at 6pm on December 21st.

If you want to host any veteran get togethers, or hear of any events please reach out so that I can try to disseminate the information to other veterans in our community. I look forward to connecting veterans to each other and all resources that are available in our community. There is much I still have to learn.

Last, we need your voice at our post meetings. Many of you have reached out and voiced that you would like to see a change of direction, but unless you show up to the meeting there is little that I alone can do. We would like to see you show up and be part of the conversation. I will try to figure out zoom to be able to invite more of you to attend the meetings, and if you would like to see something on the agendas please show up to the lunch 2 weeks prior to the meeting. For example, if you would like to see something on the December 13th agenda, please show up to lunch this Wednesday, November 30th at noon to tell me what you would like to see so that I can get it on the agenda.

Thank you for all of your time and energy and input. It takes all of us to make our post the very best that it can be. Please feel free to reach out.

Warm Regards and Happy Holidays,  
Kristin Ashley  
Commander  
Rodeo Post 683



**THE KITTITAS COUNTY VETERANS' COALITION**

Is located at 507 N. Nanum St. #117  
Ellensburg, WA 98926  
(509)933—2932

kcvcoalition@outlook.com

The KCVC can assist veterans with:

- Relief Benefits
- Death Benefits
- DD-214 Retrieval
- Transportation Assistance
- Mental Health Counseling

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**BEEF GIVEAWAY  
AND  
WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT  
EXCHANGE**

**FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES  
DECEMBER 21ST 6PM  
RODEO POST 683  
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KITTITAS, WA**

**LIMITED BEEF PLEASE RSVP FOR  
BEEF GIVEAWAY  
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# Surgeon's Corner December 2022

## VFW Post 683 Surgeon's corner

We are continuing our exploration of treatments for PTSD. This month, we will look at emotion regulation. Regulation of emotions are skills that can be taught and are found to be helpful in the treatment of PTSD among other mental health problems. Your question might be what is emotion regulation and how do I use it to manage my own emotions when they are difficult? The VA lists several strategies:

The body channel consists of focused breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, exercise, yoga, dance, and meditation.

The behavioral channel consist of choosing to do alternative activities, use time-out, change your facial expression, ask for help, and call a friend. Making yourself smile can be helpful. Calling a friend is always a good thing to do when you are having problems.

The thought channel consists of positive self-statements, attention-shifting, using positive imagery, and choosing to alter your interpretation of events.

The VA offers a treatment called, Skills Training for Affective and Interpersonal Regulation, STARS. STARS is an evidence-based cognitive-behavioral therapy for individuals suffering from Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD. STARS can even help those that suffer from chronic and complicated forms of PTSD as well as those with co-morbid disorders. Co-morbid means that the sufferer have more than one mental health problem that they suffer from.

Knowing that there are treatment options for veterans with PTSD is very important considering that 21% of veterans that receive health care from VA are diagnosed with PTSD (Miles et al., 2016). These veterans have stronger associations with anger and hostility. Therefore, helping veterans regulate their emotions can help with stopping or reducing aggression in those with PTSD.

What can you do? If you can choose your situation, and avoid those that cause you problems, that can be an effective way to manage your emotions. If you cannot avoid the situation, can you modify the situation? If you cannot change the situation, you can try to change your attention. You can also change how you think about the situation. You can also change how your respond to the situation.

The least effective solution is to suppress your emotions. Suppression usually lead to poor outcomes such as cardiovascular problems, cognitive problems, and relationship problems. A better way is to use reappraisal, which is to modify the meaning of the situation. Reappraisal is useful in most situations except for extreme emotional states where distraction is more effective. Usually though, it is better to change the situation if at all possible. If you cannot change the situation, then use reappraisal, but do not use reappraisal if you can change the situation. You can use reappraisal to reduce temptation. You can also use reappraisal in marriage to reduce any dissatisfaction with the relationship. Reappraisal increases resilience and improves positive emotions and reduce negative emotions and manage anger.

Call to action: Reach out to a therapist if you suffer from PTSD

Resources:

If you are in distress, call or text 988

<http://veteranscrisisline.net>

Mindfulness app

<https://mobile.va.gov/app/mindfulness-coach>

References:

[mentalhealth.va.gov](http://mentalhealth.va.gov)

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25681165/>

Dr. Olav Opedal  
Psychologist & Data Scientist  
[olav@opedalconsulting.com](mailto:olav@opedalconsulting.com)

WDVA Veteran or Service-member Owned Business Certification Number: OPC628rt

November 21, 2022



### **Senate Hearing on PACT Act Imple-**

**mentation:** VFW National Legislative Assistant Director Kristina Keenan provided a statement for the record for a Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs hearing on VA's implementation of the *Honoring our PACT Act of 2022*. She included observations made by VFW Service Officers who have been assisting veterans with their VA disability claims for toxic exposure conditions. "About one-third reported that they have already seen PACT-Act-related claims adjudicated and some being granted by VA, primarily for Vietnam War veterans with hypertension and for those who served in Thailand," said Keenan. She added that while VA has reported a large increase in claims since the passage of the PACT Act, VA is also processing claims faster at nearly the same rate as the increase. She stated that the VFW recommends that VA maintains its overtime staffing in order to continue managing the increased claims workload.

**Women Veterans Task Force Holds Roundtable:** Members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Women Veterans Task Force, VA, women veterans, and veteran organizations discussed child care, sexual harassment and assault, and intimate partner violence, which are included in Title V - Deborah Sampson of the *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020*. VFW National Legislative Deputy Director Tammy Barlet discussed VA's briefing on the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program launch. VFW National Legislative Assistant Director Kristina Keenan noted the importance of VA helping veterans obtain child care so they are able to schedule Compensation and Pension examinations and other VA benefit appointments.

**New Toxic Exposure Screening for Veterans:** If you are a veteran enrolled in VA health care, you can now receive the toxic exposure screening at VA medical centers and clinics across the country. If you are not enrolled in VA health care, you will be eligible for the screening once you complete the enrollment process. These screenings will become a regular part of your medical appointments and, if you believe that you experienced toxic exposure during your military service, you will be connected to support and resources.

**Holiday Overseas Mail Deadlines Approaching:** The U.S. Postal Service is preparing for the holiday season as many families spend holidays apart due to military service. In order to ensure overseas packages are delivered before Dec. 25, it has provided the following deadlines: **Dec. 9** for all Air/Army Post Office (APO), Fleet Post Office (FPO) and Diplomatic Post Office (DPO) addresses with AE zip codes using Priority Mail and First-Class Mail; and **Dec. 16** for APO/FPO/DPO addresses using USPS Priority Mail Express (excluding zip 093). The Postal Service offers a free "military care kit," which consists of the items most often requested by military families.

**Men's Health Awareness Month:** According to VA, male veterans die five years earlier than most female veterans. Detection and proper attention to conditions such as [prostate](#) or testicular cancer, [mental health](#) issues, and [suicide prevention](#) factors may help to avert premature deaths. VA created a [recommendation chart](#) for preventive care that lists recommended screenings and immunizations. Veterans who are overdue for preventive care are encouraged to schedule appointments as soon as possible.

**Bring Christmas Joy Through Toys for Tots:** Since 1947, Marine Toys for Tots has been bringing the joy of Christmas to America's less-fortunate children and fostering community engagement. Every holiday season, new, unwrapped toys are distributed to children in need. Donated items may be dropped off at designated locations, or you may make a virtual donation.

**MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced four burial updates for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from World War II and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Cpl. Tommie T. Hanks, 27**, of Fort Worth, Texas, was assigned to Company E, 2nd Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. On Nov. 26, 1950, he was reported missing in action while his unit was attempting to withdraw from east Ch'ongch'on River near Anju, North Korea.

-- **Army Pfc. Francis P. Martin, 25**, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. His unit was engaged in battle with German forces near Lichtenberg, France, when he was wounded and reported missing.

-- **Army Staff Sgt. James Rotunno, 27**, of Brooklyn, New York, was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. His unit was engaged in the Battle of Reipertswiller in France when it was surrounded by German forces.

-- **Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Walter Nies, 23**, of Eureka, South Dakota, was assigned to 96th Bombardment Squadron, 2nd Bombardment Group, 15th Air Force. On Jan. 24, 1944, the B-17F Flying Fortress bomber on which he was serving as a tail gunner was shot down by enemy fighters. The crew was captured by Germans, and Nies was among those sent to Stalag Luft 6 prisoner of war camp.

# Thank You!



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Dr. Olav Opedal  
Psychologist & Data Scientist  
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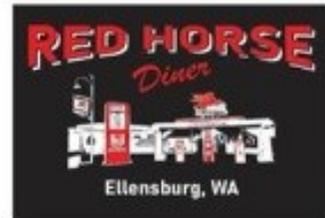
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WE THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS!

We are blessed to live in a community that respect and honor those that have served our country to keep us free.



## VFW AUXILIARY OFFICERS

2022-2023

Cindy Ness, President

Amanda Jaquins, Senior Vice President

Diana Cyr, Junior Vice President

Cindy Ness, Secretary

Joy Silva, Treasurer

Linda Hopper, Conductress & Guard

Debbie Evans, Chaplain

Debbie Evans, 3-Year Trustee

Roberta Whaley, 2-Year Trustee

Linda Hopper, 1-Year Trustee

## VFW Auxiliary News

Our monthly meeting day is the **SECOND** Tuesday of each month, with our next meeting **December 13th**. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

At our November meeting we voted to have our meetings coincide with the Post, so our next meeting will be the second Tuesday, December 13th.

We have been busy getting the Auxiliary back on track with some great community service projects. \*\*We participated in the Trunk or Treat event held in Kittitas on October 29th. There were lots of cute costumes and even some of the adults participated. My favorite was Jake from State Farm! \*\*Table favors for Prestige Rehab Center –Thanksgiving – Joy Silva made some Turkeys and delivered 53 turkeys on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Joy is working on stockings for Christmas table favors. It was also requested that we make something for the staff (70 staff members). Cindy Ness is making Christmas ornament gnomes. The Christmas stockings and gnomes will be delivered before Christmas. \*\*Flag Retirement Project—Amanda Jaquins received three American flags from the East Valley Wal-Mart to retire. These will join the many flags already at the Post. Cindy has been in contact with Mayor Rick Hink to set a date and place to hold the retirement ceremony. \*\*Joy Silva donated some elastic to Prestige Rehab Center for craft projects. \*\*Linda Hopper attended and assisted at a fundraiser at Super One Foods on November 10th. \*\*School Supplies –Amanda Jaquins reported there were two large pallets that were available. Cindy Ness contacted Kittitas School District to see if they would like to have these school supplies and find out if they would be able to pick them up. KSD was excited to receive the school supplies and picked them up on November 4<sup>th</sup>. The value of these school supplies is \$8,049.03!

As you can see we have been busy. We have some great ideas in the works, so please come and see what we will be up to! We encourage our members to come, participate and help us support our veterans and the programs that benefit them. Thank you for your help!

With the coming Christmas holiday and New Year I would like to extend my greetings for a most blessed time with family and friends.

Blessings! *Cindy Ness, President*

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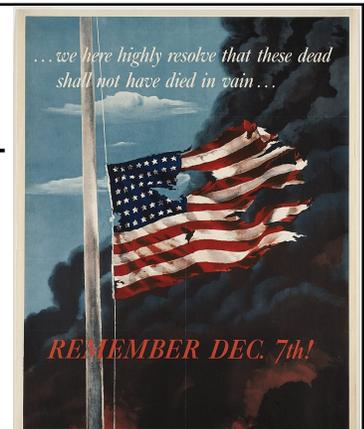
## PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR CORNER

## National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

**National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**, also referred to as **Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day** or **Pearl Harbor Day**, is observed annually in the United States on December 7, to remember and honor the 2,403 Americans who were killed in the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, which led to the United States declaring war on Japan the next day and thus entering World War II.

In 1994, the United States Congress, by Pub.L. 103–308, 108 Stat. 1169, designated December 7 of each year as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. The joint resolution was signed by President Bill Clinton on August 23, 1994. It became 36 U.S.C. § 129 (Patriotic and National Observances and Ceremonies) of the United States Code. On November 29, Clinton issued a proclamation declaring December 7, 1994, the first National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

On Pearl Harbor Day, **the American flag should be flown at half-staff until sunset** to honor those who died as a result of the attack on U.S. military forces in Hawaii. Pearl Harbor Day is not a federal holiday – government offices, schools, and businesses do not close. Some organizations may hold special events in memory of those killed or injured at Pearl Harbor.



# December 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 Lunch Noon to 2pm  Pearl Harbor Day	8	9	10
11	12	13 Post & Auxiliary Potluck 6:00 pm Business Meeting 7:00 pm	14 Lunch Noon to 2pm	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Post Dinner 6 pm Beef Give Away Winter Begins	22	23	24
25 Christmas Day	26	27	28 Lunch Noon to 2pm	29 VFW Fireworks Sale at Exit 115 Shell	30 VFW Fireworks Sale	31 WW II Ends 1946 Kosovo Campaign Ends 2013 VFW Fireworks Sale

## Future Events

December is Food Drive for the FISH Food Bank  
 Mid-Winter Conference January 20-22, 2023 @ Yakima  
 District 7 meeting February 18, 2022 @ East Wenatchee Post 3617 1:00 p.m.  
 102nd WA Department Convention, June 14-18, 2023, Spokane, WA.