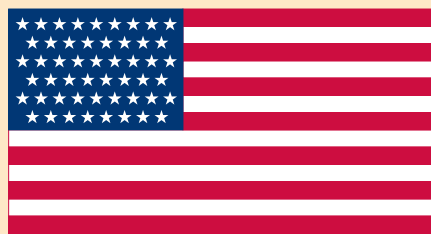


VETERANS OF MOUNT PROSPECT ILLINOIS



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In Remembrance Editor Emeritus Bob Fey



Mount Prospect VFW Post 1337 Veterans Receive a Day of Honor in Washington DC

by Jim "The Hammer" Parker

Wednesday, 23 August 2023, is a day that many local veterans will not soon forget. That was the day 19 of them were flown to the Nation's Capital aboard Honor Flight Chicago's 110th flight for what the organization proclaims to be a Day of Honor. The trip include a round trip flight, three meals plus snacks, local transportation to visit several of the city's military monuments and memorials, along with several surprises along the way, all at no cost to the veterans.

The event was put in motion about four years ago when HFC volunteer recruiter and Vietnam veteran, Jim Parker, visited the Post during a regular meeting at the invitation of Les Durov, then serving his first term as Post Commander, to make a presentation. Parker had done many of these during which he hoped to get one or two qualifying veterans to submit applications to fly with HFC to DC, but he noticed something special about this Post. That night he left the meeting with a list of over 20 interested vets and as a member of the Post 1337. Over the next few weeks Parker met with his new "Comrades", helped them with the paperwork and submitted the list to HFC executives Edna Ho and Doug Meffley, but not before adding his own name to the list. Parker told his fellow vets that there would be about a two year wait because there was a long list of vets in line ahead of them. No one could foresee, however, that Covid-related flight cancellations would double that time.

As promised, their flight day did come, and it started early. Most of the veterans gathered around 3:00am for a charter bus ride to Midway Airport. They arrived about an hour later and were greeted by about 150 HFC volunteers in colored shirts that indicated their assigned jobs. Our guys received their own colored shirts (grey) marking them as the vets to be honored on this flight. In-processing took some time as there were 90 other veterans who were flying with them. But the volunteers worked efficiently and before too long they were at the gate enjoying breakfast with coffee and doughnuts. At Dulles Airport they were welcomed with a water canon salute and by even more volunteers plus a great many flag waving locals. They boarded their bus (color coded Purple) and were greeted by their Bus Captains, Arlington Heights resident Dan Harrington and Tim Smith from DC. The Captains narrated their tour of DC and the local sites they stopped to visit which included the Air Force Memorial, The Korea Memorial, the Viet Nam Wall, the Lincoln Memorial and the Udvar-Hazy Center. Each veteran was accompanied by his personal "Guardian" who acted as a tour guide, escort and "gopher". Some of the vets had a family member as his Guardian and others had HFC volunteers from DC. The now long day was apparently coming to a close when the veterans returned to Dulles, ate dinner and boarded their return flight.

When the vets arrived back at Midway about 2030hr each was met by a young, uniformed sailor from Great Lakes who

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American Legion Post 525 Donates Record-Breaking Amount to Veterans Path to Hope

One of the highlights of the American Legion's year in Mount Prospect is the Annual Fall Classic Golf Tournament hosted by Legion Post 525. All proceeds from the tourney are donated to a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting homeless veterans and their families called Veterans Path to Hope (VPH) of Crystal Lake. The tournament was held on October 5th at the Mt. Prospect Golf Course.

Commander Bill Starr proudly announced that this year's event broke records by raising more money than ever before. The Fall Classic was a resounding success with 80 golfers attending and net proceeds amounting to \$13,066. MS Laura Franz, Executive Director of VPH, visited the American Legion Monday night to accept the check on behalf of her organization. To learn more about Veterans Path to Hope, visit: veteranspathtohope.org



Mount Prospect Banner Program



Back in 2019 my brother-in-law sent me a picture of his banner that the village of Romeoville put up to honor the veterans in their town. At the luncheon following our Memorial Day Ceremony, Mount Prospect Village Trustee John Matuszak happened to be sitting at our table, and I showed him this picture, asking if it was possible to do something like that for Mount Prospect veterans. He said he would look into it and passed on information about the project to the Mayor and the Village Manager. However, before any decisions could be made the COVID Pandemic hit and everything went on hold. People were sick, lockdowns were in place, supply lines backed up and at times it seemed like the world was turning upside down. And through it all, the village never forgot about us veterans.

This spring Mount Prospect announced their banner program where they would put up 30 veteran banners a year. The banners would be hung from 2 weeks before Memorial Day until 2 weeks after the holiday. Once taken down they would be stored until 2 weeks before Veterans Day when they would once again be installed, to be taken down 2 weeks after the holiday. At that time they would be made available to the individual veteran.

To apply for a banner, fill out an application and email it to Public Works along with a digital picture of yourself (preferably in uniform). You will then be placed on the waiting list.

Ron Vlcek, Post 525 Adjutant

Congradulations P02 Fonseca AML 525 Member



I just wanted to say "Hello" to everyone back home and thank you for your continuing support. Currently I am aboard the USS Robert Smalls CG-62 sailing through the Indian ocean. We have had a very busy last couple months sailing through the Philippine, South China and Java seas all this time with Chinese and Russian ships close on our heels. We've encountered heavy seas as high as 14ft and wind that would blow you right off the deck if you stepped outside. Going without sleep for two days is not uncommon as I work to repair and maintain the Spy radar with my shipmates. But even still being at sea has given me some of the best experiences of my Navy career. Port visits to Da Nang that helped everyone decompress, crossing the equator and the initiation ceremonies that follow, getting to fire machine guns, and last but not least opening mail. You really don't appreciate the little things like candy and snacks till you've eaten ships food for a month straight. The care packages that have been sent to us are certainly keeping the moral high! When I bring those huge boxes into our work center and bust them open to share with my friends, it's like Christmas time. I really appreciate the packages and the care that was obviously put into making them. It really is nice to get those little reminders from home, especially in foreign lands.

On a more personal note I was promoted on the 4th of June to 2nd Class Petty Officer due to scoring in the 96 percentile of my rate on the advancement exams (I scored better than 96 percent of all other Spy technicians at my rank) and my "Early Promote" evaluation from my divisions chief. A lot of my friends think I'll make 1st Class Petty Officer within 2 years time, I'm not going to let them down. I also crossed the equator on this deployment and was initiated as a shellback. The initiation ceremony was long and crazy, by the end I was soaking wet, tired, and a little bruised and banged up. But it was probably one of the most fun experience's I've had at sea, and it's nice to no longer be a pollywog. Once again I really appreciate all the support from home and hope everyone stays happy and healthy!

-FCA2 Fonseca, Andrew

I'm not really good at writing so I hope that'll suffice. I appreciate everything you've done for me!

V/R

FCA2 Fonseca, Andrew

CF01 x22323

USS Robert Smalls CG-62

Save Money On American Legion Dues

Contact Adjutant Ron Vlcek

Limited Time!

woodbutchr@aol.com



Blue Star Memorial Marker

On 24 May the Rolling Meadows Garden Club, in conjunction with the Rolling Meadows Veterans Committee, dedicated a Blue Star Memorial Marker along Kirchoff Road. Placed next to the Veterans Carillon, alongside Salt Creek, enhancing the landscape dedicated to our Veterans of past and those still serving.

This marker became a reality with the generous financial help of the Mount Prospect VFW Post 1337, Mount Prospect American Legion Post 525, and Arlington Heights VFW Post 981. A great big "thank you" to these three posts. The dedication had a color guard, bagpiper, soloist, and Taps was played. The moving ceremony had approximately 100 in attendance.

The Blue Star Marker is a nationwide initiative created by the National Garden Clubs after World War II in 1945. Since then, several thousand markers have been placed in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii

< Left our super advocate Carol Ohrn unveils the plaque.



**Our Comrades from VFW Post 981 Presented the colors
< Left American Legion Post 525 members Dana Betzner & Jerry Inselberger address the large audience on a beautiful day.**

** This story was left out of last issue due to space restraints*

Day of Honor (cont) escorted them from the plane through the airport back to baggage claim. Our veterans, now very tired, met their rides or home. Most slept well that night with some very sweet dreams.

Honor Flight Chicago has been making such dreams since 2008 when Founder, and former President of HFC, Mary Pettinato, the daughter of a WWII veteran, brought her dream to fruition. Since then, HFC has flown over 10,600 senior veterans (including over 6,000 WWII vets) to DC for their Day of Honor. Mary has retired but, for Flight 110, she returned to HFC to act as a Guardian for one very lucky vet.

Veterans Day Activities 2023

Space doesn't nearly allow all the school visits, experiences, or activities attended during our amazing mission to reach out to our youth. We unfortunately even had to turn down some schools due to conflicts. Veterans are the ones to show the children the meaning of service. Please try to attend as many functions as possible next year. Thanks to all that showed and a big shout-out to our Chairman 525 Adjutant Ron Vlcek who worked tirelessly to organize all these visits.



**7 November Mt. Prospect
Veterans Recognition from Village**



**14 November Palatine
Hunting Ridge Assembly**



**10 November Arlington Hts.
John Hersey H.S. Extravaganza**



**17 November Mt. Prospect
Lions Park School Panel
U.S.M.C. Veteran Matt Lauck
Shares experiences**



**8 November Mt. Prospect
St. Emily Assembly/Panel**

**7 November Mt. Prospect
St. Raymond's School Assembly**



**9 November DesPlaines
Central Elementary Assembly**



**11 November Lions Park
Mt. Prospect Village Ceremony
to a packed
standing room crowd**

Photo Mike Zarnek





National Community Service Award

What a great honor it was to except the National Community Service Award. Our All American VFW Post 1337 is the best in the nation for community service. Without the help from the members of the post we could not have achieved this prestige's award.

Our post held many community events throughout the 2022 – 2023 year. I'd like to name a few. Some of the events were hosting 45 recruits from the Great Lakes Training Base in North Chicago. We invited them for Thanksgiving Dinner; turkey with all the trimmings. We also had several cellphones and laptops available for the recruits to call home to their loved ones. We placed American Flags in classrooms at a school. We helped veterans with work around their homes by doing yard work and other odd jobs. We helped with financial problems and other needs which came before our post.

We also worked with school, churches, scouts and our community in Mount Prospect. My favorite is the Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen Awards. The students of middle schools and high schools all took part in these events. And don't forget the Teacher of the Year and awards for our First Responders. Our police and fire departments are so deserving of these awards. The boy scouts and our post work close together doing many projects. I love educating scouts about the American Flag educate and how to fold it. The scouts really like this one too.

Above and below Commander Durov receives NCS Award



Mount Prospect Partners

Once again thanks to the Mount Prospect Lions Club for allowing American Legion 525 & VFW 1337 Posts to man the Wine/Margarita tent at their festival. Our partnership with the Mt. Prospect Lions Club, Village, Park District and Moose Lodge 660 have helped us become two of the most prestigious veterans post in the country.



VFW National Publication Award

Dutch accepts the VFW National award from Past VFW National Commander in Chief Bill Thien on behalf of Post 1337 & 525. The competition shall be difficult for 2023-2024 as other post are benchmarking off our design....But they don't have our secret weapon, Jimmy "The Hammer" to do the amazing word crafting. **You're reading the best Vet NL in the world.**



Lee Jensen receives "Gold Appreciation Medal"

It is not known just how long Legionnaire Lee Jensen was the post Chaplain. More than 20 years..for sure! Lee will now enjoy a well-deserved rest as he passes the Chaplain baton to Joe Schmidt

Chicago Bears Honor Veterans

Some of our veterans from our post got a treat by a late invitation to do a pinning ceremony at the Bears Halas hall and a breakfast. The well attended event happens each year and Bears management gathered to honor veterans.



"Beyond The Barracks" Podcast:

Greetings, My name is A1C Bayasgalan, and I'm currently immersed in the production phase of my upcoming podcast, "Beyond the Barracks." Anticipating the release of our first episodes in early 2024. Launching the "Beyond the Barracks" podcast is my way of giving back to the military community and the next generation of individuals aspiring to serve their country.

At the heart of the BTB podcast is a belief that every story is worth sharing and deserves to be heard. While many military podcasts tend to focus on mission-based narratives, my aim with BTB is to provide a place for veterans and active-duty members to recount their personal stories—how the military has transformed and enriched their lives.

The inspiration behind starting this podcast stems from a desire to offer diverse perspectives and shed light on the profound impact military service can have on individuals. Through the BTB podcast, I hope to inspire and educate the younger generation by showcasing the experiences of those who have served their country. These stories not only support our armed forces but also provide valuable insights into the benefits that can pave the way for success in life. Join us on this journey as we delve into the compelling narratives that go beyond the barracks, offering a unique glimpse into the lives of those who have dedicated themselves to serving our nation.

Above Center; A1C Bayasgalan "Turk" is another proud member of American Legion Post 525 and on active duty. He has been excelling at his career and besides serving our county and working on his Masters Degree. Please agree to an interview and contact him t.bayasa@gmail.com



Post 525 & 1337 Honor Member

American Legion Post 525 & Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1337 both honored Member Casey Bachara for his tireless work in the veterans community for many years. Not only has Casey been active in these two posts but many other organizations for decades. He serves now as one of the chairs hosting our Navy Recruits for Thanksgiving.



Post 525 & 1337 Historian

Posts 525 & 1337 Historian Ray Limbach talks during one of his energetic presentations. This one highlights a static display that will be placed at the Mount Prospect Library. Ray works with them and the local historical society. Attend our meetings and **let our historian educate you!**

From the Commander of VFW Post 1337



The year 2023 is almost over. The holidays will soon be here and then the new year starts. All American VFW Post 1337 has already been hard at work. We have managed to get credit for most of the requirements for the dashboard. We will have to work on membership to achieve the 6TH year in a row to get the honor of All State and All-American Post.

Our post is very active and we push hard to achieve these goals. We do not stop each month, we push to get more hours and help as many veterans as we can. We have submitted VOD and Patriot Pen winners to the district. Teacher of the Year, First Responders Police and Fire departments, have all advanced and hopefully we'll get a national winner.

We are hosting the recruits at Great Lakes Training Center for Thanksgiving dinner for our second year. What a treat for them to be able to celebrate with us and call home to their family and loved ones. The Christmas Party is just around the corner and we are looking forward to celebrating with our post members. We have worked with the community on many projects for the new year. Veterans Day this year, we visited 12 schools and had our own Veterans Ceremony on November 11TH at Lions Park. It's a great day to honor all the veterans in our community. No one does more for veterans than the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Les Durov, All State-All American Commander

From the Commander of the American Legion



The Fall weather waited patiently for us to host a very successful Legion Fall Classic Golf Outing on Thursday 5 October. We were blessed with warm sunshine and 80 golfers who generously supported the event. The "Classic" is our biggest fundraiser of the year and Veterans Path to Hope gets the proceeds. This year \$13,066.00 will go directly

to support homeless veterans and their families. Well done Legionnaires! By all accounts the Veterans Day celebration was a resounding success made more special with the visit by 99 year old WWII veteran Corporal Jerry Netolicky and the angelic voices of the children of Lions Park School. Perhaps by the time this newsletter is published, we will already have hosted about 40 US Navy recruits for the day including a turkey (with all the trimmings) dinner! Thanks to the dedication and leadership of Casey Bachara to make it all happen! Where were you on your first Thanksgiving Holiday away from home? Next up is the Mt Prospect Veterans Christmas Party, Friday December 15th at the Moose Lodge. I have said it before and I'll say it again. I am proud to be your commander. *Happy Holidays to all!*

Bill Starr, Commander

Do you want to see something we're missing in our newsletter? Also hopefully everyone receives our emails giving up to date events if not contact dutch23mp@comcast.net

From the Service Officer



Our posts have taken part on actions that have had far reaching effects for thousands of veterans, our members *walk the talk*. Last month some of our members, with other veterans service organizations, took the time to appear in person to help testify before the Cook County Commission on behalf of the Veterans Assistance Commission

of Cook County. Their mission of helping veterans in more ways than can be stated in this short report were at risk. To their credit the Commissioners listened to our message and stated they would fund the VACCC their entire budget. Also assist in the future to insure they can complete their mission. This is how government should work and I'm proud of all of our members and other allies for giving their time. Last year our members were instrumental in expanding the VA Cemetery at Ft. Sheridan as well as sidetracking some Lake County Commissioners from derailing the Military Veterans Assistance Act, one of the most important legislative accomplishments ever passed in Illinois. Bottom line is you do make a difference. It goes a long ways to help others.....

Slow salute Comrades & Legionares.



Holiday Party

15 December 18hr00 Moose Lodge 660

\$25 pp

Contact Marcie Kane mfkane5@aol.com

check payable to VFW Post 1337

mail to Marcie at

1809 Cree Lane,
Mt Prospect, IL 60056



Annual Donation Lovell FHCC

"Comrades - It is that time of year that we put together a donation for our brothers and sisters confined to the Great Lakes Captain Lovell Health Care Center. Bring your gifts unwrapped please!"

Suggestions:

T shirts and briefs sizes XL — XXXL

Shaving Equipment - Safety Razors, Shaving Cream

Tooth Brush - Tooth Paste – **NO MOUTHWASH with alcohol !**

Slippers for men or women

Sweatshirts for men or women – size XL or larger

Remember our female Veterans also with personal items such as pajamas, lotion, underwear.

Deodorant

Packaged snack items

Books, magazines

Hats, gloves, scarves

NO HAND SANITIZER

NO COLOGNE OR AFTER SHAVE

Party Note

Dinner, open bar & DJ are included

Please bring appetizer or dessert