

# ARLINGTON VFW POST 981

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



Website – [vfwpost981.com](http://vfwpost981.com)

WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

## ALL AMERICAN POST

At our November meeting three members of our Post leadership – Commander Matt Voss, Sr. Vice-Commander Mike Smogor and Quartermaster Roger Santagato – received recognition from acting Adjutant Vince Cipolla for the Post earning All American status in 2022. Matt received his white VFW cap while Mike and Roger received pins for their VFW hats. Roger got his white cap later. This honor, as far as we can determine the **FIRST** for the Post, was earned by the entire Post due to efforts in recruiting, community service and fund-raising.



## COMMANDER

As we close the door on 2022 I hope you and your family had a wonderful Holiday season and are continuing to be healthy and safe as we enter 2023.

I have been a member of Arlington Post 981 since 1991 and I firmly believe the year we had in 2022 was by far the best the Post has ever had. We celebrated our 100th year anniversary, for the first time in our Post's history we were named an All American Post and for the first time in forty years we made the All-State list as well. We resumed all of our pre-COVID Post social activities, held our inaugural summer family picnic, attended numerous farmer's markets and had a booth at Arlington Heights' Harmony Fest. Our member social clubs' activities have grown more robust, the Color Guard was as busy as ever and our two weekends of Poppy Day collections were incredibly successful. What an awesome year. Congratulations and thank you to all of our membership for making it happen!

Post 981 is in the process of resuming sponsorship of a Boy Scout Troop and Cub Scout Pack. Local Arlington Heights based Troop 132 learned that effective February 1st that they would be losing their current sponsor. The Scouts reached out to us in hopes that we would be able to help them. The Staff has decided that this would be a great opportunity for our Post to be more involved with other likeminded, local organizations. The Scouts and the VFW have a long history of working together to help their communities and I am excited at the opportunity that this new relationship will bring to the Post.

District 4 Commander Steve MacInnes has decided to step down as our Post Service Officer. Over the years Commander Mac's contributions to Post 981 are too long to list. He has held essentially every officer position at our Post, including Post Commander and we owe him a ton of gratitude. He has agreed to continue to maintain our Post's

Program Activity Reports (formally the X-Sheets) with National which will keep him attending the Staff meetings and actively engaged with the Post, just in a “less official” capacity. Stewart Abbink has agreed to become our new Post Service Officer and has already begun his training with our District 4 Service Officer Dutch Degroot. Stewart is an OIF & OEF Army Veteran and will do a fine job helping not only our membership but all Veterans navigate the VA in order to obtain the help that they need.

Our 2023 Post goals are simple; maintain our All American and All State statuses and continue to modernize our way of doing business in order to grow our membership such that we can perpetuate for at least another 100 years! Although simple, these goals are not easy. I am confident that based on our Post’s previous 100 years and with our current, active membership we can and will accomplish them all!

*Semper Fi*  
*Matt*

## **SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER**

Happy Holidays! Sad to report, but our Post lost two more Life Member since the last newsletter: Louis Ferrara, a World War 2 Army Veteran from Wheeling, and Chester Ross, also a World War 2 Army Veteran from Arlington Heights. May they rest in peace. Of the current surviving estimated 167,000 World War 2 veterans, we are currently losing about 234 every day! Illinois has approximately 6,000 surviving World War 2 veterans. Do the math - at that rate it will only be 2-4 years before the Greatest Generation of Veterans is gone. A sobering thought.

Our current Post 981 membership numbers stand at 167 Life, 12 Continuous for a total of 176 and a percentage to last year of 105.39. Please be aware of recruitment opportunities to keep our organization strong and viable.

On a brighter note: after our last Post meeting one of our newer members came up to me and said that joining the VFW was one of the best things he ever did. He is a former Marine who spent time at Camp

Lejeune North Carolina, which, as many of you know, had a problem with tainted water back in the 1950s through the 1980s. When he joined our Post he inquired as to how to file a claim with the VA. We referred him to the Service Officer who referred him to an Illinois VSO (Veteran Service Officer) who helped him process his claim. As a result he was awarded 100% disability and a substantial monthly payment. These are the kinds of things that the VFW can do for its members! It's satisfying to help our Veterans get the benefits they are entitled to.

Wishing all our members and their families and friends a Happy and Healthy 2023!

*Smokey*

## **JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER**

After a wonderful Holiday Party our next Post outing will be a Chicago Wolves game on Saturday evening April 8. It will be Salute to Military Families night featuring the District 4 Color Guard. Easy to get to the Allstate Arena, parking only \$15, and a hot dog and soft drink thrown in. See the attached circular for details.

*Mike Kolbuk*

## **UPCOMING POST EVENTS**

- Post Meeting – Wednesday (02/01)
- 4<sup>th</sup> District Meeting – Sunday (02/26) 1:00 PM, Evanston VFW
- Post Meeting – Wednesday (03/01)
- Post Meeting & Elections – Wednesday (04/05)
- Chicago Wolves Outing – Saturday (04/08)

# 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:

**Louis Ferrara**

**George Hathaway**

**Chester Ross**

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

The long list is the result of VFW National notifying us of the deaths, some of which happened years ago (their old address kept on accepting VFW mailings like this newsletter). As soon as is possible we request that family members **notify the Post via telephone** (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 on our website.

# POST HOLIDAY PARTY

After the amazing 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party it was decided to hold the Holiday Party at the Legion Hall on December 4. Holiday decorations and an abundance of good food and entertainment made it a magical night for the 39 members and guests 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 and meat selections, artichoke-spinach dip, and hot mini quiches and spinach pies.

Commander Matt led us in the Pledge, Chaplain Luken said a prayer, and Jr. Vice Commander Mike outlined the procedure to fill plates with Chicken Florentine or Beef Short Ribs, Triple Cheese Au Gratin Potatoes, Balsamic Grilled Vegetables, green salad and rolls and butter. Dessert was a sheet cake 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

Thanks to the generosity of Bob Henderson's family our Post is looking for TWO recipients of

our Scholarship Grants for the Fall 2023 school year.

Any children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren of our members would be 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](http://www.vfwpost981.com).

## POST 981 ELECTION NOTICE

At the March 1 2023 meeting nominations for elected Post Officers – Commander, Sr. Vice-Commander, Jr. Vice-Commander, Quartermaster, Adjutant, Chaplain, Service Officer and One-Year Trustee – will be accepted. Additional nominations can be made at the April 5 2023 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, Al Hembd, 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

At the deadline of November 1, 2022, our Post had received twelve Voice of Democracy entries and one hundred and thirty five Patriot's Pen entries. We have one VOD winner, Bridget Martin, who is a Junior at St. Viator High School in Arlington Heights. This year we also have three Patriot's Pen winners: Quinn Koerner from Lake Zurich Middle School North, Lucy Olson from St. Theresa in Palatine, and Dominik Paplinski from St. Alphonsus Liguori in Prospect Heights. Our winners received their Post awards at our December 7 Post meeting and read their winning essays to the Post. Their entries were forwarded to VFW District 4 for judging. District 4 winners will be announced at the January 15 Awards Banquet at The Seville in

Streamwood. Congratulations to all our Post winners!

*Smockey*



## LONE STAR STEAKHOUSE DONATES TO POST

During the end of October through Veterans Day Lone Star Steakhouse in Mount Prospect solicited donations for our Post. They converted the proceeds into gift cards. These cards will be used as extra prizes for our monthly meeting drawing for the next year. Thanks to Quartermaster Roger for sitting outside the closed restaurant during lunch on Veterans Day handing out coupons to veterans. This was the requirement to get the cards.

## STEVENSON HS POPPIES

For the second year in a row Post 981 delivered 1,000 poppies to Stevenson High School for a Memorial Day reminder to the students. Stevenson HS, in turn, donated \$500 to our Poppy Fund.

## POST MEMBERS EDUCATE DISTRICT 25 STUDENTS ON VETERANS DAY

Two members of our Post, Dale Berg and Stewart Abbink, were part of a Veterans Day program that was put together by Arlington School District 25 and broadcast to the 5,400 students and 400 teachers and administrators.

Dale and Stewart along with Greg Padovani were interviewed separately for 45 minutes and provided with a few generic questions about their experiences both in service and afterwards. This allowed each of them to personalize their segment. These segments were later edited into the program that was broadcast.

Check out a short version of the program that District 25 has posted to YouTube.

## **NEW POST MEMBERS**

*No New Members Last Quarter*

## **COLOR GUARD**

The Color Guard Past events:

Nov 11 Buffalo Grove Park District –  
Veterans Day Celebration

Up Coming events:

Jan 7 Memorial Service – Joseph Riefski

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 in. If you would like to learn more about joining the Color Guard and the commitment level. If a veteran has passed away, as soon as is possible we request that family members notify the Post via telephone (listed on our website). 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 listed on our website.

Those interested to join the Color Guard please contact, Dale Berg at 847-636-1479 or email [bergda@comcast.net](mailto:bergda@comcast.net).

Dale Berg  
Color Guard Commander  
VFW Post 981  
702 W Burning Tree Lane  
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

**Color Guard Commander**

*Dale Berg*

# ARLINGTON VFW POST 981 HOCKEY TRIP



## Chicago Wolves

Center Balcony Game Ticket & Hot Dog & Soft Drink

**JOIN US ON APRIL 8 AT 7:00 PM AT THE ALLSTATE ARENA IN ROSEMONT TO SEE THE WOLVES TAKE ON THE IOWA WILD. MILITARY NIGHT. ENTER AT VIP BUILDING NORTH OF ARENA. GO TO WILL CALL AND GIVE THEM YOUR NAME. PARKING ONLY \$15.**

Post Members, 1 Guest, & Grandchildren under 18 – \$5 **apiece**. Other Adults & Grandchildren over 18 - \$20

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Send your reservations and checks (made out to VFW Post 981) to: Michael Kolbuk, 654 Briarwood Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090. Deadline for reservations - Post meeting April 5

Name \_\_\_\_\_ \$5 Guest \_\_\_\_\_  
# Of Children (under 18) \$5 \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Other Adults \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS®**



**ARLINGTON VFW POST 981**

**C/O Mike Kolbuk**

**P.O. Box 825**

**Arlington Heights, IL 60006**

**TO:**