

# The Rising Star

Disney-Bell Post 66 Newsletter

May 1, 2003

## So Much To Do...So Little Time!

**W**e are completely into spring and soon summer will be upon us and another Legion year will have come and gone. But before then we have a very busy month coming up in May so take a few notes and be sure you don't miss out on these activities.

First of all, there are five Fridays this month and that means five chances to enjoy an inexpensive and great meal at the Post. Menus are posted in the lounge and elsewhere in this newsletter and I am sure there will be something for everyone. These meals are fund raisers for those groups hosting them and this benefits all of us as well as the veterans programs they support. Fridays have very busy, with Happy Hour from 5:00 til 7:00 (\$.25 off all drinks) and dinner from 6:30 til 8:00. All we ask is that you plan ahead and make a reservation by calling the Post no later than the Wednesday before so we can prepare enough for everyone.

Having made Four Star Post for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, and a few months before deadline, our First Vice Commander and Adjutant are taking it easy for a little bit. And why not...they both deserve it. But as you know, membership never ends. Soon you will be reminded to pay your 2004 dues and help sign-up another member to Post 66. It takes a lot of work by many people and all of you are part of this membership team. Now is not the time to stop and rest on our laurels. All and anything you can do to help is appreciated. Ask a neighbor, ask a friend and always carry an application with you to be prepared. You never know when you are in a position to enlist a new member.

Besides the Friday night dinners, we also have other activities coming in the next few weeks. Memorial Day ceremonies will be conducted on Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at Bowie Veterans Park in Old Bowie. This annual event reminds us of the sacrifices made by those who gave their lives for our freedom. Please join us, as the host veterans service organization, our Honor Guard, and the friends and families of Bowie's veterans on this special day. Will host a reception at the Post immediately following the ceremony. The SAL will be hosting their annual Mother's Day breakfast which is always a popular treat at the Post. Why not Get Mom and the family and join us for a great time. Mothers, as always, are free. Everyone else is five bucks.

May is also the month where our organizations nominate and/or elect their officers for service in 2003-2004. Serving as an officer is a great responsibility and should be taken seriously and with the best intentions of service to our Post, our community and the veterans that have served our country. As an officer, you are expected to support not only the functions of the organization to which you belong, but the rest of the Legion family as well. You should also be prepared and willing to make a commitment to attend the patriotic ceremonies that are held as well as the free parties. While volunteering to serve as an officer is commendable and all volunteers are welcome, I ask all of you to think about this before accepting a position in the leadership of our Post.



This year, Post 66 will be hosting our inaugural Flag Retirement Ceremony and what we hope will become an annual event. It will be on Flag Day, Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in what we know will be a patriotic and inspiring event.

Nothing can make a Commander more proud than to lead the membership in memorial services and other such ceremonies honoring our veterans. As you know, each April, we honor those members of the Post who have passed away during the previous year and transferred to Post Everlasting. This year's ceremony was particularly poignant since we had only learned the day before that Past Commander and Life Member John E. Walkington had been called home. A special memorial service was also conducted for John the following Saturday at the Post. We will all miss John very much.

J. D. Larson  
Commander

### *First Vice Commander Report*

Post 66 now has 846 members for the year 2003. That is 4 above the Department goal and 11 above the number needed to make 4 Star. We are also 52 members ahead of where we were at this point last year.

But the job of the membership committee is not yet complete. We got a great start on 2003 by mailing almost 200 letters and applications to members of Post 297, which is Maryland's post for members who have not selected a post of choice. For example, when someone signs up through National, or signs up on line at the Department web site, they are assigned to Post 297. Our Adjutant puts the pressure on someone at the Department and gets mailing labels for Post 297 members that live within

our post's geographical boundaries. We then prepare letters, provide postage-paid return envelopes and applications for transfer and stuff envelopes addressed to these transfer candidates. We try to do this early in June, before the Department sends out renewal notices. Hopefully, this will give the next Membership Chairman a jump start on reaching the 2004 goals.

Remember to keep your eyes and ears open for potential new members. In the next newsletter I will list those of you who have won awards for bringing in new members for 2003.

Clif Morvant  
1st Vice Commander



Disney-Bell Post 66 will host our inaugural Flag Disposal Ceremony on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The Post Honor Guard will be rendering honors and we expect many civic leaders, as well as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and other organizations, to attend. It is expected to be a very special occasion.

If you or anyone you know has a U.S. flag that has served well and is ready for retirement, drop it off at the Post. We will insure that is retired with proper respect. A small reception will be held immediately following the ceremony.

## Memorial Day Ceremony

### Good Deeds Get Rewarded

In connection with our community service project, The American Legion Auxiliary would like to announce the winners of our "Random Acts of Kindness" project held from March 19th to April 16th. Although all of our Auxiliary members contribute to "Acts of Kindness" on a daily basis, the first place winner was Juanita Thompson and second place went to Priscilla Sprehe. Both ladies won gift certificates, courtesy of the Outback Steakhouse of Bowie (thank you Outback, for your donation). I would like to thank all our members for participating in this fun and rewarding challenge. Let's keep those "Acts of Kindness" going.



Congratulations again to Juanita and Priscilla!

Cindy Morvant  
ALA Community Service Chairperson

On Monday, May 26, 2003, we will celebrate the lives of those who have fallen in combat. The recent sacrifices made by those who did not return from Iraq should serve to heighten our awareness and appreciation for all of those who have given their lives in defense of freedom. We will salute those who have given their lives and to whom we owe so much. All members of the American Legion family are encouraged to demonstrate our heartfelt appreciation for their valor and courage by attending the Memorial Day Ceremony.



The service will be held at Bowie Veterans Memorial Park in Old Bowie at 11:00. Disney-Bell Post 66 is the host veterans' service organization for this year's ceremony. As such, a reception will be held immediately following the ceremony at the Post.

### AMERICAN LEGION UNIFORM CAP

Post 66 now has a supply of American Legion uniform caps in stock. The basic cost for an American Legion Uniform Cap is \$30.95 for the lined, style 2 Post Cap with Bowie, Md. on the left side and the number 66 on the right. The mandatory state insignia Maryland shield is an extra \$6.00 and the "For God and Country" patch for the left side of your cap is \$1.95. An armed forces tack of your branch of service is also available for an additional \$3.95. It is recommended that you purchase a plastic cap cover for \$1.50. If you order through the Post and not separately, we will pay the shipping and handling fee of \$6.95. Your total cost for the Legion uniform cap is \$44.35.

If you wish to purchase a cap, please contact the Post Adjutant at the Post (301-464-9814) or his home (301-390-6436), or you may e-mail him at home [jimabiam@aol.com](mailto:jimabiam@aol.com) or the Post at [alpost66@bellatlantic.net](mailto:alpost66@bellatlantic.net).

## Who's Packing Your Parachute?

Charles Plumb was a U.S. Navy jet pilot in Viet Nam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent six years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.



One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Viet Nam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!" "How in the world did you know that?", asked Plumb. "I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked!" Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he looked like in a Navy uniform: white hat, a bib in the back and bell-bottom trousers. I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said, 'Good morning, how are you?' or anything, because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor." Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent at a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?" Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it though the day. He also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory: his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute and his spiritual parachute. He called on all of these supports before reaching safety. Sometimes in the daily challenges that life gives us, we miss what is really important. We may fail to say hello, please or thank you, congratulate someone on something wonderful that has happened to them, give a compliment or just do something nice for no reason. As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize people who pack your parachutes.

As noted in the Commander's column, the Adjutant is taking the month off; however, he did wish to contribute this article for your enjoyment! *Editor*

## Oratorical Contest Update

Our Post 66 Champion, County Champion, Southern Maryland District Champion and Department of Maryland Champion, Jed Wentz was in Indianapolis the weekend of April 12 – 13 to compete in the finals of the American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest.

Jed competed in the first round against the champions from Alabama, Florida, Mexico (yes the country), South Carolina and Virginia. Unfortunately, the contestant from Alabama, who is the younger sister of last year's national winner, won this round. The national contest is a single elimination event, so Jed had the rest of the weekend to enjoy the companionship of these outstanding high school orators from around the world (including Europe and South America) without having to work even more on fine tuning his presentation.

Our Post is very proud of Jed and those who have met him know he will be successful in his future endeavors. Jed's career goal is to become an Army officer. He has already been recruited as a member as soon as he is commissioned.



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## Unit 66 Report

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There has been quite a gap since my last report to you. We canceled our February meeting due to snow and the newsletter deadline was before our March meeting. I will try to bring you up to date on our activities.

Our "Tribute to Youth Program" was on Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, all of our young people that participated in our programs were very impressive.



I'd like to congratulate each and every one of them for a fine job.

We have three girls that will be going to Girls State in June, to be held at Frostburg State University. We look forward to hearing about their experiences at next year's Children and Youth Program.

We still need a few members to pay their dues for the year 2002-2003. If you have not yet done so, please get them to us before the end of May. We would like to join the Post in making Four Stars this year.

On Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, a group of ladies from Unit 66 traveled to Stallings-Williams Post #206 in Chesapeake Beach for the National Presidents Visit. Our National President Elsie Bailey joined us for a big breakfast and fellowship. She is a very warm and friendly lady and makes us glad to be members of the American Legion Auxiliary.

I am saddened to report that lifetime member Evelyn Durst passed away in April. She was a faithful member and until health problems prevented her from attending meetings, a strong member. She was a 56-year member and she will be missed.

Our May Friday night dinner has been selected as our Poppy Dinner.



The menu is: oven fried chicken, mixed vegetables, noodle's Alfredo, salad rolls and butter, salad and dessert. We would like to see many of your faces and appetites at this dinner to

show support for our Poppy program. "Operation Iraqi Freedom" has added new and younger veterans to our population and the donations from the poppies go toward helping them.

There will be a Walk-a-Thon to support the Children's Miracle Network. The date will be May 31<sup>st</sup> at Calvert High School in Calvert County. There are pledge envelopes available if you are interested in participating. If you are interested in walking please leave a message at the Post (301-464-9814) and we will contact you.

Our next meeting will be May 21<sup>st</sup>. We will be having our election of Officers for the 2003-2004 year and election of delegates to the Department Convention in July. If you have any desire to run for an office, or want to show your support for someone else please, come and let your voice be heard.

Juanita L. Thompson  
President

We have just been notified that you can request documents from the National Personnel Records Center by accessing them on the internet. The address is: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. This will speed up the process of getting copies of DD 214's and other information.



**SAL Mother's Day Brunch**

When: Sunday, May 11  
 Time: 9:00 a.m.  
 Menu: Brunch Stuff  
 Cost: Mothers: Free  
 Others \$5

**Life Lesson Number 2  
 Always Remember Those Who Serve**

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. "How much is an ice cream sundae?" he asked. "Fifty cents," replied the waitress. The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins in it. "Well how much is a plain dish of ice cream?" he inquired. By now more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing impatient. "Thirty-five cents," she brusquely replied. The little boy again counted his coins. "I'll have the plain ice cream," he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came back, she began to cry as she wiped down the table. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies.

You see, he couldn't have the sundae because he had to have enough left to leave her a tip.

**MENU**

**May Friday Night Dinner**

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| <b>May 2*</b>  | <b>Steak (\$9)</b>                     |
| <b>May 9</b>   | <b>Oven Fried Chicken (\$8)</b>        |
| <b>May 16*</b> | <b>Tacos (\$6)</b>                     |
| <b>May 23*</b> | <b>Baked Salmon (\$8)</b>              |
| <b>May 30*</b> | <b>All-You-Can-Eat Spaghetti (\$6)</b> |

**All meals are served 6:30 to 8:00 pm. Reservations should be made by calling the Post no later than the Wednesday before.**

**May 10\*                      Shrimp Nite**

\*Proceeds from the sale of these dinners go to benefit the Post 66 Honor Guard.

