

THE RISING STAR

DISNEY-BELL POST 66 NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1, 2003

Happy Holidays!

Even though this southern boy hates cold weather, this is really a great time of year. Post 66 is humming with activity. The Turkey Shoots this year are drawing bigger crowds than ever. If you plan on participating, you must sign up early to assure a slot. The Turkey Shoot crowd usually fills the post hall after the shoots are over and continue the partying for some time. So even if you are not a shooter, Sundays at the Post are always a fun day. Don't forget about the great breakfasts and lunches with the very popular soup made available by the Auxiliary. Please note that there will be no Turkey Shoot on December 28th.

Veterans Day ceremonies were sponsored this year by the DAV. A large crowd was on hand as usual, but there were not as many young people as in past years. I am always impressed to see the turnout of youth at both Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies. It seems that the Prince George's School Board decided to open schools on Veterans Day to make up for a day lost to Isabel. It was pointed out by a couple of the political speakers that this was an ill-advised decision, especially since the schools were closed for a "Halloween Holiday". Where are the School Board's priorities?

The Early Bird Dinner was another success and a full house as usual. During the dinner, a drawing

was held to award a Paid Up For Life (PUFL) Membership to a member who paid his or her dues by Veterans Day. The winner was Thomas E. Marcos, who has been a member of Post 66 for some fifty years. Congratulations Thomas.

DISNEY-BELL POST 66

NATIONAL CHAMPION COLOR GUARD

November 22 was a busy Saturday at the Post. The Auxiliary held a crafts fair and bake sale in the morning with 17 vendors on hand. In the afternoon, the SAL will sponsored a Shrimp and Oyster Feast. I am writing this prior to these events, but I am looking forward to another fun day at the Post.

Friday night dinners are still a great meal at a great price. December 6 will be a steak dinner, the December 12 is chicken, and there will be pork chops on the 19th. There will be no dinner on December 26th. And don't forget the popular shrimp night on December 13th. Also, please note that there will be no Post meeting on the fourth Friday of December which is Christmas Eve.

The annual Post Christmas Party will be held on Christmas Eve from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. This is always a nice event and gives everyone a chance to wash up and dress pretty.

We are currently at approximately 90% of reaching four star status. We have the "tough ten percent remaining to sign up. If you have not paid



Post 66
No December Meeting
Merry Christmas

your 2004 dues, please mail them in as soon as possible. Your 2003 membership card will expire at midnight December 31. There is no grace period. If you do not have your 2004 card after that date you can and should be denied access to Post activities.

The SAL is sponsoring the annual "Toys for Tots" drive and they have a collection box for new, unwrapped toys at the Post. Please do not donate toys requiring batteries or stuffed animals. You may also help in the important cause by leaving a check at the Post made out to American Legion Toys for Tots. Any donations, large and small, go a long way to help provide a "Christmas" for needy children.

Pending Executive Committee approval, the Auxiliary will be placing a box in the hall for collection of donations for the Bowie Food Pantry. We have received information that with area troops being deployed to fight the war on terrorism, many more families with reduced incomes are in great need of life's basic. Especially needed are baby food, diapers, peanut butter, jelly, dry cereal and tuna fish. Please try to remember to bring an item or two to the post to help needy families during this time for giving.

My personal wishes are extended to each of you for a joyful holiday season and a prosperous new year.

Clif Morvant
Commander

Unit 66 Report



Some of our Auxiliary projects coming up will take place after this newsletter has gone to the printer, so I will give a full report in the January newsletter. However; I can report that we had crafters for seventeen tables filling our hall. We had a bake sale table, took orders for the Rada Knives

and had the kitchen open for refreshments for our Craft Show on November 22, 2003.

Our Turkey Shoot breakfasts are going well and many thanks to all the shooters and the others who just attend the breakfast for supporting us. I would like to thank the Unit members who are selling the scatter shots and soon will be braving the cold weather, especially to Kim Prendable who is doing a great job.



Auxiliary Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, December 17
7:30 pm
Annual Christmas Party

Thanksgiving is over and I hope you all had a Blessed Day with family and loved ones. Please remember our Veterans who have to spend these Holidays in the hospital or Veterans Homes. A card or visit is always appreciated.

On December 6, 2003, several Unit members will travel to Charlotte Hall to wrap gifts that the Veterans choose for a family member. The Scouts and ROTC youth are there also to help in assisting with the Veterans. Our Auxiliary dinner on December 12, 2003 will be baked chicken, mashed potato, gravy, vegetable, salad, rolls and cake for dessert. Just think, it's a night out when you don't have to cook.

The Unit Christmas Party will be held on December 17, 2003. A gift exchange and refreshments will be part of the evening. We dispense with the regular meeting that night unless something of importance has to be discussed. All Unit members are welcome. The children's Christmas Party will be held on December 20, 2003 and the DAV is hosting. It will be from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a visit from Santa. Each child will receive a gift and refreshments will be served.

I want to wish you all a very Merry Holiday Season and for those who will travel a very safe journey.

Priscilla Sprehe
Unit President

Adjutant's Call

Recently, I have had several inquiries concerning repeat dues renewal notices. I share your concern and would like to again review the renewal process.

National Headquarters of The American Legion will send out five dues renewal notices to those members who have not renewed for the current year, and to some who have already renewed. These are sent out on the 1st of July and October, the middle of December and March and a final notice mailed on the 1st of May. The cut off date, that is the date your membership must have been processed by National Headquarters, is approximately 45 days prior to a mailing date. Normally, I personally hand carry membership to Department every Thursday; however, if you mailed your renewal check on September 2, 2003, chances are, depending on when I received it, it may not have been transmitted until Thursday, September 11, 2003. This means you have missed the cut off date for October, August 11, 2003, by one whole month and you will receive another dues notice. This may seem excessive but when you deal with over 3 million members, even with an automated system, it takes time to coordinate who has paid and who has not.

On each renewal notice are several items you should notice. One is a statement "Please disregard if you have already paid your 2004 dues" and the other is an "as of date". This date is when they checked the status of your membership. For example if the date is 09/12/03, your check of September 2, 2003 has not been processed by National Headquarters; therefore, you have been sent another renewal notice.

My suggestion, is that you check your membership card, if it is 2004, do as they recommend and disregard. Do not waste 37 cents by sending me a letter advising me that you have paid your dues, having sent your membership card, I already know that.

While I know this can be an exasperating experience, please bear with the system, as there is not much we can do. Thank you.

James L. Pritchett, Jr.
Adjutant

Chaplain's Corner

Happy Holidays!

Please report to me any illness or deaths of veterans.

Also remember our veterans and their families at this time of year. In particular, remember our veterans at Charlotte Hall in both the VA hospitals in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.

As my computer has died, please call me at 301-262-0257 or leave a message for me at the Post.

Toni King
Chaplain



Post 66
No December Meeting
Merry Christmas

American Legion High School Oratorical Contest

Disney-Bell Post 66 will be sponsoring the local level of the National High School Oratorical Contest on January 31, 2004. Initial registration and a briefing on the rules will be held in early December at the Post. Interested students can pre-register by phoning Post 66 at (301) 464-9814 or Brian Frye, the Post Oratorical Committee Chairman, at (301) 860-1717.

Each year thousands of high school students gain a deeper understanding of the U.S. Constitution and share that knowledge with a vast audience through the American Legion High School Oratorical Contest. Hundreds of students win scholarship awards at the Post level for speeches that explore the substance and meaning of the Constitution. Other objectives of the contest include the development of leadership qualities, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and the preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

The contest consists of a prepared oration between 8-10 ten minutes in length and a short oration on an assigned topic between 3-5 minutes in length. State and local contests run annually January through March, culminating at the national level in April. In Maryland, local Posts participating in the contest conduct the initial program and send their respective winners to the county level and then on to the state finals. The Maryland champion then competes at the regional and possibly national level. The three national finalists compete for scholarships ranging from \$14,000 to a top award of \$18,000 going to the winning oratorical.

The local contest in Bowie offers \$500, \$300, and \$200 for the top three competitors. The American Legion encourages parents and school administrators to support this annual competition which instills Americanism in our high school students across the country.

A few Volunteers to be time keepers and escorts are needed and should see Brian Frye for details.



SAL Squadron 66
Monthly Meeting
Monday, December 8
7:30 pm

Hero Miles


Air travelers can donate frequent flier miles to help soldiers on leave from Iraq reach their destinations through a new program called Operation Hero Miles.

In September 2003, the Department of Defense started giving soldiers stationed in Iraq two-week leaves in the largest rest and recuperation leave program since the Vietnam War. The soldiers can fly to Germany or Baltimore Washington International Airport for free, but the soldiers are responsible for flights the rest of the way to their destination. Funds to provide additional airfare for American troops were left out of the \$87 billion aid package for Iraq and Afghanistan. There was a motion in the House to include the funds, but it was judged "not in order" and did not come to a vote.

More than 200 soldiers arrive at BWI daily as part of the R&R program, reports the American Forces Press Service. The Atlanta and Dallas-Fort Worth airports were scheduled to be added to the program Nov. 1. Launched by Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.), whose district includes BWI airport, the Operation Hero Miles website lists participating airlines and provides information on how to donate frequent-flier miles and how soldiers can receive complimentary tickets. Delta, Southwest

and Alaska Airlines/Horizon Airlines are participating in the program. "So many Americans want to donate their frequent flyer miles to help our men and women in uniform in Iraq so they can spend quality time with their family and friends here at home," said Ruppensberger.

The congressman's staff is donating more than 67,000 frequent flyer miles to Operation Hero Miles. For more information or to donate miles, go to www.heromiles.org.



TURKEY SHOOTS!
EVERY SUNDAY
PRE-REGISTER AT THE POST
BREAKFAST/LUNCH SERVED
\$50/18 SHOTS

TGI Friday Night Dinner Menu
December

Dec 5	Steak
Dec 12	Baked Chicken
Dec 19	Pork Chops
Dec 26	No Dinner

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

Dec 13	Shrimp Nite
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Pre-Application for Internment

As a resident of Maryland and a U.S. veteran, you are entitled to burial in one of five state-run Maryland Veterans Cemeteries. They are: Allegany County (Rocky Gap), Anne Arundel County (Crownsville), Baltimore County (Garrison Forest), Dorchester County (Eastern Shore) and Prince Georges County (Cheltenham). As a service to veterans and their families, you may pre-apply for internment and thereby easing potential problems for your family at a very difficult time. In order to take advantage of this program, contact our Post Service Officer, Eddie Thompson, to complete the necessary paperwork. Eddie's telephone number is 301-262-2263



Post Closed
 Christmas Day
 Merry Christmas





Disney-Bell Post 66

American Legion Disney-Bell Post 66
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Bowie, MD 20720
Tel: (301) 464-9814
Fax: (301) 805-6832
Website: www.alpost66.org

Non-Profit Org.
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Bowie, MD
Permit No. 30

POST OFFICERS

Commander: Clif Morvant, 1st Vice Commander: Tom Murphy, 2nd Vice Commander: Jr. Martin, Adjutant: James I. Pritchett, Jr., Judge Advocate: Charlie Milstead, Finance Officer: Dick Lanham, Service Officer: Eddie Thompson, Historian: Myron James, Chaplain: Toni King, Sergeant-at-Arms: Nick Muller, Executive Committee: David Cooks, Dan Healy, J. D. Larson, Bruce Settle and A. H. Sprehe.

Post 66 Annual Christmas Party



Wednesday
December 24, 2003
5:00 – 8:00 pm

WASH UP!
DRESS PRETTY!