

THE RISING STAR

DISNEY-BELL NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1, 2004

Time to Vote...for Post Officers!

We took the first steps toward starting the new Legion year by nominating officers for 2004–2005 during the membership meeting on May 26th. The following individuals are currently nominated: Commander: Clif Morvant, First Vice Commander: Tom Murphy, Second Vice Commander: Nick Muller and Dan Healy, Finance Officer: Dick Lanham Herman Peterson, Judge Advocate: Charlie Milstead, Service Officer: Eddie Thompson, Historian: Myron James, Chaplain: Toni King, Sergeant-at-Arms: Bill Carlson, Executive Committee (Five Positions): J. D. Larson, Alwin “Major” Sprehe, Nick Muller, Herman “jr.” Martin, Herman Peterson, Brian Frye, Roger Goll and David Cooks. The office of Adjutant is appointed by the Commander.



I wish to thank all who have volunteered to serve as a Post Officer. As I have discovered, it sometimes takes a lot of work and time to do a good job that is often unnoticed by the membership. Our growing Post is able to do so because of the work of those willing to step forward and take leadership positions and run the Post as a business and to ensure that we continue to participate in all Legion programs.

When you vote for an officer you are not only entrusting that individual with the obligation to run the Post programs, but you are entrusting the Executive Committee with literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in Post assets. I urge all members to attend the Membership Meeting and election on June 23rd. You must have your current 2004 membership card with you to be eligible to vote.

June looks like another busy month at the Post. Every Sunday is NASCAR Sunday and on June 6th many will be on the bus trip to Dover to see the race first hand. Those who aren't going on the bus trip will have fun trying to spot our group in the stands (maybe everyone going should wear the same color shirts).

The ever popular Shrimp Night will be on June 12th and the Friday night dinners will feature steak on the 4th, the SAL Dinner on the 18th and Spaghetti on the 25th.

On June 14th we will hold our second annual Flag Disposal Ceremony to commemorate Flag Day. The American Legion's National Champion Color Guard will lead the moving program that is sure to give you that “Proud to be an American” feeling. The program is schedule to begin at 7:00 p.m. and last about one hour. We are planning on having All American Hot Dogs and Hamburgers after the program and everyone is welcome. So hitch up the wagon and bring the whole family for a great day of patriotism and fun. If you have American flags that have served their time and are in need of replacement, please drop the used flag off at the Post at least a few days prior to Flag Day so that they can be properly honored. We have a new drop-off box in the front parking lot for your convenience.

FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY

FLAG DAY

MONDAY

JUNE 14TH

7:00 P.M.

Also, mark your calendars for July 4th. We will hold our 7th Annual 4th of July Party and we are expecting a great family event. I hope that this will be the last "4th Under the Big Tent". Bring family and friends and come on down for hot dogs and hamburgers, chicken and sausage and the usual sides and fixings. I am sure there will be fun and games for all. As always this is a free event, but we are asking that if you bring some salad or dessert to share it will be appreciated. Please call or drop by the Post to register by June 27th so that we can be sure to have enough food on hand to go around.



Post 66
Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, June 23
7:30 p.m.
Election of Officers

Please note that the Annual Department of Maryland Convention will be held the week of July 17-23 in Ocean City and most of the officers will be at the convention. Post operating hours will not change, but at the bartender's discretion, we may close early. Therefore it is a good idea to call ahead if you are planning on a late visit.

The summer will be slowing down a little but not completely. Friday night dinners will be on hiatus until September and even The Rising Star will take a vacation for the month of August.

I have enjoyed the honor of being the Post Commander for the past year. The Post has had a successful year in every program area, especially our growth in membership. I would like to thank all of the Post Officers for their work in getting the job done. My thanks also to the Auxiliary and SAL for their support.

Clif Morvant
Commander



Unit 66 Report

I think that the young people that responded to doing the essay's for the schools and became winners should be given credit and named. Back in April at our Tribute to Youth Program we had five boys and one girl who won at the Unit level. In group one (3rd and 4th grades) we had two fourth graders from Samuel Ogle Elementary School, and they were Jeremy Halpert and Eric Macchio and from Heather Hills Elementary School was the one young lady; Brooke Taylor Stevens. In group two (5th and 6th grades) we had two fifth graders Brandon Caplan and Omar Tingle and one from sixth grade, Bret Yon, all from Samuel Ogle Elementary School. These young people did a fine job and are to be congratulated. Brandon Caplan who won first place in our Unit went on to be a first place winner in both the District and Department in his age group. Their parents and teachers can be very proud of these students. We also had two young ladies who attended the Youth Conference at Valley Forge in Pa. and two young ladies that attended Girls State. Once again we had a very successful Tribute to Youth evening.



Auxiliary Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, June 16
7:30 p.m.

Also in April, Anna Thompson, Juanita Thompson, Toni King and myself traveled to Baltimore for a Naturalization Ceremony where we distributed American Flags and pins to all those who were

becoming new citizens. A thank you goes to Juanita for arranging this very interesting day.

At our Post Everlasting Ceremony we paid honor to the five Unit members who had passed away this past year. May they Rest in Peace.

May being Poppy Month, Juanita, Toni and I went to City Hall for the monthly Council Meeting and presented Mayor Robinson and the Council members with Poppies. Many attending were also given a Poppy and made a donation which goes to help the Veterans.

May 22nd was the family Walk-a-Thon at Ft. McHenry and all donations collected go to John Hopkins in connection with the Children's Miracle Network, a very worthy cause. There was a picnic following the walk and Unit 66 was well represented.

Our newly elected officers are as follows: President- Priscilla Sprehe, Vice President- Tammy Planty, Secretary- Juanita Thompson, Treasurer- Anna Thompson, Chaplain- Toni King, Historian- Linda Healy, Sergeant-at-Arms- Lois Van Sickle.

By the time you read this our Bowie Memorial Day Parade will be over and both the Post and Auxiliary and SAL are participating. And on Memorial Day we will be at Veteran's Park for the Ceremony there, presenting our wreaths. June 20th is Father's Day and we are having a breakfast at the Post in honor of all fathers. Please join us but sign up at the bar so we can have an idea how many will be attending. Fathers eat free but the cost to all others is \$5.00. The time is 9:00 am until noon. The usual breakfast menu will be served. Happy Father's Day.

Priscilla Sprehe
President

PAT LAMB IS CHAMP

Pat Lamb won the Post's 8-ball tournament when he beat Joe Manny in the playoff 2 - 1. Both played good pool throughout the tournament, but Pat prevailed and deserves the title "Champion". His name has been placed on the Champion Board in the Game Room. Congratulations, Pat.

Adjutant's Report

Disney-Bell Post 66 has had a fantastic membership year during the 2003-2004 Legion year, surpassing our goal by over 35 members. Many of you have joined just recently and may be surprised to see a dues notice in your mail so soon. Please do not be alarmed. The American Legion administrative year of 2003-2004 will end on June 31, 2003 and although you have six months remaining on your current membership, National will initiate the start of the new administrative year by mailing your first renewal notice for 2005. The "Early Bird" campaign gives our Post a head start on meeting the new membership goals and you are encouraged to renew your dues when you receive your notice. Doing so will prevent your receiving another renewal notice in October. It will also entitle you to attend our Early Bird Dinner in November.

If you have transferred into Post 66 from another post during the past year, look at the left side of your renewal notice. If it is from your last post, National apparently has not yet processed your transfer. DO NOT pay 2005 dues to your old post. If you do, you will automatically be transferred back to your old post and we must do the whole transfer routine over again and we will not receive credit for your membership. Mail your 2005 dues of \$20.00 to

Disney-Bell Post 66, 9605 Old Laurel Bowie Road, Bowie, MD 20720.

As always, should you have any questions, comments or concerns do not hesitate to contact me either at the Post or my home (301-390-6436). Post e-mail address is alpost66@bellatlantic.net and mine is jimabniam@aol.com.

In service to God and Country.

James L. Pritchett, Jr.

Adjutant

July Fourth Picnic Set

The Disney-Bell Post 66 will hold our 8th Annual 4th of July Picnic on Sunday July 4th, from 1:00- 4:00 p.m.. Every year just gets better and better and this year will be no exception. Most of the food will be provided by the Post (all the hot dogs, hamburgers and fried chicken you can eat), as well as all the soda and beer you want. The "big tent" will be on scene and thanks to the Girl Scouts under the leadership of Anne Ambler Powell (SAL Commander Skip Powell's daughter), more picnic tables are available. (Next year we hope to have our own pavilion built and ready to go. Vicki the Clown will be on hand for the kids, as well.



We had almost 200 people last year and we could more. So don't hesitate and mark your calendars now. If you've been to one of these before, you know what great fun we have. The picnic is free to all members of the Post, Auxiliary, SAL and their families.

We are asking everyone to bring a side dish of something (small salad, chips, snacks, etc.) or dessert to share with everyone. A sign-up sheet is at the Post so please call and let us know how many will be coming and what you can bring. You do not have to bring something to attend so don't let that be

a problem, but in order for us to have enough food, we would still like you to call and let us know how many will be attending. RSVP no later than June 27, 2004.

Squadron 66 Report

I want to thank everyone for the great turn out for the Mother's Day Breakfast last month and everyone who helped in the kitchen and all the other details associated with this annual event.

Officers have been nominated for next year and they are as follows: Commander: George (Skip) Powell, First Vice Commander: Joe Weiks, Adjutant: Steve R. Planty, Finance Officer: Darby McNeil, Chaplain: Del Billings, Sergeant-at-Arms: Charles (Hack) Hammerly, Pat Lamb, and James Clark, III, Historian: Joe Clark and Steve E. Planty.



Don't forget!!! Due to Flag Day Ceremonies on the 14th, our regularly scheduled meeting and elections will be held on Tuesday, June 15, 2004 at 7:30 p.m..

I wish to thank every one for a great year and I hope to see you at both the Flag Day Ceremony and at the meeting on Tuesday.

Skip Powell

Commander



SAL Squadron 66
Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, June 15
7:30 p.m.
Election of Officers

A Marine's Dad

(Editor's Note: Frank Schaeffer is a writer. His latest book, co-written with his son, Marine Cpl. John Schaeffer, is "Keeping Faith: A Father-Son Story About Love and the United States Marine Corps." This is his story.)

Before my son became a Marine, I never thought much about who was defending me. Now when I read of the war on terrorism or the coming conflict in Iraq, it cuts to my heart. When I see a picture of a member of our military who has been killed, I read his or her name very carefully. Sometimes I cry. In 1999, when the barrel-chested Marine recruiter showed up in dress blues and bedazzled my son John, I did not stand in the way. John was headstrong, and he seemed to understand these stern, clean men with straight backs and flawless uniforms. I did not.

I live on the Volvo-driving, higher education-worshipping North Shore of Boston. I write novels for a living. I have never served in the military. It had been hard enough sending my two older children off to Georgetown and New York University. John's enlisting was unexpected, so deeply unsettling. I did not relish the prospect of answering the question "So where is John going to college?" from the parents who were itching to tell me all about how their son or daughter was going to Harvard. At the private high school John attended, no other students were going into the military. "But aren't the Marines terribly Southern?" asked one perplexed mother while standing next to me at the brunch following graduation. "What a waste, he was such a good student," said another parent. One parent (a professor at a nearby and rather famous university) spoke up at a school meeting and suggested that the school should "carefully evaluate what went wrong." When John graduated from three months of boot camp on Parris Island, 3,000 parents and friends were on the parade deck stands. We parents and our Marines not only were of many races but also were representative of many economic classes. Many were poor. Some arrived crammed in the backs of pickups, others by bus. John told me that a lot of parents could not afford the trip. We in the audience were white and Native American. We were Hispanic, Arab and African American and Asian. We were former Marines wearing the scars of battle, or at least baseball caps emblazoned with battles' names. We were Southern whites from Nashville and skinheads from New Jersey, black kids from Cleveland wearing ghetto rags and white ex-cons with ham-hock forearms defaced

by jailhouse tattoos. We would not have been mistaken for the educated and well-heeled parents gathered on the lawns of John's private school a half-year before. After graduation one new Marine told John, "Before I was a Marine, if I had ever seen you on my block I would've probably killed you just because you were standing there." This was a serious statement from one of John's good friends, an African American ex-gang member from Detroit who, as John said, "would die for me now, just like I'd die for him." My son has connected me to my country in a way that I was too selfish and insular to experience before. I feel closer to the waitress at our local diner than to some of my oldest friends. She has two sons in the Corps. They are facing the same dangers as my boy. When the guy who fixes my car asks me how John is doing, I know he means it. His younger brother is in the Navy.

Why were I and the other parents at my son's private school so surprised by his choice? During World War II, the sons and daughters of the most powerful and educated families did their bit. If the immorality of the Vietnam War was the only reason those lucky enough to go to college dodged the draft, why did we not encourage our children to volunteer for military service once that war was done? Have we wealthy and educated Americans all become pacifists? Is the world a safe place? Or have we just gotten used to having somebody else defend us? What is the future of our democracy when the sons and daughters of the janitors at our elite universities are far more likely to be put in harm's way than are any of the students whose dorms their parents clean?

I feel shame because it took my son's joining the Marine Corps to make me take notice of who is defending me.

I feel hope because perhaps my son is part of a future "greatest generation." As the storm clouds of war gather, at least I know that I can look the men and women in uniform in the eye. My son is one of them. He is the best I have to offer. He is my heart.

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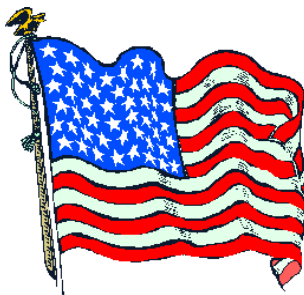
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POST OFFICERS

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

Flag Retirement Ceremony
Monday
June 14, 2004
7:00 p.m.



Annual Family Picnic
Sunday
July 4, 2004
1-4 p.m.

