

THE RISING STAR

DISNEY-BELL POST 66 NEWSLETTER

JULY 1, 2005

A Year of Progress — A Year of Loss!

The 2004 – 2005 Legion year for our Post saw a lot of progress and the loss of several members who will be greatly missed. As our Newsletter takes a break in August, this will be my final submission as Commander. I thank you for putting your trust in me for the past two years and I hope I have lived up to that trust. It has been a trying year in many respects, but also very rewarding. As I did last year, I would like to recall the events of the past year, but before I do, I would like to extend my thanks to all that contributed their time, effort, encouragement and support toward our goals.



First, my wife, Cindy, has given me more than just support. She has always been there to remind me of commitments, offering me encouragement and prodding me forward. There are times when it would have been easy for me to lie back on the job,

but Cindy kept pushing me onward. Thanks for being there for me.

The Executive Committee has been wonderful. Every officer has done their job well and brought credit to the Post.

Adjutant Jim Pritchett has kept me informed, maintained meeting minutes and made sure that our Post complied with the requirements of the Department and National Offices.

Tom Murphy, our First Vice Commander and Membership Chairman did his job, along with Jim, in bringing our Post to four star status.

Second Vice Commander is a tough job. The incumbent has to keep the post home running and increasing attendance and business, as well as profits. Nick Muller took a lot of chances in trying new ventures that, for the most part, were very successful. Our facility manager, Gidget Gunson, proved to be a great asset to our Post operations. Gidget definitely increased bar business and made sure that the atmosphere of our post home was always upbeat.

Judge Advocate, Charlie Milstead, made sure that our meetings were run according to the rules and regulations of the American Legion. He, along with our Finance Officer, worked way too many hours trying to work with our hired accountant to improve the Post accounting system.



Installation Dinner

A Joint Installation of Officers will be held on Wednesday, July 27. Cocktails: 6:00 p.m., Dinner: 7:00 p.m. with ceremony to follow. There is limited space available and a cut-off number will be imposed. Please call the Post with your reservation as soon as possible but certainly no later than July 17.

Finance Officer, Dick Lanham, has one of the most thankless jobs at the Post. Working with Charlie Milstead, he put in countless hours and much frustration in trying to get our new accounting system in place. Dick also had to be ready at our twice monthly meetings to answer questions from the membership regarding Post expenses. His reports, both written and orally presented, were always professionally done and well-received.

Eddie Thompson, our Service Officer, continued to provide assistance to our members in need. Eddie provided counseling and assistance to veterans needing help in securing benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, those needing ambulatory assistance with wheelchairs, walkers and canes and continually keeping the membership informed on issues related to disabled members of our Post.

Myron James, Historian, has been busy all year compiling a scrapbook and history of our Post activities. Whenever there is anything going on at the Post, Myron is there with his camera to be certain that there is a historical record of our activities.

Toni King continues to offer support to our sick and ailing members. Toni is also there when she is needed by the families of our departed members. This has got to be one of the toughest positions to hold in our Post. Dealing with bereaved families and making sure that our Post fulfills the wishes of departed members is a most emotional undertaking, but Toni never fails in making sure the right thing is done for our veterans.

Our Sergeant-at-arms, Bill Carlson, has made sure that our public events and meetings were held in the proper decorum and that the facility was properly prepared for various events throughout the year.



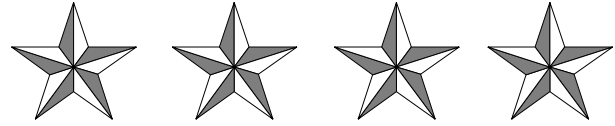
The Executive Committee, David Cooks, Brian Frye, Roger Goll and J.D. Larson and Major Spree, helped keep the officers in check by their attention to all post activities and faithful attendance at Post meetings.

After recognizing Post officers, I would be remiss if I neglected to mention the two other organizations in our "family" that have contributed throughout the year toward making ours a Post to be proud of. Priscilla Sprehe, Auxiliary Unit President, and the active members of the Unit, have contributed their time and talents to many of our annual activities. The SAL, led by Squadron Commander Skip Powell, came to the rescue on several occasions throughout the year. Skip never hesitated to take on the jobs that needed the youth and availability that the Post membership just doesn't have.

With all of the recognition noted above, I will have to limit my annual summary to just a few highlights. Even prior to the new year beginning, our Post was proud to announce that our National Championship Color Guard Team won the statewide competition during Convention in Ocean City. The Legion year officially began with Installation of Officers on July 28th, with the

event orchestrated by Jim Pritchett and a great dinner prepared by the Auxiliary.

(Commander's Article Continued on Page Four)



1st Vice Commander Report

This is my last article as First Vice Commander and Membership Chairman. It has been an interesting year in regards to recruiting new members. One of the problems we faced this past year was retention of current members and the New Membership Committee will be taking a good look at this situation for the coming year.

It's been said time and time again that membership is everybody's job and as an officer of the post you should do your best to bring at least three new members into our Post. I am also exploring new ideas for retaining current members and will pass them on to the new Membership Chairman. We finished the year with 926 members which is three over our goal of 923.

Thanks to all the members who know that membership is everyone's job. I would list the names of the members who know this fact but I don't think it's necessary, they know that they contributed and will get their recognition when membership awards are distributed at the Installation Dinner. The old saying is still true, 10% of the people do 90% of the work.

The 2005-2006 membership year will be a challenge to earn our 18th continuous year for reaching **Four Star** status. Please help your Post and the Membership Team by renewing your dues early and recruiting a new member to Disney-Bell Post 66.

Thanks again to the members who contributed in our membership efforts.

Thomas D. Murphy
1st Vice Commander

Adjutant's Call

A reminder that the annual dues for Disney-Bell Post 66 are now \$25.00 per year effective as of July 1, 2005. As a membership incentive, Legionnaires who become an Early Bird, may pay the old rate of \$20.00 until close of business, Veterans Day, November 11, 2005. I certainly hope you take advantage and become an Early Bird.



Again, the Department of Maryland and the Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) are jointly conducting a major enrollment campaign for the "no-cost" \$1,000.00 AD&S program. Last year an enrollment postcard was mailed with every 2005 membership card. If completed and mailed in, your coverage will continue through August 31, 2006. This year another enrollment postcard will be mailed with your 2006 membership card. Legionnaires signing-up via this postcard will be covered until **September 1, 2011** (assuming membership is maintained). Take advantage of this American Legion benefit, complete and mail that card in. Acceptance is guaranteed.

Currently we have on sale Post 66 T-shirts and ball caps at a very reasonable price, \$8.00 and \$13.00 respectively. These items along with 3' x 5' U.S. Flag sets at \$10.00 each, are available to get you started for the Fourth of July. Any of these items may be purchased at the Post or by contacting the Adjutant.

As always, should you have any questions concerning your membership, I am available. My home phone is 301-390-6436, cell 240-355-6809 and my E-mail address is Jimabniam@aol.com.

In service to God and Country, I am.

Sincerely,
James L. Pritchett, Jr.

UNIT 66 REPORT

On June 14th the Post held the annual flag disposal ceremony and as usual the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts did a fine job escorting the members of the Post, Auxiliary and SAL and even our own Juanita Thompson represented the District. The weather was ideal and hot dogs and hamburgers along with other goodies were served after the ceremony.

Our regular Unit meeting was held on Wednesday June 15th and we missed Anna Thompson who was at Girls State. Plans were discussed for the Installation dinner and the menu will be ham, scalloped potatoes and green beans, salad, rolls and of course a cake for dessert.



On June 19th the Auxiliary hosted the Fathers's Day brunch from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.. We had a good turn out and breakfast was enjoyed by all. Each Dad got to take home a tie or two compliments of the "Major" and it seemed to go over real big. Glad they could be put to good use and thanks gentlemen.

Soon we are off to Convention in Ocean City the week of July 11th through July 15th. Opening night, Post Everlasting and the Parade will keep everyone busy in addition to the daily meetings. And finally Installation will take place at the Post on July 27th. Hope everyone is enjoying their summer so far.

This being my last newsletter as President I want to thank all my officers once again for all their support for the past two years. Good luck to all the incoming officers. As I depart Bowie in the near future I will be taking many, many memories with me and the welcome mat will always be out for visitors. God Bless you all and God Bless the American Legion Family.

Priscilla Sprehe
President

(Commander's Article continued from Page Two)

We participated in "A Call to Patriotism" on September 11th at Allen Pond Park. Again, we were well represented by our Honor Guard.

Unfortunately we lost a dedicated member of the SAL when Dave Tomlinson was called to Post Everlasting on September 11th. The SAL Annual Car Show on 9/18 was again a great success and September saw the beginning of our 10-month season of Friday night dinners and shrimp nights.



Turkey Shoots began in October and through the season, J.D. and his crew made sure that Sundays were "Fundays" at Post 66. October also was the month

for the SAL Crab Feast, the Children's Halloween Party, the Unit Craft Bazaar and the SAL Comedy Night.



The Honor Guard and others participated in the Veterans Day ceremonies in Old Bowie. The Early Bird Dinner was another highlight in November. In December, we had a children's Christmas party and a Post Christmas for the adults. Again, our Post made a huge contribution to the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program. The Executive Committee approved a donation to Fisher House Foundation, with \$2,000.66 earmarked for each Fisher House program at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Andrews Air Force Base and Bethesda Navy Medical Center for a total donation of \$6,001.98.



January brought on the Annual High School Oratorical Contest. Thanks to Brian Frye for chairing this event for the second year. Also, the SAL held a successful pig roast that was fun for everyone. In February, the SAL sponsored a Sweetheart Dance, with entertainment donated by the David Wayne Band and proceeds going to Fisher House.

March is always green at the Post with our annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner put on by our resident Irishman, Tom Murphy. Great food and great fun. The Post Birthday Party was on March 12th, and the Auxiliary did their usual great job. Also in March, the SAL held its first Chili Cook-Off. What fun that was, and all of the chili was great.

April is always a solemn month for the Post with our Post Everlasting Ceremony. We also lost two more members to Post Everlasting in April, Chet Mackavage

and George Pierce. We had two "Roasts" in April. First the SAL roasted Bull and Oysters, then the Prince George's County Council roasted County Commander J.D. Larson. Also, the Auxiliary held their annual Children and Youth Program. Then, near the end of the month, we were all crushed with the loss of Alwin "Major" Sprehe, a life member of the Post and husband of Unit President Priscilla Sprehe.

May is Mothers Day month and the SAL put on a very nice tribute to mothers with a brunch on their day. The Color Guard represented our Post at the Memorial Day Services in Veteran's Park in Old Bowie. We also had a float and marchers participate in the annual Bowie Memorial Day Parade.

June 14th, Flag Day, was a big event at the Post with the impressive Flag Retirement Ceremony coordinated by Jim Pritchett. Post members, Auxiliary and SAL members, as well as Boy Scout Troop 1688, Cub Pack 1688 and a host of others joined together in united patriotism and respect to honor those flags that have served their purpose and were in need of appropriate disposal.

What a TEAM. What a YEAR. Thanks to everyone for allowing me to serve as Commander of Disney Bell Post 66.

Clif Morvant
Commander

WE'RE AT THE BEACH!

The Department of Maryland of the American Legion will hold its annual department convention in Ocean City, Maryland from the week of July 11-15. During that time, the Post will operate a Hospitality Bradley-on-the-Bay. Hours of operation for the Hospitality Suite will be from noon to 8:00 p.m. daily. If you are in Ocean City during convention week, please stop by and visit. Bradley on the Bay is located just to the left of the Convention Center in Ocean City with plenty of free parking in the Municipal lot.



In the meantime, anyone requiring to reach any officer for Legion business may do so by leaving a message at the Post.



American Legion
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POST OFFICERS

Commander: Clif Morvant, 1st Vice Commander: Tom Murphy, 2nd Vice Commander: Nick Muller, 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: Bill Carlson, Executive Committee: David Cooks, Brian Frye, Roger Goll and J. D. Larson

Joint Installation of Officers!



Wednesday
July 27, 2005
Cocktails: 6:00 pm
Dinner: 7:00 pm

RSVP: NLT 7-17-05