



AMERICAN LEGION POST 46
NEWSLETTER
July, August and September 2011

"In Memory of Those Who Served and to Honor Those Who Are Serving."

To All Fellow Legionnaires of American Legion Post 46

In our last Post 46 newsletter, my introductory letter noted three momentous news events that all occurred in the month of March - the catastrophic earthquake in Japan, the uprisings in the Muslim world including the war in Libya to oust Col. Gaddafi and the Rolling Stone story featuring 5/2 Stryker Brigade Combat team.

The long term consequences of the nuclear fallout following the earthquake in Japan will be with us for many years to come. Not only do they raise yet more obstacles to those who advocate the increased use of nuclear power to solve our national energy problems, they also serve to remind us of the awesome potential of Mother Nature which she demonstrated once again here at home with a devastating tornado which swept through Joplin, Missouri, in May virtually eliminating the city and killing some 100 people.

We will also be living with the uncertain consequences of the unrest in the Muslim world for many years to come. As many of you are aware, we continue to be heavily involved in the war effort in Libya. Although the Obama administration continues to claim that American forces are playing only a limited role in the NATO operation, Africa Command, on the other hand, reports that U.S. aircraft continue to fly a significant number of support missions and strike sorties. Its spokeswoman is quoted as stating "...since 31 March, the US has flown a total of 3,475 sorties in support of OUP" (don't you love military acronyms? At least it wasn't OOPS! The first person to provide me with the definition of this one gets a free dinner at our next Post 46 meeting). "Of those, 801 were strike sorties, 132 of which actually dropped ordnance". (Once again, I hope that one of our Air Force members can provide me with an explanation of this distinction - what sortie does not drop ordnance of some kind or another? Maybe bullets don't count?) The current debate before Congress will now involve the War Powers Resolution and whether or not it applies to our Libyan operations as described above.

Finally, the previous news item involving 5/2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team has fortunately disappeared from the news headlines which is probably due, in large part, to the sensational news about the detection, elimination and burial of Osama bin Laden in May. In previous Post 46 newsletters, we have included articles about some of the amazing accomplishments of US Navy Seals and the attempted prosecution of some of their members for carrying out their missions; however, this particular mission accomplished in Pakistan has to be the most daring and sensational of them all. We assume that no subsequent prosecutions of any members of NAVY SEAL TEAM 6 will be attempted. There is a more detailed report of this particular mission later in this newsletter.

It seems that we are bombarded with news events from all directions so that it is obviously difficult to keep up with many of them. If any Post 46 member feels that a particular news event might be of

particular interest to our members and deserves some further attention in our newsletter, please let me know or send me a summary of the event which we can include in our next issue.

As always, a schedule of events is posted in this newsletter and we invite all members to get involved and participate as much as they are able to do so. As veterans gather together we find that true friendships develop and the diversity of age, military rank, occupations, etc. is no barrier to conversation and discussion and adds to our knowledge and experiences of life.

IMPORTANT NOTICE. We continue to enjoy the hospitality of Webers Inn for our monthly meetings. Please be informed that one of our loyal and devoted Post 46 members, Tom Scott, has provided an added incentive which he hopes will add to the social atmosphere of our meetings. Thanks to Legionnaire Scott's generosity, a delicious and hearty Weber's dinner will be served to all attendees prior to our Post 46 meeting. If this newsletter reaches you before July 11th, the date of our next monthly meeting, please join us at 6:00 P.M. at Webers. It would be appreciated that, if you are not a regular attendee of our meetings, that you call Commander Duncan at 734-997-9485 so that we can have a rough estimate of how many will be joining us for dinner.

Thanks for you all you do for Post 46 and our veterans. If you have any news you want included in our newsletter, please forward it to my attention and, if it passes the censor, it will receive our thoughtful consideration.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| July 11 | Regular Post Meeting
Directors Room, Weber's Inn
Dinner served at 6:00 P.M. |
| July 20 | Luncheon Meeting
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Road, 11:45 a.m. |
| August 1 | Regular Post Meeting
Directors Room, Weber's Inn, 7:00 p.m. |
| August 17 | Luncheon Meeting
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Road, 11:45 a.m. |
| August 19 | Bingo, Veterans Hospital, Ann Arbor 7:00 P.M. |

September 12 Regular Post Meeting
Directors Room, Weber's Inn, 7:00 p.m.

September 21 Luncheon Meeting
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Road, 11:45 a.m.

LUNCHEON MEETINGS

As always, our luncheon meetings are held each month at the Classic Cup Café on Jackson Road, Ann Arbor. It is an opportunity for all members to get together, relax, enjoy a meal and get to know other members of Post 46 in an informal setting. We intend to invite guest speakers from time to time on various topical issues. Please suggest what type of speakers you would like - salesmen, investment advisors, athletic coaches, veterans, etc.

POW/MIA UPDATE

In a recent newsletter, we brought our members up to date about the fate of a POW who had his roots here in Ann Arbor. I hope you recall the story about Ahmed Altaie and his capture back in October, 2006, in Baghdad. This Iraqi-American Army soldier served as an interpreter, had married an Iraqi woman in 2006 and, while visiting his wife in Baghdad by motorcycle (an unauthorized and foolhardy excursion) he was grabbed, thrown into a car and driven off. He continues to be missing and unaccounted for to this day. At the time of our newsletter, we reported that Altaie was the only POW reportedly missing in the Iraq-Afghanistan conflict. We have since learned that another US soldier, Bowe Bergdahl from Hailey, Idaho, is also being held captive as a POW in Afghanistan. Sgt. Bergdahl has been a captive of the Taliban for two years, since June, 2009. The circumstances of his capture are also somewhat cloudy but, one way or the other, he was captured in a mountainous region along Afghanistan's border with Pakistan. Unlike the capture of Altaie, the Taliban has celebrated the capture of Bergdahl with the posting of videos online, in which Bergdahl pleads for his release, criticizes the US war effort and praises the Afghan insurgency.

In Bergdahl's hometown, yellow ribbons and stickers with his picture are common on cars and store fronts. An Idaho radio host, Kevin Miller recently conducted a "Freedom Walk" to highlight Bergdahl's case stating: "We have this soldier coming up on two years in captivity and we don't hear anything about it unless there's a new video ... I can't believe this hasn't been a bigger story". This Fourth of July, Bergdahl has been named the honorary Grand Marshall of the parade in Boise, Idaho, and we can only hope that Sgt. Bergdahl will be on hand in person to lead the parade this time next year. All Legionnaires are asked to pay special attention to their MIA/POW empty chair at their upcoming meetings and to honor and remember these two missing servicemen.

BINGO NIGHT AT THE VA HOSPITAL

A Bingo night is scheduled at the VA Hospital on August 19, 2011. If you can join us and help hospitalized veterans with their bingo cards, please let us know. Steve Duncan will continue his regular role of calling out the numbers.

DEATH OF OSAMA BIN LADEN

The most earth shattering news for most veterans during the last three months was the startling and unexpected report of the detection, elimination and burial of Osama bin Laden. For many years since what we now call simply "9/11", the capture of Osama has been foremost in the minds and hearts of many American veterans. In order to finally capture and kill him on May 1st of this year, some 20 US Navy Seals flew stealth helicopters low over the Pakistani hills in order to avoid detection by radar to his compound in the small garrison town of Abbottabad just 50 miles north of Islamabad. We were later told that Pakistan had not been informed in advance about the incursion into its territory until after Osama was dead and his body was out of the country along with computers, documents and other intelligence items taken from his compound. It was further reported that the SEALS were authorized and prepared to shoot their way out of Pakistan if Pakistan had tried to block their return to base. For many, the elimination of Osama was a point of honor for our military servicemen and women and all veterans who attended our Post 46 meeting on the next day were offered a drink at the Weber's bar in commemoration of this significant victory.

What happens next is a difficult question with many possible answers. Was Pakistan a help or hindrance in the detection of Osama? Is Pakistan our friend or foe or both? Who will now head the al-Qaida organization? It is reported that the USA sent some \$4.5 billion in aid to Pakistan in 2010. It is probably impossible to know where this money ended up. Our love-hate relationship with this nuclear armed, divided and troubled country is complicated and books and papers are written every day trying to describe or explain it. This newsletter will not and cannot attempt to shed even a small ray of light on the subject. At this point in time, simply enjoy the fact that a major terrorist leader who hated this country more than life itself, who plotted and caused the deaths of many Americans and other civilians over the past 10 or 15 years and who encouraged others to wage holy war against us is now no longer able to do so.

CHELSEA AMERICAN LEGION POST CHICKEN BROIL

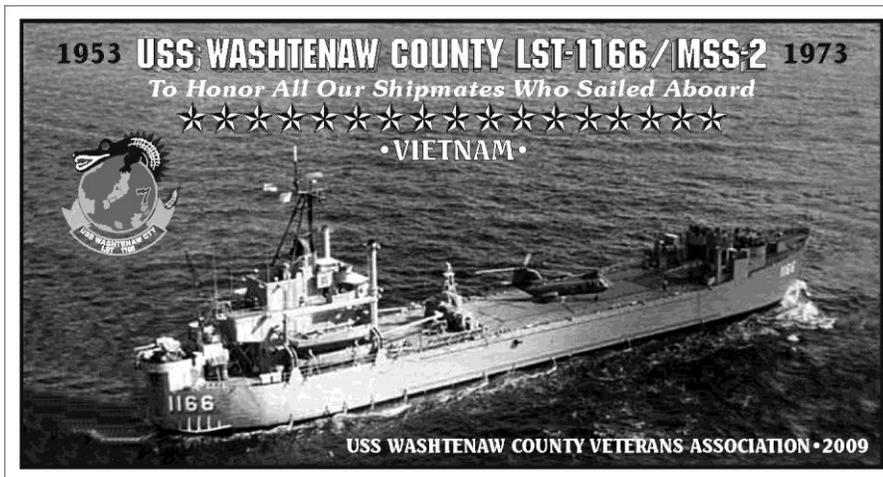
In our last newsletter, we reported that our near neighbor, American Legion Post 31 in Chelsea was facing some difficult challenges from Sylvan Township regarding the requirement that it first obtain a costly special use permit before it could legally conduct its annual fund raising chicken broil event on Cavanaugh Lake. It appears that the authorities at Sylvan Township have had a temporary change of heart.

As you may recall, in February, Post 31 was notified by Sylvan Township that it would have to apply for a costly "special use" permit to hold its chicken broil on July 4th. After some public uproar and dissent, the township has since returned the \$900 permit fee to Post 31 while it reportedly "works through zoning regulations for events held in the township". For over 25 years, Post 31 has held a chicken broil at its building on Cavanaugh Lake at 1700 Ridge Road. Now, this tradition will continue for at least another year unless bad weather intervenes. If it pours with rain prior to the event or rain is a factor, the event is then cancelled and there is no subsequent "rain date" so be sure to contact Post 31 if you plan to attend and the weather is questionable.

The chicken will be ready starting at 11:00 A.M. and meals will continue to be served until the chicken runs out. The charge for each meal is \$9.00 and includes chicken, cole slaw, baked beans, a dinner roll and chips. Not a bad way to spend a July 4th holiday and to assist Post 31 to raise funds to support its local civic and military activities.

POST 46 AND THE USS WASHTENAW COUNTY

Our Post 46 Adjutant, Elmer White, who served in the Air Force, recently became heavily involved in a local Navy project (there is indeed inter-service branch cooperation!) which involved the construction and dedication of a memorial of the USS Washtenaw County, an LST which served during the Vietnam War. Legionnaire White invites all Post 46 members to visit the new U.S. Navy Vietnam War Memorial in the lobby of the Washtenaw County Building at Main and Ann in Ann Arbor. The Memorial was dedicated on May 6th, the 36th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. The display features the USS Washtenaw County, an LST (Landing Ship Tank) that served duty supporting the Riverine Forces in the Mekong Delta and was the most highly decorated ship of the Vietnam War. LSTs were known as “gator freighters” because they could glide up to the beach and open their bow doors like a gator opening its jaws. LSTs delivered tanks, troops and supplies. The display was created by James Leacock, retired Curator of Displays at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Leacock has created displays for the D-Day Museum in New Orleans, Vietnam Wall Visitor Center and the Atomic Testing Museum. In WWII the designer’s father served aboard the USS Bataan which motivated James to donate half the \$25,000 cost of the project in his father’s honor and in honor of his high school buddies who served in Vietnam. Post 46 Adjutant Elmer White chaired the committee that worked for two years to raise funds and assist in the design of the state-of-the-art museum quality display. Thanks also go to Post 46 and its members who donated \$1,450 toward the project. This is truly a destination for all veterans, their children and grandchildren.



BASEBALL WRAP UP AND REPORT

Commander Steve Duncan has been following our Post 46 baseball team from state to state and from tournament to tournament. Steve reported that the team initially got off to a poor start. It won its first game against MSA 11 to 1. It then lost 2 games to AA Travelers but then rebounded for a 4 win, 1 loss record at the tournament in Troy, Ohio. The team then lost both ends of doubleheaders to East Lansing Post 205 and Hudson Post 180. Subsequently, it won only 2 games in the Wolverine Invitational at Blissfield, MI, on the weekend of June 16-19 followed by the split of a doubleheader with Adrian Post 275 on June 20

Steve reported that the team played well at the Midwest Classic with a record of 4 wins, 1 loss and 1 tie and lost in the semifinals on Sunday. The next games are on Wednesday at Chelsea on July 6th. We hope

that a number of Post 46 members will come out and give the team some support. Finally, this coming weekend, the team plays in the Spartan Classic at East Lansing MSU Kobs Field. The games are on Thursday at noon and Friday at 2:30 P.M. Once it begins, the Post 46 baseball season is very condensed and the team plays a large number of games in a very short period of time so that, before you know it, the season is over. The team budget is always stretched beyond its limits and any contributions from members or other parties would be gratefully accepted. If you are able to make a donation to this worthy cause, please contact Steve immediately. We will have a full report of the finish of the Post 46 baseball season from Commander Duncan in our next newsletter.

E-MAIL VS. SNAIL MAIL

Many of you will be receiving your copy of this letter by e-mail which, of course, saves postage and gives you early delivery; however, for our WWII vets, most of whom just do not like to hook up to that modern device called the internet, your newsletter will be delivered by the post man with the help of a postage stamp dedicated to the memory of Bill Mauldin. As all you "older" vets know, Bill Mauldin was a two time Pulitzer Prize winning editorial cartoonist who rose to fame during World War II depicting American soldiers as represented by two archetypical characters known as "Willie and Joe". These two characters were two weary and often bedraggled infantry GIs who reluctantly endured all the difficulties and dangers of the battlefield with humor and some contempt. Mauldin's cartoons made him a hero to the common soldier. It was reported that George Patton once summoned Mauldin to his office and threatened to "throw his ass in jail" for spreading dissent after one of his cartoons made fun of Patton's demand that all soldiers be clean shaven even when under fire. Enjoy snail mail and Mauldin together!

POST OFFICERS

Steve Duncan, Commander & Finance Officer
Greta Krapohl, Sr. Vice Commander
Michael Malley, Jr. Vice Commander & Judge Advocate
John "Laurie" Howley, Sgt. at Arms
Robert Oxenger, Chaplain
Elmer White, Adjutant
Graydon Krapohl, Service Officer
Thomas Scott, Executive Committee
Douglas Woolley, Executive Committee
Dale Burgess, Executive Committee

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