

Looking on the Bright Side

We made it to another Spring! Can you believe it? Things are finally looking a bit brighter, and I'm not just talking about the sunny weather. Between reduced case counts and wide distribution of the vaccine, there's a light at the end of this tunnel ("the year that wasn't" as I call it).

The warmer weather is definitely welcome, though - have you started growing yet? This photo I found online really spoke to me - it features 4 stacked hand-painted signs reading "Your mind is a garden" / "Your thoughts are the seeds" / "You can grow flowers" / "or you can grow weeds" Profound, huh? I hope you can use this time to tend to your own gardens, both physical and mental.



COVID-19 Vaccine Information



Under the recently signed SAVE LIVES Act, the VA is now authorized to provide COVID-19 vaccines to ALL veterans, spouses, and caregivers who wish to receive it. Also, Governor Inslee recently changed the requirements statewide, and anyone over the age of 16 who wants to get the vaccine can (starting 15 April), without needing to meet any other requirements.

The COVID-19 Vaccines are free for everyone.

Generally speaking, appointments are required, so it is best to contact your local healthcare provider or nearest VA healthcare facility. There is also the mass vaccination site at the Town Toyota Center in Wenatchee (appointment slots open each week on Sunday and must be made online), and a majority of local pharmacies now offer the vaccine as well - call first to verify if you should make an appointment with them.

You may have heard rumors about the vaccine, but please know - it has been proven safe and effective. While some people may have more adverse reactions to it, these often subside within a couple days, which sounds a lot better than being hospitalized for weeks with the actual virus.

For more information, check out the following links:

WA Department of Health: www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/Vaccine

Veterans Affairs: www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine

Making Plans for Memorial Day

One of 2 major military and veteran holidays of the year, Memorial Day honors those who have served and are no longer with us. Typical Memorial Day ceremonies involve placing flags on the graves of veterans and laying of wreaths, one for each branch of the military. Below are some of the events that might be happening around the region in honor of Memorial Day 2021, pending regulations regarding gatherings.

Unless noted, events are scheduled for Monday, May 31.

~ signifies approx times

*** Please verify with hosts to confirm events will take place.*

Wenatchee Valley

9am: Evergreen Memorial Cemetery (East Wenatchee) [*Patriotic Council*]

10am: Memorial Park (Wenatchee) [*WVC Veteran Knights*]; Columbia River Pedestrian Bridge [*Patriotic Council*]

11am: Wenatchee City Cemetery [*Patriotic Council*]

Noon: Flag raising at Pybus Market [*Patriotic Council*]; Lunch at American Legion Post 10

Grant County

previous year's plans

9:30am: Valley View Memorial (Soap Lake) [*VFW Post 24 & AL Post 28*]

11am: St Rose of Lima Cemetery (Ephrata) [*AL Post 28 & VFW Post 24*]

12:30pm: Qunicy Valley Cemetery [*AL Post 183, AL Post 28 & VFW Post 24*]

Electric City

previous year's plans

Sat before, 1pm: Spring Canyon Cemetery flag laying (Grand Coulee)

Day of, 11am: Spring Canyon Cemetery ceremony, with flag pick-up [*AL Post 157*]

Brewster/Pateros

previous year's plans

9am: Pateros Cemetery [*AL Post 97*]

~9:30am: Brewster Bridge [*AL Post 97*]

~10am: Packwood Memorial [*AL Post 97*]

~10:45am: Monse Cemetery [*AL Post 97*]

~11:30am: Brewster Cemetery [*AL Post 97*]

Noon: Service at American Legion Post 97

Chelan/Manson

11am: American Legion Park (Manson) [*AL Post 108*]



Tonasket

previous year's plans

10am: 3 ceremonies back to back: 4th Street Bridge, Tonasket Cemetery, US Armed Forces Legacy [*AL Post 82*]

11am: American Legion Post 82 Open House and lunch.

Cashmere/Peshastin

No planned event at time of printing.

Okanogan

previous year's plans

8:15am: Malott Cemetery [*AL Post 56*]

~8:40am: Spring Coulee Family Cemetery (Dry Coulee Rd) [*AL Post 56*]

~9:00am: Okanogan Cemetery (Conconully Hwy) [*AL Post 56*]

~9:25am: Okanogan Memorial Cemetery [*AL Post 56*]

~9:55am: Omak Cemetery [*AL Post 56*]

~10:20am: Riverside Cemetery [*AL Post 56*]

Veterans In Business: Westguard Painting



In the newest installment of our Veterans In Business series, we meet Joshua Simonson and Reece Caouette, US Army veterans and the owners/operators of **Westguard Painting, LLC** in East Wenatchee.

A couple of goofballs who enjoy the job, they share with us how their military experience translated to hands-on hard work and successful entrepreneurship (as witnessed by the growing team).



Read the whole interview on the NCW Veterans Info blog:

<https://ncwveterans.info/business/veterans-in-business-westguard-painting/>

Vet Corps Navigators' Food Bank

The Vet Corps Navigators around the Wenatchee Valley have come together to create a new Veterans Food Bank to serve needy Veterans and their families.

Located at **1208 N. Wenatchee Ave**, this Food Bank does not have regular open hours. Donations and Pick-ups should be coordinated with one of the local Vet Corps Navigators (listed below) or Vets Serving Vets (aka The Bunker).

WDVA Vet Corps Navigators:

Mark Harle – The Bunker

Trent Mortensen – Chelan Co VSO

Jose Solis – Douglas Co VSO

Joe Gerak – Wenatchee Valley College



Pictured: Navigators Trent and Joe (right) with the food donations received from Blossom Creek and the Community during the March food drive. Photo by Mark Harle, 16 March 2021.

Read more about it on the NCW Veterans Info blog:

<https://ncwveterans.info/news/vet-corps-navigators-start-veterans-food-bank/>

From Your Veteran Service Officers



Tony Sandoval
Chelan County VSO
 428 Orondo Ave,
 Wenatchee
 9am - 4pm Mon - Thurs
(509) 667-6906
 tony.sandoval@
 co.chelan.wa.us

Still working hard for veterans in Chelan county and the Wenatchee Valley. The office is not fully open yet, so please call or email to make an appointment or even just to give us a heads up that you'll be visiting. Prefer visitors between noon and 4pm. Other than that, no major news at this time.

Chelan County Veterans Advisory Board will be meeting via zoom on 22 April at 1:30pm. If you're interested in attending, reach out via email and we'll pass along the login link when it is ready.



Sarah Simonson
Douglas County VSO
 211 11th St NE (VFW Post
 3617, East Wenatchee)
 9am - 3pm Tues - Friday
(509) 683-3605
 vso@co.douglas.wa.us

I recently received my 2nd quarter metrics from DVA - 85% of the cases I helped file were accepted. There has also been quite a bit of movement on older cases lately, rather than new ones being filed. Other than that, the DCVSO office was recently closed due to COVID-19 exposure, but we're back open taking all safety precautions and ready to work for you.

Douglas County Veterans Advisory Board is meeting on schedule and in person again - every first Friday at 10:30am at VFW Post 3617 in East Wenatchee.



Tom Even
Okanogan County VSO
 1 Tonasket Shop Rd
 8am - 3pm Mon-Thu
 8am - 2pm Fridays
(509) 486-2121
 vso@co.okanogan.wa.us

As of 31 March 2021, there's a new VSO for Okanogan County.

Pam Stevens moved to Utah with her husband, who recently started a new job. Thanks go out to Pam for her years of hard work. We wish her the best of luck in whatever adventures await.

Tom Even, USMC veteran and Legion Rider, has taken the mantle for the OC VSO position, and the county will soon be looking to hire a new part-time assistant. We're excited for Tom to continue serving the veterans of North Central Washington throughout Okanogan County.



Jerry Gingrich
Grant County VSO
(509) 754-2011 x2931
 jtgingrich@grantcountywa.gov

What's Up Vet!



Our Vet Corps Navigators have come up with a COVID-safe way to stay in touch and be available to answer questions about veteran benefits: **weekly Zoom chats**.

Join our Navigators Jose Solis, Trent Mortensen, Mark Harle, and Joe Garek every Tuesday and Thursday between 2-4pm via zoom. No registration required.

Click <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358564972> or visit Zoom to Join and enter **Meeting ID 863 5856 4972**

These chats are open to all veterans, spouses, dependents, or anyone who might have questions for a veteran. The Navigators will be answering questions about resources, benefits, going back to school, or any other info that may come up.



Civil Air Patrol

Read all of the CAP updates on NCW Veterans Info:
<https://www.ncwveterans.info/tag/civil-air-patrol/>



Cadet Lt Col Emmanuel Larsen received the Cadet Officer of the Year Award from Dick Winn, Commander of American Legion Post 10 on 23 March. Since joining the program in 2016, Cadet Lt. Col Larsen has reached the second highest Cadet rank in the program, as well as receiving a number of awards including the Air Force Organization Ribbon, the Achievement Award, General Ira Eaker Ribbon (award presented by Major General Mike Worden (USAF Ret) on 06 April 2021), General Billy Mitchell Ribbon, and the Non-Commissioned Officer and Officer Awards for his Outstanding Leadership from VFW Post 3617.



AL Post 10 Cmdr Winn w/ c/Lt Col Larsen & mom Karen



Pangborn has had 6 Cadets take their first power flights. One cadet who wasn't sure she wanted to fly, returned after her 40-minute flight saying, "it was better than sports." The Squadron resumed our Orientation flights for new cadets in February and had a second flight on the 13 March. Another 3 new cadets will be flying on the 10 April if weather holds true.

The Squadron is planning a trip to the Aerospace Flight Museum in Seattle this coming May.

[L to R] Capt Leigh McGougan, c/Airman Toledo, c/A1C Olin, Mission Pilot Maj Greg Carpenter (Yakima Sqdn)



American Legion

While monthly in-person meetings may have been canceled or restricted for health and safety concerns, I've listed the normal meeting times here for reference. Please check with each Post for complete details.

Post 10 (Wenatchee)
208 N Wenatchee Ave
(509) 663-5912

Post 28 (Ephrata)
276 8th Ave NW
(509) 754-2761

Post 56 (Okanogan)
860 N 2nd Street
(509) 826-2610

Post 64 (Cashmere)
401 Sunset Highway
(509) 782-4973

Post 82 (Tonasket)
319 S Western
(509) 486-2382

Post 84 (Oroville)
314 14th Ave
(509) 476-2761

Post 97 (Brewster)
102 N 3rd St
(509) 689-3307

Post 108 (Manson)
142 Pedoi St
(509) 888-3831

Post 143 (Twisp)
626 Bridge St
(509) 997-5322

Post 157 (Electric City)
31 Coulee Rd
(509) 771-5796

Post 209 (Moses Lake)
538 W Broadway
(509) 765-1126

Post 10, Wenatchee

Our post hosted the Wenatchee Apple Blossom 2021 royalty at our 102nd Birthday Dinner on 15 March, catered by Two Chefs Catering.

We will be laying flags on graves at the Wenatchee Cemetery for Memorial Day on Sat, 29 May.

Monthly meetings on 2nd Thursday at 7pm.

Post 28, Ephrata

Monthly meetings on 2nd Thursday at 7pm.

Post 56, Okanogan

Monthly meetings on 3rd Monday at 7pm.

Post 64, Cashmere

Monthly meetings on 1st Thursday at 7pm.

Post 82, Tonasket

Monthly meetings on 1st Monday at 5pm.

Hodges Post 84, Oroville

Monthly meetings on 2nd Thursday at 7pm.

Columbia Post 97, Brewster

Monthly meetings on 1st Wednesday at 6pm.

Manson Post 108

We have returned to our regular meeting location at 142 Pedoi St.
Monthly meetings on 1st Monday at 7pm.

Methow Post 143

Monthly meetings on 2nd Thursday at 7pm.

Post 157, Electric City

Monthly meetings on 2nd Tuesday at 6:30pm.



Veterans of Foreign Wars

While monthly in-person meetings may have been canceled or restricted for health and safety concerns, I've listed the normal meeting times here for reference. Please check with each Post for complete details.



Post 24 George
Meets at Quincy Senior
Center (even months) /
Moses Lake Elks Lodge (odd
months)
(509) 750-0938

Post 3617 Wenatchee Valley
211 11th St NE
East Wenatchee
(509) 884-3617

Post 6853 Chelan
427 Bradley St, Chelan
(509) 679-4949

George Washington Post 24

Monthly meetings on 2nd Saturday at 10am.

Post 3617, Wenatchee Valley

We invite everyone to join our causal Coffee Chat on Friday mornings via Zoom. Catch up with our Post members from the safety and comfort of home. Check our Facebook page for meeting information.

Monthly meetings on 3rd Wednesday at 7pm.

Post 6853, Chelan

Monthly meetings on 1st Tuesday at 6:30pm.

Post 108 Teacher Grant Winners

In early January, American Legion Post 108 announced a Teacher Grant program with the intention to provide 4 teachers in the Manson school district each with \$250 to use in support of the shift to remote learning.

The deadline saw a total of 7 applicants for the grants. Post members had a difficult time selecting winners; at the February meeting, Post 108 unanimously voted to provide a \$250 grant to all 7 teachers.



Brittany Siverston



Andrea Whitney



Katie Plummer



Carman Fretwell



Mary Bider



Alicia Alexander



Samantha Lovelace

Read more at <https://ncwveterans.info/news/american-legion-post-108-teacher-grant-winners/>

Please support our Sponsors:



Veteran Owned (509) 264-6832
Aquacontrolwa@gmail.com

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free estimates 509.679.0866
westguardpainting.com

Your AD Here

Editor's Notes

What do you know... a year has gone by since our lives were changed by a new virus, and we're finally starting to see some semblance of "normal" again. Please don't let your guard down too soon, though. Continue wearing masks and physically distancing for a bit longer, and make a plan to get the vaccine.

But with the return of in-person events, that might mean more activities to report on the website and in this lovely little publication. Please remember to take photos and send me an email with details about WHATEVER you've got going on. Share your successes, and your struggles, so we can celebrate and support you through it all.

I'm also looking for a couple more sponsors for this newsletter (see those empty slots above?) - if you know of a business (veteran-owned or veteran-friendly preferred) who'd like to get some additional advertising at a reasonable price, give them a copy of this newsletter and encourage them to reach out.

Warmer weather is here, so get some fresh air when you can. Stay safe and healthy, and stay in touch. **~Connie**

NCW Vets Gazette is a newsletter for Veterans in North Central Washington, provided free of charge in print and digital form courtesy of NCW Veterans Info. It is made possible with thanks to the continued support of VFW and American Legion posts across the region, NCW Vets Serving Vets, other local veteran organizations, as well as Sponsors & generous community members (like you).

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www.facebook.com/ncwveterans

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855.838.8255

**Mann-Grandstaff
VA Medical Center**
4815 N. Assembly St - Spokane
(509) 434-7000 (800) 325-7940
www.spokane.va.gov

Wenatchee VA Clinic (CBOC)
2350 Chester-Kimm Rd
(509) 663-7615
weekdays 7:30am - 4pm