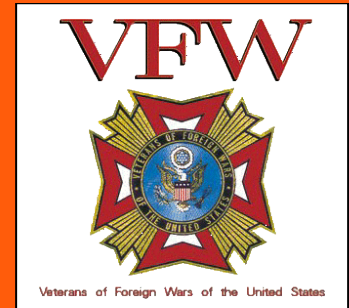




SIMSBURY VETERANS MEMORIAL COMPLETED

# VFW Post 1926 Newsletter



## September 2017

IN THIS ISSUE

## Commander's Message

By every measure 2016 / 2017 year was a great year for Metacomet VFW Post 1926. We partnered with American Legion post 84 to complete and dedicate the Simsbury Veterans Memorial. We started the ADOPT A VET project and successfully brought a local homeless vet out of the cold into a home with a job and transportation. We also restarted the High School Veterans History Day and took the leadership in Simsbury's Memorial Day Events.

As can be seen by the events and projects in this newsletter we had our hands full. We also had a great year in meeting our goals for membership and National VFW projects. During the State convention John Lamb and I were honored on behalf of Post 1926 to be one of 3 posts to receive both the All State Quartermaster and Commanders award. We were also pleased that our entry for patriots Pen, Rachel Coppinger, not only placed first in the state competition but 17 in the national VFW competition!

With all this we still are short of our number one goal of growing our membership. It is critical that we bring in the younger generations of Veterans to help guide the post into one that attracts and supports the younger veterans in the community. I look forward to working with the membership and the veteran community for what looks like a busy and exciting 2017 / 18 year.

*John Romano, Commander*

## Veterans Memorial

The Simsbury Veterans Memorial was dedicated on Sunday November 13, 2017. The effort to bring it to completion started well over 5 years ago and has been a significant effort on the part of Post 1926 members Len Lanza who chaired the team and John Fox who was the committee treasurer and Ray Jennings and Bruce Elliott for the American Legion. Many others participated in the fundraising activities. Also critical were the designer, Terri Hahn and the project manager, Jeff Shea who is the Town of Simsbury engineer. It should be noted that part of the effort including forming a company named Simsbury Veterans Memorial, Inc, with the help of pro bono support from the law firm of Robinson and Cole so that the committee could enter into contracts and obtained IRS 501(c)3 status.

Chaired by Ray Jennings, fundraising efforts raised over \$250,000 of direct funding from the community and a \$150,000 grant from the State of Connecticut. The Town of Simsbury also dedicated \$100,00 of capital funds towards a contingency pool if scope expansion or issues arose during construction.

The memorial has already been expanded with the addition of a new sidewalk last spring that links the memorial to the Simsbury Public Library parking lot.



## Message from Our Commander



## Simsbury Veterans Memorial dedication.

## Patriots Pen - Rachel Coppinger

Post 1926 was pleased to sponsor Rachel Coppinger's entry into 2017 Patriots Pen National VFW competition. Rachael's entry not only won at the state level but was 17<sup>th</sup> in the national competition out of thousands of entries. Shown in the photo is Rachel at the State of Connecticut VFW convention receiving the first-place award and being placed in the National contest as the representative from Connecticut.



## MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS

Memorial Day events include Parades in Tariffville and Simsbury each followed by a ceremony. This year marked the 100-year anniversary of Simsbury's Memorial Day Parade

This year planning committee was led by John Fox and John Lamb from Post 1926. Unfortunately, both parades had to be called due to rain. Fortunately, backup facilities were arranged for each ceremony. Tariffville's service was held with a full house at Trinity Church and in Simsbury at Eno Memorial Hall.

Banners from 1917 were displayed on the decorative lamp fixture along Hopmeadow Street. The banner images and pictures from the Simsbury service are shown below

## Images of Memorial Day 2017



## CALENDAR 2017 / 2018 MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**Note: All meetings start at 7 PM  
instead of 7:30**

September 11 – post 1926 meeting at Eno Hall

September 16 - District 3 Picnic

September 17 – Simsbury Fly-in

October 9 – Joint meeting with AL at Maple Tree. Dan Crowley speaker

November 4&5 – Poppy drive Fitzgerald's

November 6 – post 1926 meeting at Eno Hall

November 9 – Veterans Luncheon hosted by Town of Simsbury at Simsbury Public Library

November 11 – Veterans Day Ceremony

December (11 or 14) – Freemasons Hall, joint VFW/Legion Holiday Social

December 16 – Wreaths Across America – VFW support of the Abigail Phelps Chapter DAR

January 8 – post 1926 meeting at ENO Hall

February 12 - post 1926 meeting at Restaurant TBD

March 12 – post 1926 meeting at Eno Hall

April 9 - post 1926 meeting at Restaurant TBD, Voting for officers

May 12 – District 3 Installation of officers (Hosted by Post 1926 at Simsbury Public Library)

May 14 – post 1926 meeting at Eno Hall, Installation of Post 1926 officers

May 26 & 27 Spring Poppy Drive, location TBD

May 28 – Memorial Day Parades and Ceremonies

June 11 - post 1926 meeting at Restaurant TBD, Final Meeting of 2017/18



## VFW social breakfast at 9:00 AM at Benny's 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday every month

### Details of 2017/18 Events

#### September 16 – District 3 Picnic:

The first meeting for VFW District 3 will be held on Saturday, September 16th at the New Britain Post located on 1 Veteran Drive, New Britain. As always, the meeting will begin at 10:00am and conclude around 12:00 noon. The meeting is open to all members and it's a great opportunity to learn about what's planned for the 2017 – 2018 year. Immediately following the meeting is the District 3 Summer Picnic. This is a family affair so members can bring wives, children, grandchildren, etc. There will be hamburgers, hot dogs, corn on the cob, potato salad, macaroni salad, chips, and soda. You do not need to attend the meeting to be able to enjoy the picnic. Just arrive around noon. Contact John Lamb for details and reservations.

**September 17 - Simsbury Fly-In:** The show opens at 8 AM and ends at 3 PM. Breakfast will be served from 8 AM to 11 AM and lunch from 11:30 AM to 2 PM. Setup of the VFW booth will be at 7:00 AM. Contact John Romano for details if you want to help man the VFW booth

#### November 9 – Town of Simsbury Veterans Luncheon:

This annual event will change venues and format this year to be held at Simsbury Public Library in the large program room accompanied by a guest speaker. Reservations are needed, signup will start Oct 19 at the senior center or details will be announced. We will be advising membership of the details well before signup date so we can make sure our membership gets every opportunity to attend.

#### November 11 - Veterans Day Ceremony:

The ceremony location has not been finalized but likely will be at Eno Hall starting at 12:00 PM. Contact John Romano or Len Lanza for details.

#### Fall Poppy Drive – November 4&5,

**Fitzgerald's:** The buddy poppy donations are the principle fundraising event for the VFW. Proceeds go towards our operations to fund our aid to veterans and the community projects.

**Holiday Social – Freemasons Hall:** Each year we have a joint holiday social with Simsbury's VFW Post 1926 and American Legion Post 84. This includes dinner hosted by Simsbury Junior Women's Club and refreshments including beer and wine. Spouses or guest are welcome. **This year we would like to have a guest speaker.**

~ April 25 (final date TBD) –

#### High School Veterans History Day:

This event gives the veteran a chance to talk about his or her military experience with high school students. It is conducted in the HS amphitheater with each class breaking into groups of 2 to 3 students with each veteran. This year we will slightly change the format so that the vet has each group for 20 minutes with extra time for questions. It is also later in the school year based upon feedback from the veterans and students. Veterans are encouraged to bring photos and any materials they feel would interest the students. We arrive before 7 AM with light continental breakfast and a full lunch provided. Contact John Fox for details and to register to attend.

**May 12 – District 3 Induction of Officers, Simsbury Public Library:** This year Post 1926 will host the District 3 May meeting which includes induction of officers for the 2018/19 year. Coffee will be served at 9:30 and the meeting will start at 10AM with lunch served at noon.

**May 28 - Memorial Day Ceremonies:** For Tariffville muster in the park across from Cracker Barrel at 8:30AM and the parade will start at 9:00 AM. Service following the parade will be held in St Bernard Cemetery. For Simsbury, muster at Simsbury Bank on Owens Brook Rd at 12:45 PM for the parade start at 1:30PM. The service following the parade will be at the newly dedicated memorial adjacent to the public library. This is a major event with significant planning and effort by the parade committee headed by John Fox and John Lamb. Please see either to be assigned very simple tasks to help. Planning will start in September.

**Spring Poppy Drive – May 26 & 27 (location TBD):** In the past we have done this at Simsbury Stop and Shop however in the recent years we have not enough participants to cover both doors. This is a significant impact to our fundraising goals.

If we can get enough members to participate we can return to this venue.

### Projects for 2017/18 (new in red)

#### Eagle Scout awards – John Romano:

Post 1926 presents an award with a short speech to each of Simsbury's Eagle Scout at the individual Troop 76 and Troop 175 award ceremonies

**Adopt a Vet – Jason Lill & John Fox:** This program has been in place for a year with an objective of helping veterans in need. A homeless vet has been adopted and has successfully gotten him into housing, transportation and in a job. The long-term objective is to help the individual stand on his own in a sustaining lifestyle. The program also helped a disabled vet financially while appealing his disability with the VA.

**Veterans Appreciation Day –** The objective of this program is to meet with veterans in the community to promote membership, promote social interaction, and to get more input on veterans in need. This will be 5 to 7PM happy hour at Red Stone Pub the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from September through June. Post 1926 will provide light snacks and the first beer / beverage plus the owner will discount drafts and bottled beer by 1\$. Marc will also help us promote the program. Hopefully this can be expanded to other social events such a summer veterans' family picnic. We need theme ideas and members to show up each month to socialize with other veterans in the community.

**Fall Paver Drive - John Fox:** Donations for pavers on the Simsbury Veterans Memorial are being received for installation by Veterans Day 2018. Application forms can be downloaded on the memorial website at [www.simsburyveteransmemorial.com](http://www.simsburyveteransmemorial.com) or at the public library or Eno Hall Senior Center. Note: Post 1926 and the American Legion have led the initiative for design, approval and construction of the memorial. There is maintenance and upgrade activities that are still ongoing.

**Simsbury Veterans Memorial Documentary – John Fox & Ray Jennings:**

The objective of the joint Legion and VFW project is to archive the detailed construction and document the objectives of the memorial project. Video and photos were taken at the quarry, at the construction site, during dedication and augmented by footage from Connecticut Public Television. The editing is being done by a Simsbury High School student using ScTV facilities and equipment. The documentary will be run by ScTV, Simsbury Public Library and will be on the Town web site.(see below).

**Simsbury Veterans Memorial Web Page – Len Lanza & John Fox:** This project is an idea floated by the town IT department to have a page on the towns web site devoted to the Simsbury Veterans Memorial. Envisioned is the documentary linked to the page along with the database and schematic of the pavers so individuals can locate their paver on the web page.

**Christmas Clothing Drive - John Romano, John Lamb & John Fox (need others):** Annually post 1926 collects new clothing and accessories for holiday gifts for veterans at CT Veterans Home. The drive starts on Nov 11 and ends at Dec 11 with delivery to the VA home at Rocky Hill.

**Recording of Veterans Stories- John Fox:** This is a restart of a project that ran up to 2 years ago. Rich Curtiss has students of the High School record interviews of veterans to archive their stories at the Simsbury Free Library. Please contact John Fox if you are interested in telling your story.

**Scout of the year Award - TBD:** This is a VFW national program / competition and descriptions and objectives can be found on line at the VFW web-site.

**Teacher of the Year Award - John Fox & TBD:** This is a VFW national program / competition and descriptions and objectives can be found on line at the VFW web-site.

**Safety project – TBD:** New project required by our national by-laws as a community project. Examples are a deliberator package presented to Simsbury EMT. Others are fire preventions and stop, drop and roll training at local schools.

**Patriots Pen – Dan Coppinger:** This is a VFW national program / competition and descriptions and objectives can be found on line on the VFW web-site: <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth->

and-education/youth-scholarships. The objective is to expand it to local private, public schools and promote more participation.

**Voice of Democracy – Dan Coppinger:** This is a VFW national program / competition and descriptions and objectives can be found on line at the VFW web-site: <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships> The objective is to expand it to local private, public schools and promote more participation.

**Post 1926 Web Page- John Fox & John Lamb:** Post 1926 was awarded a grant to use the VFW National formatted web page. This project has not gotten off the ground so it will be the near-term goal to post this information package and calendar on the page as a start. Next will be to post meeting minutes and expand given time and resources.

**Memorial Day – John Fox & John Lamb:** This is a major project that Post 1926 has taken over the planning committee leadership. This includes interfacing with Town departments and local supporting clubs and organizations for the planning and implementation of the Tariffville and Simsbury Parades and associated ceremonies.

**Buddy System –** Each active member is given 2 to 3 names of members to contact monthly to develop relationship with the vet so if needs arise we are in a position to assist; to encourage participation in meetings; to inform members of upcoming projects and events; and report to the post surgeon or VSO if the veteran needs help with the VA or the VFW.

**Troop Deployment Sendoff / Return Welcome Home –** Find out if we can get an advance warning of troop deployment and return and organize a sendoff and welcome home.

**Care Package for Deployed Vets:** Organize Junior Women's Club and HS Wounded Vet Strong club members to take on this project that used to be done by the VFW Auxiliary

**Other Community Projects:**

1. American Legion baseball - flag raising before game
2. Wreaths Across America – support to Abigail Phelps chapter DAR.

3. VFW post 1926 awards to Fire, EMT, Police and outstanding resident acts of Americanism.

## Communication

*We need your help. If you see any project that you would like to participate in please contact either John Fox, John Lamb, or John Romano*

**Post 1926 WEB PAGE:** Visit our web page frequently to see any changes in events and projects as well as contact information at: <http://www.vfw1926.org/>

## Members and interested

**Veterans:** Our primary means of contacting members for announcements is by email. Please contact either John Lamb at [lambo61@comcast.net](mailto:lambo61@comcast.net) John Fox at [jfox@comcast.net](mailto:jfox@comcast.net), or John Romano at [romano05@comcast.net](mailto:romano05@comcast.net) and provide your updated contact information including email address.

**Veterans in Need:** If you know of a veteran that needs help please let us know. This includes assistance with the VA, help with major or minor home projects, and emergency financial help. This also includes assistance to elderly vets that need handicap ramps constructed or help with yard work.

## Contact information:

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