Back on June 8, 2014, I held the God Bless America concert. We had an evening of patriotic songs sung by the Breath of Aire Choir, and then I had the honor of presenting my “Point of Light” awards to local veterans. In this report I wanted to take a moment to honor the award recipients, and also provide information on services that are available to our veterans.

Tim Matthes,
Mayor
City of Port Orchard

June 2014 Point of Light Recipients

Bob MacFann
Bob MacFann retired from the City of Port Orchard Police Department in January of this year after serving over 15 years with the City of Port Orchard. He proudly serviced the Department and the City by the way he consistently demonstrated his willingness to assume more responsibilities. He was recognized as the Port Orchard Police Department “Officer of the Year in 2000” and continued to receive many commendations over the years. He was deeply committed to the concept and utilization of the bicycle patrol and through his willingness got the Port Orchard Police Department’s Bicycle Patrol up and running. Bob also was a trailblazer as the first School Resource Officer for the Department. He worked extremely hard in
making the School Resource Officer position a viable one, one that would meet the needs of both the School District and the Police Department. His adaptability to work with school administration, teachers, and students is to be and was highly commended.

While serving as a Police Officer, he also served his country through two tours of active duty in the Army National Guard. He was deployed in 2008 in support of Iraqi Freedom and again in 2011 where he was deployed as a squad Leader in a Military Police Platoon in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). During his last tour, he was wounded in the line of duty when his vehicle was exposed to IED/RPG blasts.

Among the medals, citations, and campaign ribbons awarded are the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with campaign star, Iraq Campaign medal with two Campaign Stars, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Medal with bronze service star, and Global War on Terrorism service star.

Alfred H. Coffelt, Jr.
Alfred H. Coffelt, Jr. served and retired from the U. S. Army. He presently is serving as the Post 30 American Legion Post Commander. He is also the Post Real Estate Manager.

Alfred is an active member of the Knights of Pythias and the Saints Car Club in Port Orchard.

Michael Countryman
Michael Countryman served in the Navy as a Fire Control Tech for 9 years. He served on the USS Alabama, then overseas in Afghanistan, and he volunteered as a crew maintenance volunteer on the USS Turner Joy. He lives in Port Orchard with his wife, Jeannie, and children, Brayden and Isabella. He is a member of the VFW Post 2669. He also volunteers at the Veterans Home at Retsil.

He has received a Joint Force Commendation, Army Achievement Medal, and the Afghanistan Campaign Medal and earned an Information Domination Warfare Designation. He was recently promoted to Chief, and is still serving his country in the Navy.

Alvie Weatherill
Alvie Weatherill served in the US Army twice. First from 1937-1940, and then was recalled into the Army in 1943 where he served as a dog handler in the Pacific Theater.

After WWII, he went to work at PSNS as a police officer and transferred to the shipyard fire department in 1952, where he retired as a Captain. He also volunteered as a fireman for the City of Port Orchard for 25 years and was a Chief for ten years for Port Orchard, until his son, Jay Weatherill, became Mayor.

He is still active with the VFW and still participates with charity work. He is 94 years old.
Karen Taylor
Karen Taylor started with the ombudsman program in 1996. Always working for veterans at Retsil Veterans Home, she has completed over 6,000 hours of service.

She volunteers at Park View Retirement and Assisted living community helping veterans living there. She is committed to helping with resident rights, assisted living, and long term care issues. Karen is a long time resident and is married to Richard Taylor and is a mother and grandmother. She is most deserving of this Points of Light Award for her long term commitment to our nation’s veterans.

Charles McGuire
Charles McGuire is a survivor of the Battle of the Bulge in World War II.

He has volunteered with the Great Peninsula Conservancy for many years. He has donated land to that organization. Charles volunteered with the VFW Post 2669 serving as Honor Guard, bingo operations, and organizing visits to the veteran’s home at Retsil.

Charles is almost 90 years old and has had to slow down a bit, but he continues his support through VFW fundraisers.

Washington National Guard Family Assistance Coordinators
Family Programs is primarily an Information and Referral Resource that supports Service Members and their families effectiveness, train to build family self-reliance, and coordinates programs and services that assists family members before, during and after deployment. A Family Assistance Coordinator (FAC) is stationed at the Port Orchard Armory to assist Service Members and their families with numerous issues.

Activities held in 2014:
June—Port Orchard Eagles Club hosted a military appreciation dinner for vets and service members.

July—Port Orchard hosted a military appreciation day at the Port Orchard Famers Market.

August—A&W Restaurant completed a Wounded Warrior Project Fundraiser for Veterans raising over $2,000 from our local Port Orchard Store alone; South Kitsap Help Line hosted a two week summer lunch camp at the Port Orchard Armory Gym for military children and non-military families; Washington National Guard Youth Camp was hosted locally at YMCA Camp Seymour. 143 military children were able to attend a week long overnight youth camp; and Operation Home Front with the support of local Port Orchard businesses and volunteers coordinated a local backpack drive to help support local military families with school supplies and other needs. 275 backpacks were handed out to local needy families.

Future and upcoming events
October—Military-hosted community Harvest Party & Halloween Trunk or Treat at the Port Orchard Armory

November—Military Family Expo in Port Orchard

Contact Family Assistance Specialist James Goodman at 360-874-2966 with any questions regarding the Family Assistance Program.
Mobile Vet Center

Mobile Vet Center Program
Department of Veterans Affairs maintains a fleet of 70 Mobile Vet Centers (MVC) that are designed to extend the reach of Vet Center services through focused outreach, direct service provision, and referral to communities that do not meet the requirements for a “brick and mortar” Vet Center, but where there are Veterans, Service Members, and their families in need of services. In many instances these communities are distant from existing services and are considered rural or highly rural.

Each MVC includes confidential counseling space for direct service provision, as well as a state of the art satellite communications package that includes fully encrypted tele-conferencing equipment, access to all VA systems, and connectivity to emergency response systems. Vet Center staff regularly collaborates with VA partners to create a single VA Footprint at events to ensure access to all available VA services and benefits.

The placement of these vehicles is designed to cover a national network of designated Veterans Service Areas (VSA) that collectively cover every county in the continental United States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

Scheduling a Mobile Vet Center
To have a MVC and Vet Center staff participate in upcoming events where Veterans, Service members, and their families will be attending, please email: Vetcenteroutreach@va.gov

VFW Fred Needham Post 2669

The VFW is a nonprofit chartered by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Their primary purpose is to assist needy Veterans and their orphans or widows.

Not just any Veteran can join. They must be entitled to a campaign medal or have drawn combat pay. They submit a DD214 to determine eligibility. The VWF 2269 recently built the Veterans Wall in the Port Orchard Marina Park and are now working on an addition to it. Bricks are still available via their web site: www.vfwpost2669.org

On Memorial Day weekend they distribute buddy poppies to collect money which they in turn give to needy Veterans. They also put out grave flags at Sunset Cemetery. They have a scholarship program ran by the Post which pays out $4,000 annually.

For more information contact their Post Home located at 736 Bay Street, Port Orchard, WA. 360-876-2669.

News & Events

Stand Down for Veterans
The event will take place Saturday, October 4, 2014, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., at the Sheridan Park Community Center, 680 Lebo Blvd, Bremerton.

Many free services are available for Veterans and their dependents. ID required for entry. Bring several copies of your DD214/discharge papers, or VA, military, retired military, Reserve or National Guard ID for faster services. Unaccompanied dependents must bring DD214 and proof of relationship.

Military Appreciation Day
The Military Appreciation Day will be held Saturday, March 28, 2015, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the Kitsap Pavilion, Kitsap County Fairgrounds. This yearly event is brought to the community by the Silverdale Chamber of Commerce and managed by the Silverdale Military Affairs Committee.

Each year, over 100 organizations attend to serve the military, veterans and their families by providing services and resources. The event also offers a wider variety of features, such as fun, games, and entertainment for military children, and assistance for veterans.