



# Highland Park Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial Post 4737 NewsGram

P.O. Box 47, Highland Park, Illinois 60035  
Meetings at Wooden Nickel, 444 Lakeview Ave., Highwood IL  
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August 2018

*Honor the Dead by Serving the Living*

**POST WILL MEET:** On Thurs, Aug 9, 2018, 7:00pm at the Wooden Nickel, 444 Lakeview Ave, Highwood, IL. Future mtgs: Sept 13, Oct 11, Nov 8 and all second Thursdays of the month, unless otherwise notified. The Post will provide after-meeting fare from the Wooden Nickel menu.

**Main Agenda Items:** Meeting attendees will discuss an Aug 25 Pig Roast at the Wooden Nickel. Also, our Post's participation in the upcoming Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen youth essay contests needs discussion.

**15th ANNUAL LOVELL FHCC CAR SHOW:** The weather was a bit ominous, but about 80 or so car enthusiasts brought their rides to the 15th Annual Lovell FHCC Car Show. And it didn't start raining until the event was over. Chief of Voluntary Affairs Ken List has someone in his corner up there when it comes to weather during the outdoor events at Lovell.

The Post volunteers ran two grills this year to ensure prompt delivery of hot dogs and brats to our serving crew. The smiles and appreciation from patients, staff, car owners and visitors make this one of our most satisfying events. Nothing says "I care" quite like putting food into someone's hand.

Thanks to our volunteers: Jim Brown, Aaron and Yvonne Ferrer and their daughter Ayiana and her friend Savion, Bill and Pam Gansberg, and Pete Quilici. And thanks to the Lovell staff for filling in as needed and for the initial set-up and clean-up.

**POST HOSPITAL NITE:** Our Bingo Hospital Nite at Lovell is on hiatus until September. Our next Post Bingo Nite is on Sept 24 at 6:30 PM and on most following fourth Mondays at Bourke Hall, Bldg. #4, Lovell FHCC.

**UPCOMING COMMEMORATIVE DATES:** September 2 (VJ Day: Japan surrendered, 1945, ending World War II fighting); September 11 (Patriot Day-Remembrance of the 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks on the US); September, third Friday (POW/MIA Recognition Day). Remember to display the flag.

**VA NURSING HOMES UNDER INVESTIGATION:** The VA operates nursing homes in 46 states that serve some 46,000 veterans annually. The VA has tracked detailed information about the quality of care they provide since at least 2011 and instituted a ranking system in 2016 but kept everything secret until June. The VA also has contracted for more than a decade with an outside company to conduct inspections of its nursing homes and kept the resulting reports from the public.

The House Veterans Affairs Committee has launched an investigation into care at the VA's 133 nursing homes after learning the agency had given almost half of them the lowest possible score in its secret, internal rankings. Internal documents obtained by USA TODAY and the Boston Globe revealed that patients in more than two thirds of VA nursing homes were more likely to suffer pain and serious bedsores than their private sector counterparts. More generally, VA nursing homes scored worse than private nursing homes on a majority of key quality indicators, including rates of anti-psychotic drug prescription and decline in daily living skills.

*(See, on-line USA Today, 07/17/2018)*

**THE SAD SAGA OF 4250 N. OAK PARK AVE AND ILLINOIS IN GENERAL:** The 'Gram has previously written about the new IL Dept of Vet Affairs home to be built at 4250 N. Oak Park Ave. in Chicago. Amid much fanfare, the project broke ground in 2014 and remains unfinished today. Apparently, the builders followed Chicago codes instead of the contracted stricter state codes, so the completed work fails to comply with the state's earthquake protection. Sounds like most of the structure must be demolished. *(See, on-line Sun-Times, 11/11/17, "Illinois Veterans Home delays may register on the Richter Scale.")*

Your Editor drove by the project on Aug 3, and it is sitting there as a pathetic monument to IL government incompetence. A review of Illinois geological maps indicates that while seismic activity is a concern in mid and southern Illinois, it appears there is no concern in Chicago. Common sense suggests that the state's earthquake construction code should be waived. So, what gives?

Could it be that state government used an unnecessary earthquake protection code to halt the construction to stop the project and save money, despite the dire need for the facility? The state budget impasse of 2015-2017 may have initially caused construction to halt but why aren't crews working today?

More likely, the state, despite its claimed observance of a "sacred" duty to veterans, needs the money for other things. Government employee pensions and other post-employment benefits are the likely main culprits. Forbes Magazine estimates that \$1 of every \$3 of individual income tax is paid out to retired Illinois educators. *(See, on-line Forbes Magazine, 6/4/18, "30,000 Six-Figure Illinois Educators Cost Taxpayers \$3.7 Billion")*. And then there's the police, fire, sanitation, etc. employees all owed generous, unsustainable and taxpayer subsidized pensions. These are sucking up increasing portions of already confiscatory property taxes. *(See, on-line Crain's, 7/13/18, "Pensions sucking up half of property tax hikes")*.

The new veteran home project supposedly is scheduled for completion in mid-2019. Meanwhile, don't hold your breath. And steering clear of the Quincy Veterans Home with its history of Legionnaires Disease and need for massive and expensive modifications is advisable until the state clarifies how it will pay for its "sacred" obligation to veterans.

Sounds like a good issue for the VFW Dept of Illinois to look into.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
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...INCLUDES NEWS OF  
HO TAI P.T. #67 MOC



### ***MEETINGS AT WOODEN NICKEL IN HIGHWOOD***

**ORDER YOUR THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUN NOW:** Every so often, the advertising in the VFW National Magazine gets under your Editor's skin. The August edition is particularly notable. Three ads from different hearing aid manufacturers and four ads from different walk-in tub makers is a bit much.

But this month's winner is the semi-automatic Vietnam Veterans Tribute Thompson for only \$2995.00. Your Editor saw only one of these relics in Vietnam. And a bit of research disclosed that although the U.S. military declared the Thompson obsolete in 1957, surplus guns remained in storage. In 1961, President Kennedy made the decision to increase military aid to South Vietnam, so crates of Thompsons were on their way to Southeast Asia to be distributed to South Vietnamese soldiers. Also, Special Forces, US Navy personnel and Marines picked up a few, but the Tommy Gun was a heavy, ammo hungry beast quickly dumped in favor of the M-16.

It appears that the sponsor of this once-in-a-lifetime, limited-edition Tribute Thompson, America Remembers, sees an opportunity to go to the bank on the Tommy Gun's sparse Vietnam history. It must have a lot of them to unload because its website shows eleven different tribute Thompsons such as the American Eagle Tribute, G-Men/J. Edgar Hoover Tribute, Melvin Purvis Tribute and American Armed Forces Tribute.

The point of this is that America Remembers has a right to make money, and these Tributes appear to be quality replicas. But the VFW also has an obligation to control its advertising. Are advertisements for expensive tribute firearms sending the right message to the younger veterans the VFW seeks to attract?

**FTC GOES AFTER VETERAN CHARITIES:** The 'Gram occasionally publishes veteran charity ratings from CharityWatch and has warned readers of the poor performance of most veteran charities and many outright frauds. Finally, the problem has become so bad that the Federal Trade Commission has begun cracking down on veterans' charity fraud. In what may be the biggest US coordinated enforcement of charity standards ever, the FTC, the National Association of State Charity Officials (NASCO), and law enforcement officials and charity regulators from 70 agencies in every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, and Puerto Rico recently announced they took or would take more than 100 legal actions against 85 fraudulent organizations promising to help veterans and service members. (*See, on-line Non-Profit Quarterly, 7/23/18, "FTC Launches Major Initiative to End Veteran Charity Fraud"*).

The list of scams and poor performers would fill this page. Do your homework before you give.

### **UPCOMING LOCAL ACTIVITY CALENDAR:**

**All first Thursdays of the month:** Ho Tai Pup Tent No. 67 Scratch.

**All second Thursdays of the month:** Post 4737 meeting.

**All third Wednesdays of the month (except July and August):** Meeting of Lake County Veterans Assistance Commission at Forest City Community Center, 2001 Virginia Avenue, Great Lakes, IL 60088.

**All third Thursdays of the month:** Ho Tai Pup Tent No. 67 Hospital Nite.

**All fourth Mondays of the month (except June, July, Aug):** Post Bingo Nite at Lovell FHCC.

**Aug 19-Fifth District meeting** at Lake Villa Post 4308.

**(Further info on VFW Natl/Dept websites, 5th Dist. Facebook, gen internet search or contact QM Quilici)**

### **HO TAI PUP TENT NO. 67 - A brief resume of "Louse-y" News**



**SCRATCH, SCRATCH:** Sept 6, Oct 4, Nov 1 and all subsequent Scratches (first Thurs unless otherwise notified) will be held at 6:59 1/2 PM, at the Highland Park Police Dept. Training Room, 1677 Old Deerfield Road, Highland Park, IL.

**COOTIE HOSPITAL NIGHTS:** Capt. James Lovell Fed Health Care Ctr, Bldg. 134, Bingo and Ward visits, 6:30 PM. Coming dates are Aug 16, Sept 20, Oct 18 and all third Thurs, unless otherwise notified.

**"KEEP 'EM SMILING IN BEDS OF WHITE"**

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