

Blue Star Banner Presentations - An Account.

Respectfully Submitted— Msgr. Robert Cokinis CSM

John Pierce has been presenting the “Blue Star “ to families of deployed area troops as long as I have had the privilege to know him since 2007. John tells me he had started these presentations after the first of the Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom (Iraq & Afghanistan) deployments began. I had accompanied John last year in the delivery of mother’s day flowers to a deployed mom for mother’s day after her son was sent on his first deployment. I had the opportunity recently to accompany John on his presentation of a Blue Star Banner to soldier Scott Connelly and his family at a send off party in Morton Grove this past July 25th.

John had responded to a request for the Blue Star made by Scott’s aunt Mrs. Peggy Karol, who had herself received the Blue Star from John 2 years before when her son Jack (Scott’s cousin) was to be deployed in Iraq that year. She was so moved by the presentation and how it helped her through the separation pain of sending her son to serve that she sought the same comfort for Scott’s mother and father as well as Scott’s wife Kathy and their small children. We joined the party (in progress) as a surprise, Peggy announced us.

All were quiet as John announced the Blue Star presentation, highlighting its history and value and

its symbolic link to our dear ones serving a far. John also asked friends and relations to help us spread the word of the Blue Star to the many Americans who have seen the Blue Star displayed yet haven’t a clue that its all about our servicemen and women far away!

In the case of the Connelley and Karol families, John extended his remarks to highlight a long war veteran history spanning the Revolutionary, War of 1812, Mexican, Civil War WWI & II Viet Nam and the Present Iraq and Afghanistan wars. In a tender moment John touched Scott’s oldest son and gently bade him to remember that it was because of his fathers love for our country that he was leaving them for a little while. The young boys’ reverence and sorrow were not to be lost from this occasion and no one present was unmoved.

The party then continued on in celebratory mode and we remained for a little while and received many compliments and gracious comments for having made the presentation. I was touched to see so many others moved and I could not help thinking of all those whose send off party might have been missing such a presentation. I then told John that he could count on my help at as many of these presentations as he might need me...I am happy to be there for these men and women who are in the middle east for me!





Department News

The American Legion - Department of Illinois



SEPTEMBER 2009



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MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

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Top 10 Districts as of Sept. 8, 2009

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DISTRICT & DIVISION RANKINGS

DISTRICT ~ COMMANDER

- 5 ~ Cicero
- 8 ~ Wood
- 10 ~ Nauman
- 13 ~ Dyson
- 1 ~ Radka
- 17 ~ White
- 18 ~ Williams
- 12 ~ Schaefer
- 16 ~ Rice
- 21 ~ Buske

DIVISION ~ COMMANDER

- 2 ~ Keegan
- 4 ~ Phelps, Sr.
- 3 ~ Taylor
- 1 ~ Penn
- 5 ~ Towery

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- ★ Volunteer Opportunities
- ★ Community Involvement
- ★ Veterans Affairs/Assistance
- ★ Children and Youth Programs
- ★ Insurances
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Illinois American Legion

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