

# Neighbor & Classifieds

NC

## 'The most welcoming post'

### Mount Prospect VFW post to celebrate 100 years of service

BY STEVE ZALUSKY

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When Veterans of Foreign Wars Prospect Post 1337 in Mount Prospect was chartered in 1925, the village wasn't even a decade old. Randhurst was decades away, as was the current downtown development boom.

One hundred years later, the post is still going strong and remains an integral part of the community. The post will celebrate its centennial Saturday, April 5.

A banquet will be held at 6 p.m. at the Cotillion Banquets, 360 S. Creekside Drive, Palatine.

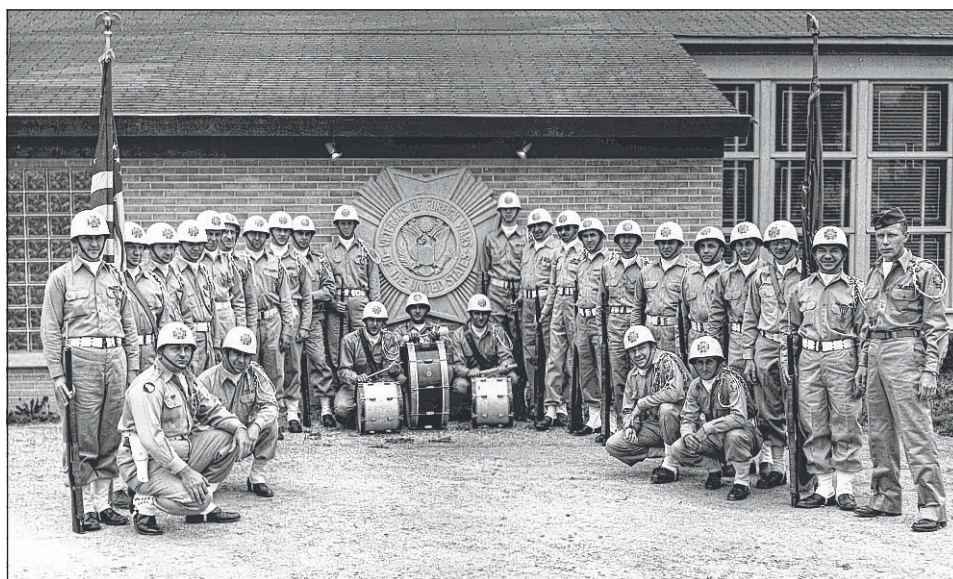
The keynote speaker will be Medal of Honor Recipient Allen James Lynch.

Fifteen World War I veterans from Mount Prospect submitted a signed charter on April 7, 1925.

The first location of the post was a farmhouse on North Wille Street, which no longer stands. The veterans held meetings, ceremonies and fundraisers. They also went trap shooting for ducks and geese, and donated trees and flagpoles around town. They even donated a trench mortar from the war to be placed in front of what was then-Village Hall.

In the late 1940s, the VFW built a new home at 601 N. Main St. on property donated to them by Walter Krause Jr. The VFW still holds its meetings there although it sold the property in the 1980s to Moose Lodge 660.

The post has about 140



COURTESY OF DUTCH DEGROOT

A VFW Post 1337 honor guard from the early 1950s is shown in front of the post's hall at 601 N. Main St. in Mount Prospect. It now belongs to Moose Lodge 660. The VFW sold to them in the 1980s, but the VFW still uses it for meetings.



JOE LEWNARD/jlewnard@dailyherald.com, 2017

Members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Prospect Post 1337 lead the Mount Prospect Fourth of July parade in 2017.

members, according to the post's service officer, Dutch DeGroot, who serves in the same capacity for the VFW's 4th District of Illinois.

Just as Mount Prospect prides itself on friendliness,

so does the post.

"I think we're probably the most welcoming post," DeGroot said.

He said the post is active in the community, partnering with American Legion Post 525, the Moose lodge

and the Lions Club.

It has partnered to offer Thanksgiving to Naval recruits in their last week of boot camp.

Post 1337 hosts with the American Legion the annual Memorial Day



DAILY HERALD FILE PHOTO, 2022

Dutch DeGroot is VFW Post 1337's service officer. "I get calls every day," DeGroot said. "It could be to put them in for a service-connected claim with the VA or to try to get them in the VA system. I have all the connections."



DAILY HERALD FILE PHOTO, 2010

Medal of Honor recipient Allen James Lynch, who served in the Vietnam War, will be the keynote speaker at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Prospect Post 1337's centennial celebration April 5.

parade and memorial service for fallen service members in Lions Park.

One of the newer VFW members is Laura Matuszak, who spent 22 years in the Army reserve. She is not in the medical field but has the title of post surgeon, in which capacity she shares health information with

members.

She said the organization remains relevant after a century.

"We have a really strong organization," she said. "The people that volunteer in our VFW are also in the Lions Club. They're also members of the Moose. That brings a lot of different perspectives to our group."

She said members of the VFW will volunteer at events held by other organizations, such as the Bluesmobile Cruise Nights held by the

Lions.

"There is a lot of synergy," she said.

The VFW provides direct services to veterans.

"I get calls every day," DeGroot said. "It could be to put them in for a service-connected claim with the VA or to try to get them in the VA system. I have all the connections."