

“Vining Named Humanitarian of the Year”

(Grandview, WA) – He came to work in the kitchen for The American Legion’s Veterans Day Brunch, but Ray Vining was surprised when he was called forward to receive the Humanitarian of the Year from Grandview’s Fred E. Hayes Post 57.

“We had to use a bit of subterfuge to get him here,” said Post Adjutant Jim Davidson, “but we knew he would respond to a call for help if he wasn’t scheduled to be somewhere else.”

The award was presented by Commander Robert Gates on behalf of the members of the Grandview Legion Post.

“We sought nominations for the award, but received only one,” Gates said. “That was for the man we ultimately decided to present with the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year and Heroism Award,” he noted. “We spent a good amount of time in one meeting trying to determine who should get the award before it dawned on us that we had a candidate in our own midst. We then set out to quietly get him here for the award.”

Vining was also presented with The American Legion Gold Medal of Merit for his decades of efforts helping others.

The citation jokingly referred to Vining as the model for the Energizer Bunny, though careful to mention he is rarely pink and has never been seen with a marching band bass drum.

The citation listed the many professional and volunteer activities Vining has and continues to perform in the community, state and nation. Highlights include his military service, decades of teaching science at Grandview High School and in Alaska, Past President of the Yakima Valley Junior Fair Board, maintaining the Grandview Rose Garden, President of the Grandview Museum Board, assisting with building ramps for handicapped people throughout the Valley, local Scout leader and Vice President for Properties for the Grand Columbia Council of the Boy Scouts. If there is a job to be done, Ray usually steps in to help.

In accepting the award, Vining noted that when he came home from Vietnam he thought he was done serving his country. He soon realized there were other things that need to be done.

“The award typically is associated with lifesaving,” said Post Chaplain Joh Myers, “and our previous recipients the last two years were involved in high profile lifesaving.” Little known, and many times forgotten is that this award can be presented to individuals for philanthropic efforts or for significant contributions to the community and fellow man. “Ray certainly meets this last category,” Myers said.

Vining will be nominated for the state award.

The Grandview Post has served Grandview and the Lower Valley for 100 years, recently celebrating its Centennial on October 13th. The Post has become well known for its service to veterans, military members and their families, the community and youth.

They meet the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Grandview Community Center.
More information is available by calling 509-882-1984.