

December 2015

Post Newsletter

WesternSpringsVFW.org

Commander's Stuff

By Mike Winner

(708) 829-0069

Gonakadet@att.net

Fellow Veterans,

Christmas is upon us. I wish each of you a blessed holiday and a Happy New Year! We have had a wonderful and fruitful year at our Post. Our Poppy drive was successful. We've been graciously given a sizable sum that we have turned into the Wakerly Foundation Scholarship. Our Memorial Day Parade continues to grow with even stronger attendance. And our presence is requested at many venues during our communities' Veteran's Day celebrations.

I look forward to another good year. We should be proud that our Post has managed to continue as other Posts around us close. It has been sad to see fellow veterans Len Caldiera, Chester Gasaway, John Lesko, Frank Maras, Peter Ference, Mike Marshall, Chester Krope, Emil Harley and Bob Bogash leave us, but it was a privilege as your Commander, to honor their life's service, and not just their military service.

These were men who served their country and their communities till the

Save the Dates

Dec. 8th – 7:30 p.m. **Post Regular meeting** at Grace Lutheran Church

Dec. 10th – Hospital Visit

Dec. 11th – Deadline for January newsletter

Jan. 12th – 7:30 p.m. **Post Regular meeting** at Grace Lutheran Church

end.

Each of you should be proud of our many accomplishments as we continue to give back to our fellow comrades and their families.

Semper Fi!

Post Recognizes Newsletter Staff

By **Walt Bergenthal**

(708) 246-4858

Statement of funds as of 11/10/15:

Post General Fund	\$14,415.57
Post Relief Fund	4,321.18
Post Dues Reserve	49.00
TOTAL:	\$18,785.75

In addition Dave Coons, last month's person who our Post cannot do without (he oversees newsletter distribution), this month we recognize Vicki Petersen. We

give a big thank you for a job well done to Vicki who is our monthly “Voice” newsletter editor. She is the daughter of Vic Martinka, who was the Commander of the Blue Star Post in Countryside when it merged with our Post. Thus the blue star worn on our caps.

Memorial Day Parade Update

By Chuck Bosco

(708) 205-3541

chuckbosko@att.net

Okay, okay, I know that you know that I know we recently experienced the heaviest November snowfall in what-120 years? Chicago weather being Chicago weather – a relative heat wave is approaching as I pen this column and by bird day we’ll have good ole November rain! Can ya believe it? Well, in my humble opinion, it’s better than snow!

Anyway, what has this to do with Memorial Day? Almost nothing except that cold weather and snow creates an intense desire in me for SUMMER! Hey, a year in Nam did that for me. Back to Memorial Day.

Again, as I pen this column, there are only 181 days until our next parade (time flies, eh?). So, here is what is shaping up. The committee had the first meeting to identify some key areas for tweaking:

- Getting vets that had car rides back to their cars.
- Firing squad volunteers need to be identified now so they can practice.
- Do a “no rain” dance.
- New flagpoles that match.
- As each name of the fallen is read, a flag is placed in the ground near the Tower (Logistics

still need to be arranged for that – if we do this).

- Vets to carry flags in parade.

Just a couple of ideas. Here’s the concern: the firing squad is symbolic and the weapons need to be fired together for the true effect. We need three vets that can do this. Carrying the flags for the route of the parade is a bit of a haul. There was some “concern” two years back when the firemen VOLUNTEERED to help out. The concern is that veterans should carry the flags. Okay, do we have enough vets to carry the flags the entire route. Well, we have 181 days to discuss this.

One more thing: the Parade Committee is no secret. Any Post veteran with great ideas and enthusiasm is welcomed to join us. The committee meets the first Saturday of every month at 8 a.m. at Grace Lutheran Church. We do this because we honor our fallen fellow service personnel.

Happy Holidays

By Carol Anne O’Donnell

(708) 246-1204

This poem was written by Lance Corporal James M. Schmidt date unknown:

“Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone. I had come down the chimney with presents to give and to see just who in this home did live. I looked all about, a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, and on the wall pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sobering thought came into my mind. For this house was so different, so

dark and so dreary, the home of a soldier, now I could see clearly. The room such disorder, not how I pictured a United States soldier. Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight. Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas Day. They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year, because of the soldiers, like the one lying here. I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry. The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, 'Santa don't cry, this life is my choice; I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my country, my corps.' The soldier rolled over and soon drifted to sleep. I couldn't control it. I continued to weep. I kept watch for hours, so silent and still, and we both shivered from the cold evening's chill.

I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark, night, this guardian of honor so willing to fight. Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure, whispered, 'Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure.' One look at my watch, and I knew he was right. Merry Christmas, my friend, and to all a good night."

Please remember all our POW/MIAs and their families and all our servicemen and women and their families in your prayers.

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

Useful Tidbits by the Numbers

35,000 – Total number of red dots that the Radio City Christmas Spectacular wardrobe team uses to brighten the cheeks of the Rockettes for the celebrated stage show.

200 – Performances scheduled for this year's Christmas Spectacular.

6 – Number of months the flu vaccination can keep you from getting sick, according to new research from the San Diego Naval Health Research Center.

50-70% – Those who got the vaccine were this less likely to visit a doctor for any flu-like symptoms for half the year.

33,000 – Approximate number of learning experiences involving food (i.e. how to use a utensil, eat a candy cane) a human will have by age 18, according to food historian Bee Wilson. Learn other fun food facts in her book "First Bites."

ZERO – Number of people who avoided a hangover by drinking water directly after consuming alcohol, according to research presented at the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology conference this past August.

800 – Number of students of legal drinking age researchers charted the drinking habits of for the study. They found that those who claimed to never feel sick actually just drank less even though many thought they were immune from hangovers.

Source: Real Simple

