

July 2020
Post Newsletter
WesternSpringsVFW.org

Commander's Stuff

By Esteban Lopez

630-765-1848

lopez_esteban@hotmail.com

What a difference a day makes! Then, what about a week? A month? A year?

As we ponder in the answer of such simple questions, we come to realize that we live in a state of flux, where change is necessary. Part of the changes capitulates this month. This is my first letter as Commander of Post 10778. I feel honored that you placed your confidence in me to lead the Post. The challenge is not to wear the leader's mantle, but to fill the void of those who have come before me, and to do a job as well as they did. I accepted the Commanding tenure for the upcoming cycle and look forward to your wisdom to help me in my tenure.

So far this year, we faced several challenges. Covid19 is the big name in the field and still ongoing. For the first time, the Memorial Day Parade in Western Springs was canceled. Thanks to the Parade Committee for all their hard work. Thank you, Chuck, for leading the committee and for the prompt foresight to cancel the event as needed. As ours is a Post of resilience

Save the Dates

July 14th – 7:30 p.m. **Post Regular meeting** at Grace Lutheran Church
July 17th – deadline for August newsletter

Aug. 11th – 7:30 p.m. **Post Regular meeting** at Grace Lutheran Church

and ideas, thanks also to Bruce for putting together and implementing the idea of a Caravan Parade, which honored Seedy and Walt for their service in WWII, but also gave us time to honor our fallen comrades.

Special thanks to our former Commander Rich Jesswein for a job well done! Congratulations to the Post officers, and a warm welcome to our Jr. Vice Commander Bill Nawrot to his new role and duties.

On Post business, Western Springs Post 10778 purchased 20 sandwiches from Casey's for the Hines Radiology Department. When going to your medical appointments, please remember to thank your caregivers and crew for taking care of our health. They are risking their health and families' well-being to complete their caring mission; the epitome of selfless service.

A sad note recently was the funeral of former Post Commander Fred Rodriguez. Our Post was represented at Fred's funeral Mass at St. John of the Cross. Thanks to those who attended the event. I'll be remiss if I fail to thank our Ninja member, Mike Winner. Mike always surprises me with the right answer when in a bind. Mike, thank you for the help.

I thank you again for your vote of confidence and for all that you do.

Ad Maiora

Quartermaster Report

By Mike Winner

(708) 829-0069

Gonakadet@att.net

Statement of funds as of 6/9/20:

Post General Fund	\$6,494.22
Post Relief Fund	3,930.16
TOTAL:	\$10,424.38

On June 11, we said farewell to Fred Rodriguez. He was a Navy veteran who participated in Operation Blue Bat in Lebanon, 62 years ago. Fred was part of an operation in which the Lebanese government, backed by the United States, needed help to maintain order under the threat of a growing civil war.

It was a successful beach landing, occupation and withdrawal. Six thousand miles from home, a woven piece of cloth, unfurled and undisturbed stood proudly on the mast of the USS Muliphen on which Fred along with a force of 14,000 Americans embraced our allies to keep order in a foreign and hostile land.

Today, as with each funeral we attend, we ensured Fred's coffin was draped in the same colors. Our Commander spoke of Fred's service, his life and his

willingness to die for us so that we can share in the freedoms that have been bestowed upon all of us by God through the selfless acts of veteran men and women like Fred.

At the conclusion of his service, we individually and slowly saluted Fred as he lay there under its warm, blanket-like comfort, and then we sharply saluted the crisp unfurled ensign, which stood proudly at the head of his coffin.

We've performed this 'Act of Presence' for each and every one of our fallen comrades. As veterans of this Post, we consider it an honor and a privilege to pay our respects on behalf of all veterans. We pay our respects by making a gesture to each other under the presence of that one special piece of cloth. We can't always make each farewell, but the colors are always there. Even after we are gone, she is folded 13 times and presented to our next of kin on behalf of the President and a grateful nation. It's formally and painstakingly folded with precision under the protection of white starched gloves and displayed prominently in public places, offices and inside our homes.

I believe the dedication and duty given to our nation by individuals, like Fred, to be entwined in the very fabric, which makes her colors so vibrant. It's why, when she fades, we are so quick to replace. Though some consider it to be a mere piece of cloth, a canvas to be used to draw attention by defacing it or turning it upside down, I personally believe those woven threads to represent the very soul of our nation. The few of us who have served, the families who have waited and endured the pains of separation and loss, we may be all that remain who truly honor her meaning, who understand her significance. It is us, who must carry on the soul of "one

nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.”

So, on Thursday, June 11, as our unfurled and crisp flag of these United States of America, stood at the head of Fred’s coffin, I said farewell to a comrade one last time and I said God Bless America to the soul of our nation.

Semper Fidelis

Hospital Chairman Report

By Walt Bergenthal

(708) 246-4858

Talk about a “gotcha!” Adjutant Bruce Harken pulled off the biggest “gotcha” in decades with Seedy and myself on Memorial Day. It was a secret that everybody was in on except Seedy and me.

On Memorial Day eve, my daughter called and said she would pick me up at 10 a.m. the next morning and to wear my WWII veterans cap. Seedy’s daughter called him at 9:30 a.m. on Memorial Day to say she’d pick him up at 10 a.m. and to wear his WWII cap. We had no idea what this was all about.

We were flabbergasted when we saw TV cameras and reporters at the Grand Avenue School where a tent had been set up. Reporters interviewed us, and cameras rolled from all of the Chicago TV stations.

Then a caravan with over 100 cars drove by with signs and honking horns. It was awesome! I still can’t believe it. All we can say is, “Thank you, Bruce!” You made our day – Seedy’s and mine 15 minutes of fame. That “gotcha” will never be topped.

Our sympathy to the family of Fred Rodriguez passed away on June 7. Life Member Fred was a Navy veteran, a past Commander of our Post and a long time

bingo volunteer at Hines. Due to the coronavirus, services were private.

Food for Thought: Food Fests

Summer looks a bit different this year during the COVID-19 pandemic. While many festivals have been canceled this year, here’s a look at the history of food festivals.

500 BC to 2nd Century AD: Greeks pay homage to the god of wine, Dionysus, during a three-day festival called Anthesteria.

3rd Century BC to 2nd Century BC: During harvest season, ancient Egyptians honored the cow goddess, Hathor, with overnight picnics in front of their ancestors’ tombs.

1621: Grateful for a bountiful harvest after a year of illness and food shortages, the Pilgrims host the first Thanksgiving. The menu includes deer, duck and turkey.

Mid- to –late 1900s: Food festivals spread from around the country and the world:

- The Maine Lobster Festival shells out more than 20,000 pounds of lobsters per year.
- California’s Gilroy Garlic Festival preps dishes for 100,000 visitors.
- Italy’s International Alba White Truffle Fair offers guests the chance to taste countless varieties.

2000s: The foodie era begins, thanks in part to celebrity chefs who go from cookbook authors to center stage at massive events.