

October 2015
Post Newsletter
WesternSpringsVFW.org

Commander's Staff

By Mike Winner
(708) 829-0069
Gonakadet@att.net

Fellow Veterans,

It is with great sadness that we said farewell to our fellow comrade, Vietnam Veteran Len Caldeira. Thank you to those of you who attended his service. I think his family was most appreciative. Len was a humble man who served his country and fellow citizens till the end.

In national news, Sept. 18 was proclaimed as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. In local news, Western Springs honored its veterans and First Responders on 9/11.

We are fortunate to live in a community that pays homage to those of us that put ourselves in danger to protect the greater good. But that respect comes with a price. It is our duty to be worthy of such admiration. So, let's continue to march forward, take care of each other, and represent well, our fellow comrades: lost, missing and fallen.

Semper Fi!
Mike Winner

Save the Dates

Oct. 8^h – Hospital Visit
Oct. 13th – 7:30 p.m. **Post Regular meeting** at Grace Lutheran Church
Oct. 16th – Deadline for November newsletter
Nov. 10th – 7:30 p.m. **Post Regular meeting** at Grace Lutheran Church

Hines Seeks Book Donations

By Walt Bergenthal
(708) 246-4858

Statement of funds as of 9/8/15:

Post General Fund	\$11,978.60
Post Relief Fund	4,691.18
Post Dues Reserve	7.00
TOTAL:	\$16,676.78

Hines Hospital is again accepting paperback books. If you have some, bring them to the next Post meeting or drop them off at the back door of my house, 3951 Western Ave., Western Springs. Hines is not accepting lap robes or clothing at this time.

Our sympathy to the family of Life Member J. Leonard Caldeira, who passed away earlier this month. Len served as a captain in the Army with Vietnam deployment from September

1967 to September 1968. Many years ago, he started the annual "Tower Trot" run in Western Springs and was responsible for sending off the units during our Memorial Day Parade.

A Very Old Treasure Trove of Vietnamese Horrors

By Carol Anne O'Donnell
(708) 246-1204

The following information is quoted from a very old article dated Feb. 20, 1995, published by U.S. News & World Report, but it is still important today because few realize the vast amount of documentation that was done by our enemies from the Nazi's, the USSR and in this case the Hanoi government:

"In the gleaming marble rotunda of the Cannon House Office Building in Washington, D.C., hangs an exhibit of photographs, haggard and bloodied faces of American prisoners of war in Vietnam. Most Americans won't see the rest of the photos: a pilot lying on his back, a bullet hole in his head; an airman burned beyond recognition; a mangled corpse in a wood coffin. The photos are part of a trove of secret photos and documents from the Vietnamese military archives, now (*Editor's Note: at that time*) held under close wraps by the U.S. government. Their status is a matter of debate: The Pentagon refuses to release materials out of deference to the families of the men pictured. Others say they should be public—proof of how closely the Vietnamese documented the war and how Hanoi could provide far more information about the missing men than it has.

In defending its decision to move toward normal relations with Vietnam, the Clinton administration insists that Hanoi has made substantial progress in

solving the cases of missing American servicemen. A *U.S. News* analysis, however, finds that the Pentagon's method of accounting for missing servicemen obscures some facts—facts about how cooperative the Vietnamese has really been.

In 1987, retired U.S. Army Gen. John Vessey was named as a special envoy to examine the issue of missing and unaccounted for servicemen in Vietnam. ... Today, the Clinton administration says the Vietnamese have provided information that has trimmed Vessey's and newer lists. The number of unsolved cases, the administration says, recently dropped to 80, 73, and now 55. Often these numbers are interpreted to mean that only a few score Americans are unaccounted for. This interpretation is deceptive. Vessey himself points out that the original cases he gave the Vietnamese were on a short list, culled from more than 2,000 missing. On Vessey's original list were men the United States believed might still be alive. Some were known POWs; intelligence showed that others were last known to be alive with the enemy closing in.

'These are the easiest for the Vietnamese to solve because they were in their custody,' says Richard Childress, who was then the National Security Council's Director of Asian Affairs.

After seven years, the Vietnamese still have not explained what happened to 55 of these cases—and there are still 2,211 (*Editor's Note: As of Feb. 20, 1995*) servicemen whose remains have not been returned and are considered unaccounted for."

Please pray for our POW/MIAs and their families.

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

