

December 2018

Post Newsletter

WesternSpringsVFW.org

Commander's Stuff

By Rich Jesswein

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Once again, I'm amazed how quickly a year has flown by. I don't know about you, but my life is like a roll of toilet paper - the closer to the end, the faster it goes.

December is a time for reflection. And as I reflect on the things our Post has accomplished and the changes that have occurred, I'm proud to be a part of Post 10778.

We had several successful pizza parties with the vets from Hines Hospital.

We continue to monthly play bingo and donate \$300, plus we give them books and magazines.

We purchased medical equipment and TVs for Hines Hospital.

We participated in "Patriots Pen" and "Voice of Democracy," giving students scholarship money for their future.

Once again, we had a successful Memorial Day Parade, bringing attention to the civilians what vets have sacrificed for their freedom. (Freedom is not free).

We had a great pinning ceremony with Kindred Hospice. It meant a lot to the folks in our Post. It didn't hurt that our Post was on the front page of the Suburban Life newspaper as well. I had

Save the Dates

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

Dec. 13th – Hospital Visit

Dec. 14th – deadline for January newsletter

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

hoped that the exposure would entice some folks to join our Post.

We continue to work with Kindred Hospice, going to nursing homes, playing a drum and posting colors as part of a pinning ceremony for the vets in these nursing homes. I'm told the vets really enjoy our participation.

I'm sure I missed some activities, and if I did, I apologize. We are one active Post!!

We had a change in administration this year. KUDO's to the previous junior vice, senior vice and commander!! They showed us the way, hopefully, we can continue in their path.

The only disappointment I've had is that we haven't been able to grow the Post as fast as I would like to. However, that is a challenge for next year.

In closing, I want to THANK all of you for the work you've done this year. I

hope you all have a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

Sooooooooo

*Roses are Red
Violets are Blue
Have a safe holiday
Each and every one of you!*

Till next month CHOI

Hospital Chairman Report

By Walt Bergenthal

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Our sympathy to the family of Life Member Joseph Zalud, who passed away in October. Joe served in the Korean War as a sergeant with the 101st Airborne and commanded a group in engineering for bridge demolition.

We need Christmas cards for our annual cash gift for the patients in the residential care facility at Hines Hospital. Please bring them to our December meeting or drop them off at the back door of Walt Bergenthal's house.

Quartermaster Report

By Mike Winner

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Statement of funds as of 11/15/18:

Post General Fund	\$12,492.00
Post Relief Fund	4,552.00
TOTAL:	\$17,044.00

Merry Christmas!

Remembering a Great Veteran

By Jim Boland

Past Commander 1988-1991

One advantage of having been around since the founding of our VFW Post is all the incredible men and women I have met who contributed to making our Post the success it has become since it's founding. One of my fears is that good people are often forgotten and the deeds they performed are forgotten with them.

So one of the men I would like to tell you about was a man named Ted Malone. I first met Ted when back in 1990. I set up a display in one of my ice cream shop windows dedicated toward support for our troops being sent to participate to Operation Desert Storm. One day, a bright-white haired man walked into my shop and thanked me for the display, and asked if he could contribute to the display. He related that he was a Marine who had served in the Korean War and received a Purple Heart and bronze star. I told him 'sure,' as a few others in town had also contributed items in the display. Well, that first contact with Ted Malone developed into a friendship.

To this day I still miss him, as Ted passed away years ago. Back then I was commander of our new Post and when Memorial Day came around Ted questioned why we were not taking a more active role in the annual parade. For those not aware of it, prior to our Post's founding, the Kiwanis Club under the care of Craig Harris put together an annual parade. Back then it was nothing more than the local scout troops pulling their wagons down the street and gathering at the old water tower. The speaker might be a politician or a judge

and that was it. Craig Harris continued to work on the parade for years afterward.

Ted and I agreed that it should become the responsibility of veterans and in particular our VFW Post to put together the Memorial Day observance. Ted immediately threw all his energy into making our Memorial Day parade and observance at the water tower a true recognition of the ultimate contribution made by our brother/sister veterans. Ted, along with Mike Marshal, Dick Kowalski and Jim Brownlow, headed up to Great Lakes Navy base and asked if we could get the Navy band to march in our parade. That request required all the strings that could be pulled but the CO of Great Lakes finally agreed to bus the Navy Band along with a troop of sailors to march in our next parade. This became a tradition of our parade for a number of years before the CO felt the demands from Chicago for their participation was more paramount. So for those of you who remember, we used to have a US Navy band and a company of sailors march in our parade.

Then Ted, being a proud Marine, worked on getting several Marine high school ROTC groups to march in our parade. This has now become one of our annual traditions, thanks to Ted. From there, he arranged for a fly-over of an old WWII bomber and a flight of military prop planes to fly over as well. Ted was a good friend with a man named Joe McCarthy, a Marine Captain on Iwo Jima who was awarded the Honor of Medal. We were honored, thanks to Ted, to have McCarthy as one of our first Grand Marshals. Another year, Ted got one of the survivors of the Bataan Death March as our Grand Marshal.

From there, Ted joined the Air Cadets and using his influence got the local Air

Cadets in their blue uniforms to march in our parade. He arranged for military vehicles and re-enactors to march and rapidly our Memorial Day parade grew to become an event comparable to what Naperville was doing. There was no end to what Ted wouldn't do or places he would go to gather marchers in our parade. It was back then decided to have the Navy Hymn played while the war dead were read off to the sound of a bell ringing as each name was called. It was back then too that we acquired rifles and did a rifle salute followed by taps. Ted just loved to brainstorm ideas to help our Post.

One thing Ted and I agreed from the very beginning was that our parade would be non-political. No politicians would be allowed to march in the parade nor would we ever allow a politician to be the Grand Marshall or to speak at our parade.

A funny story happened back when Ross Perot was running for president. Remember Ross Perot??? Well, one of his supporters showed up to march in our parade with a big sign reading "Ross Perot for President." Ted and I walked over to him and Ted, in his Marine Corps gravelly voice, informed the man that he could not march in the parade with that sign. The Ross Perot supporter responded that he had the right to march in our parade and when Ted told him "not with that sign" the man responded that it was his intention to march WITH the sign. At that, Ted took the sign away from him, tore it up and said, "Now you can march in the parade." The Ross Perot supporter became angry but one look from Ted with his clenched fists lead the man to turn around, walk away and was not seen again.

To this day, we still strictly abide by the rule of "no politicians." One of our

early supporters was Judy Baar Topinka who did her best to assist our Post in any way we asked her. When she asked if she could march in our parade, it hurt to tell her but the answer was "no." Judy was disappointed but understood.

Ted was a true friend of our Post, and I know a few occasions when he even paid for a VFW membership for others who said they couldn't afford to join. I do hope by relating this story about him that we all stop and say a silent prayer for Ted. He was a true patriot. His passing was a loss for our Post and our community.

Ted, by the way, was a US Marine tanker who was at the Chosin Reservoir in the Korean War. Back then the 1st Marine Division was up in the frozen mountains of north Korea at a desolate place called the Chosin Reservoir surrounded by over 100,000 Chinese communists. It was late November 1950 and the temperature was as low as -50 below zero. They were written off by the media and many back home. There seemed no way to break out. The division was spread out and had to be consolidated. The bridge out was blown and a new one had to be airlifted in and put in place by Marine engineers. Just about every kind of obstacle was there to prevent the 1st Division getting out. Yet under able Marine Corps leadership, they fought their way out inflicting terrible losses on the Chinese. I have read that as many as 30 to 40,000 Chinese perished in their attempt to contain the Marine division. Ted was there at the frozen Chosin driving a tank and it was up there that Ted was wounded and awarded a bronze star.

Let him not be forgotten.

Weird Holiday Celebrations Around the World

Sure we know all about Dasher and Dancer here in the US. We've listened to Bing Crosby croon about his dreams for a white Christmas. But around the globe, there's more to celebrating the holiday season. Here's a look at some odd holiday celebrations.

Japan – People don't celebrate Christmas here, but it just wouldn't be Dec. 25 around here without the Colonel's 11 herbs and spices. The feast began back in 1974 when it was introduced to visitors who wanted a meal resembling a traditional holiday meal back home. Having KFC for dinner on Dec. 25 is so popular that the chain asks customers to place their orders in October.

Wales – Between Christmas time through late January, the celebration of Mari Lwyd is supposed to bring good luck. One person dresses as a horse using an actual horse skull and groups go caroling in exchange for food and drinks.

Austria, Germany and Hungary – Kids on the naughty list in this country wish they would get coal in their stockings. Instead they are visited by Krampus, a beast-like creature that punishes ill-behaved children.

Venezuela – In Caracas, it's not uncommon to see people strap on their roller skates to Christmas Mass.

Source: Newsweek