



River Cities News

Marine Corps League
HP Inc.
Evansville, Indiana

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Commandant's Corner

Bob Reutter, Commandant

This past weekend I sat by the window in my basement looking out over the pristine, snow covered back yard. My thoughts turned to the past 242 years when Marines, all over the world, fought in conditions ranging from frigid cold to make this week in Evansville seem tame to hot, humid tropical jungles and hotter, dry deserts. From fighting the Moors on the north shores of Africa, to the mosquito-infested jungles of Cuba and Central and South America. From the wheat fields of France during WWI to the islands of the Pacific in WWII. From the bitter cold of Korea to the sweltering heat and humidity of Viet Nam. And currently for the past 35 years Marines have defended freedom back in the deserts of Africa.

What do all these scenarios have in common? In every one of these climes and places there were Marines stepping up to do what was asked of them so that we could enjoy the comforts of our lives today. I read a lot about our Corps. Each of us likes to talk about our time in Parris Island or San Diego. We think (at least in our minds) that **our** time in boot camp was the most difficult, most stressful and hardest. In our own minds, each of us is correct. The young men and women who are just now becoming Marines are thinking the same thing we did. And like us, they are right. Compared to life now, Marine Boot Camp is just as difficult, just as stressful as when we went through. Just as we did, these Marines will step up when Assembly! Is called to take their places in the future history of Our Marine Corps.

If you have read this newsletter for the past few

years you have read about Marines who have gone on to very successful lives in the private sector. From leaders of big business such as Bob Parsons (GoDaddy) and Frederick W. Smith (FedEx founder) to sports figures like Ted Williams, Lee Trevino and Leon Spinks. From television performers like Bob Keeshan (Kaptain Kangaroo), Mike Farrell (MASH) and Keith Jackson (sports announcer) to producers like Donald P. Bellisario (NCIS, JAG, Magnum PI) and big screen idols like Steve McQueen, Gene Hackman, Drew Carey, Don Adams and Bea Arthur. Marines also have served as astronauts, Senators and Congressmen, Governors, Judges, Presidential Cabinet members and other government officials. Two of the most important men in President Trumps cabinet are Marines – General James Mattis, Secretary of Defense and General John Kelly, Secretary of Homeland Security. Service in the Corps is no guarantee of success but it is a big step ahead.

I ask that every one reading this month's issue to take a few minutes to reflect on what our life might be like if all of our Marine forefathers had not stepped up. Although all of America owes a great debt to Marines since November 10, 1775. Since it is not in the makeup of most people to reflect like that, it is up to us to make sure we remember and honor them.

SEMPER FI

Detachment Officers

Commandant
Bob Reutter (270) 314-9484

Paymaster
Don Landers Sr. (812) 483-3014

Sgt At Arms
Jack Kincaide

Sr. Vice Commandant
Jim Grayson

Adjutant
Art Midle (812) 760-4349

Newsletter Editor
Paula Landers (812) 483-5114

Jr. Vice Commandant
Joe Filipczak

Judge Advocate
Don Counts (812) 422-1792

Web Sergeant
Paula Landers (812) 483-5114

Jr. Past Commandant
Tim Jones (812) 454-8717

Chaplain
Barbara Kortz

**TENTH ANNUAL
MARINE CORPS LEAGUE AUXILIARY
BOWLING TOURNAMENT
HOSTED BY**

WHEN

Saturday, April 7, 2018

11:30 am - 3: 00 pm

Register by April 2, 2018

WHERE

**Franklin Lanes
1801 Franklin St.
Evansville, IN**



EVENT OPEN TO ALL AGES

NINE-PIN NO TAP - THREE GAMES - MIXED TEAMS

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TEAM REGISTRATION

**\$60 for a team of 4
includes 3 games of bowling
and shoe rental**

SCHEDULE

11:30

Check-in

12:00

Bowling Tournament

3:00

Awards Ceremony

PRIZES

First Place Team - \$200

Second Place Team - \$100

Third Place Team - \$50

High Series Male - \$25

High Series Female - \$25

Youth: Ages 16 and under

Individual prizes for High Series

*Cash prizes are based on 40 bowlers,
we reserve the right to lower
prize money based on number of
bowlers. In case of a tie, prize
money will be combined*

A Soldier's Son Visits Iwo Jima

Scott Hanson

The following story is the first installment in a series from a story written by a man whose father was in the Army occupation force that followed the Marines onto the island of Iwo Jima. We met Scott while we were working in our food booth at Harbor Freight. He sent us the story and pictures that I have relayed below. – Bob Reutter

A Soldier's Son Visits Iwo Jima

By Scott Hanson

My father was in the Army and arrived on Iwo Jima in May of 1945. The battle was over but there were still hold-outs on the island. The war was still in progress (he was on Iwo when the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan).

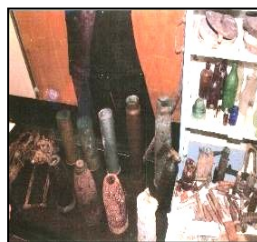


Invasion beaches from Suribachi

I had asked my father one time if he ever went to the top of Suribachi and he answered, "Every day." I asked him how he got there, and he said that he drove. He said, "After the battle the SeaBees built a road right to the top. I was a sergeant and I had a Jeep." I had also asked my father a lot of other questions about his stay there. I asked one time if he ever went looking around to find souvenirs. He said, "Hell no! There were still Japs out there!" The last of these Japanese survivors didn't surrender until 1947, nearly two years after the war ended. The entire island is less than two miles wide and less than four miles long, but they were hiding in underground tunnels and caves. Dad said that they knew they were there though because they'd come out at night and raid the garbage dumps.

He said another reason for not doing much exploring was because the Navy and Air Corp had bombed the island for seventy-five straight days prior to the inva-

sion. Then throughout the month-long battle hundreds of thousands of rounds of explosives were fired. He said that there was "unexploded ordnance everywhere" and to walk off of known paths was ask-



Unexploded ordnance



Sulfur Vents

ing for trouble. He also said that there were sulfur vents into which a man could step and fall and simply disappear into a hole. I saw some of these vents during my visit.)

The hike to the top of Suribachi was relatively uneventful other than imagining what it must have been like for those Marines in 1945. I once asked my father if Suribachi was a big mountain and he answered, "Oh hell no...it was just a big high hill. Five hundred and thirty-five feet". I was surprised at his answer so I Googled and checked it out. He was exactly right. He said that the only reason it always seems so high in the movies is that it's located right on the ocean and that anything that sticks up above the surface seems high. To put it in perspective, you could go on top of Suribachi, put up a ten-story building and the whole thing would fit under the St. Louis Arch (630 ft.)

The sides are steep and it would have been difficult to climb but hiking up the road wasn't particularly difficult. The road crosses back and forth up the north side of the mountain and someone said that the walk to the top was about two miles. That's probably accurate. It was an incline, but I had done quite a bit of hiking in preparation and had no trouble making it up there despite the heat. But I reminded myself that no one was shooting at

(continued on pg 7)

Marines in the Public Eye

Bob Reutter

Every Marine a Rifleman?

Former Defense Secretary Ash Carter shocked the military last summer when he called for boosting the military's high-tech force by finding civilians who already have those vital skills like cyber security and offer them "lateral entry" into the military — a chance to skip boot camp and put on a uniform as a mid-career rank from Day One.

In effect, he suggested having a Marine Corps that included "Marines," pinned with a staff sergeant's rocker, who had never been to boot camp and spent no time in the junior tanks. Marines scattered across the force who had little knowledge of Marine culture and whose colleagues quietly questioned their status as a "real Marine."

Nobody in the military was more skeptical than the Marines.

Yet now as the Corps begins planning to grow the force significantly during the next several years, the controversial idea is back on the table, Marine Corps Times has learned. One way or the other, the Marine Corps needs those high-tech capabilities. Currently there are big shortages in some of those career fields. It's a top priority for today's leaders.

At stake is combat readiness. Marine Commandant Gen. Neller acknowledged that it will take more than riflemen to win future wars. Growing the Marine Corps should not focus on adding infantry troops but instead on building up those high-tech capabilities to support those traditional Marines who are trained to fight at the tip of the spear.



"If you don't have those things, whatever formation you put on the battlefield is not going to be as survivable or combat effective without them," Neller said during speech at U.S. Naval Institute event in Washington in December.

The idea of lateral entry remains under discussion among Marine Corps planners. It would not be the first time: When the Corps recruits top musicians for the "Presidents' Own" band in

Washington, it finds top musicians, gives them a pass on boot camp and starts them out as staff sergeants.

But the Marine Corps leaders are treading lightly on the idea of expanding that for skills like cyber. The Corps is more skeptical than the other services about

many aspects of Carter's "Force of the Future" reforms. The Marines truly believe their motto of "Every Marine is a rifleman," and believe that has been the service's unique strength throughout its storied history.

The top generals and manpower experts want to be realistic about the fact that the more lateral entry they consider, the less honest that will make the axiom of: "Every Marine is a rifleman."

"If you go away from that, then I think you lose something that has made the Marine Corps what it is," said retired Marine Lt. Col. Dakota Wood, who served on President Trump's transition team.

"A Marine is a Marine," Wood said. "If that breaks down, you've got problems."

A Soldier's Son Visits Iwo Jima Continued from pg 4



Scott at the monument

me either.

At the top of the mountain there are several monuments and memorials. However there is only one flagstaff and it flies the Japanese flag. No one is permitted to fly an American flag there. However, my traveling companion that day had a flag in his backpack and we both posed holding this flag in the exact spot where the Marines raised the flag on February 23, 1945.

From the top of Suribachi you can pretty much see the entire island. It's no wonder that the hill had to be taken before the rest of the island would fall. From Suribachi the Japanese guns could reach any location. The entire mountain was undermined and tunneled so the guns could be rolled to a tunnel entrance, fired and then be rolled back to reload well out of reach of counter-fire. It took four days from the beginning of the invasion on the 19th until the last defenders were driven from Suribachi on the 23rd.

One of the most striking surprises to me was how close the invasion beaches were to the



Tunnel Entrances

mountain. While standing on top I was looking directly down on the beaches. To shoot from Suribachi to the beach would have been no more than a few hundred yards. Later when I walked the beaches I marveled that anyone could have survived.

(to be continued)

MCLA Southern Belles Unit 441 continued from pg 2

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In memory of Detachment #1090 members who have gone on to guard the streets of Heaven.



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06/2021

DAVID L. JONES

djones@joneswallace.com 420 Main Street, Suite 1600
 Telephone (812) 402-1600 P.O. Box 1065
 Facsimile (812) 402-7977 Evansville, IN 47706-1065

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River Cities Detachment #1090

07/2018

The company commander and gunnery sergeant were inspecting a Marine training exercise when they spotted a second lieutenant ambling about. "Where is your foxhole, Lieutenant?" the CO asked.

He snapped off a salute and responded, "I don't know, sir!" Turning to the gunny, he asked, "Gunny, where is my foxhole?"

"You're standing in it, sir," said gunny. "All you have to do is remove the dirt."

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In Memory of Marine Tommy Collins And Deceased Detachment Members



An Admin Pfc sent his Second Lieutenant a text to tell him about a problem in the office. "Sir: Windows frozen, won't open." The Lieutenant texted back, "Just pour warm water over it and smack it sharply with a hammer." The Pfc texted back "Sir, I'm not sure that is a good idea." The Officer sent back, "Just do as I ordered." A few minutes later the Second Lieutenant texted back "Well?"

"Well Sir," came back the reply, "the computer is really fouled up now!"

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02/2018

River Cities Detachment 1090
 Marine Corps League Inc.
 P. O. Box 6581
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www.mclrivercities.org
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Semper Ji

February 2018

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Newsletter Articles, Ads, and Pictures For March 2018 are due NO LATER THAN February 22, 2018				1 MCLA Southern Belles VA Clinic 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.	2	3
4	5 MODD No Growl	6 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i>	15	16	17
18	19	20 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	21	22	23	24
25	26 MCLA Southern Belles Unit #441 AmVets 84 6:30 p.m.	27 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	28 MCL River Cities Det. #1090 VFW 1114 1900			