



River Cities News

Marine Corps League
River Cities Detachment #1090
Evansville, Indiana

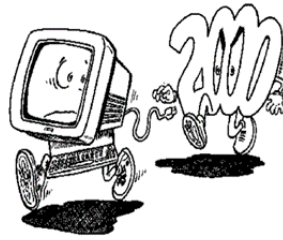
Volume 15, Issue 1

January 2018

Commandant's Corner

Bob Reutter, Commandant

Happy New Year and Semper Fi to all Marines, Marine families, friends of Marines and anyone else who happens to be reading this but doesn't fit into one of the categories above. Hard to believe that another year has passed us by! Seems that we were just sitting around worrying about whether our world would collapse when Y2K hit. As difficult as it is to believe, that was 18 years ago. If you don't remember



what the whole issue was about it is simple. In the early years of computers, programmers thought the code they were writing would be replaced so they didn't think anything about listing the year with only two places in the code. So 1950 was stored as "50" not as "1950". When the year 2000 rolled around computers around the world would see the year as 1900 not 2000. While that seems



pretty silly, a lot of processes, not knowing what to do, would have just shut down. All of the media jumped on the

"Armageddon bandwagon" loudly proclaiming the end of society as we know it. New Years Day, 2000 rolled around and the world didn't end. The media did an impressive 180 and started shouting that it was all a 'manufactured' crisis just to allow companies to spend a lot of money to fix a problem that wasn't a problem. I was in information technology (IT) during this time and I can tell you that the reason it wasn't a problem was the amount of time and resources that were invested to keep it from being one.

"What," you ask "does this have to do with being a Marine or for that matter, just being in the world

today?" Like it was in 1999-2000, the media jumps from one half truth to another trying to keep you reading, watching or listening while they describe, in glorious detail, why our society, and the world in general, is going to collapse. They insist in pointing to the symptoms – opioid addiction, unwanted pregnancy and abortion, race hatred and violence, the national debt (to name a few) – instead of looking at the cause – our refusal as a society to require the individual to accept responsibility for their actions. For everything we do, we want to have someone to blame it on rather than accept that we **caused** the problem. As a society we have allowed 'throw some more money at it' to replace 'fix the problem' as a method of living in our time. As Marines we have always gone to the source of a problem to fix it. That is what we were trained to do. Now is as

important a time to step up and say "we are mad as hell and we aren't going to take it anymore" as any in our history. Regardless of party, race, religion, gender or age we need to stand up and make it known we want the problems addressed. We want everyone – from the highest politician to the lowliest individual – to be responsible for his/her actions. We want to be there to lend a hand when it is warranted but to ensure that each person is doing what is required to be a contributing member of our society. Don't think one person can make a difference? We are not one person. We are Marines. We can make a difference – again.



Semper Fi.

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Marine Corps History

Gary Burk

The following is an excerpt from "The Battle History of the U.S. Marines"

KHE SANH, Vietnam

The "Hill Fights" of 1967 above Khe Sanh had been so bitterly contested that the ground still reeked with the sickly sweet smell of decomposing bodies every time a Marine dug a new foxhole. The very trees on Hills-881 South and 861 were so riddled with steel shrapnel that Marine engineers could not safely use their chain saws to cut lumber for bunkers.

Few Marines appreciated their assigned rolls. It went against their grain as an offensive striking force to sit tethered to a frontier outpost while an NVA force of seven times their number pounded them daily with heavy ordinance and dug siege trenches ever closer to the final protective wire.

On the other hand, in a shadowy war in which the enemy rarely stood and fought, the defense of Khe Sanh at least provided a "target-rich environment" for Marine gunners and their friends in other services. The bomb scared hills and valleys around the combat base became the ultimate "free fire zone" of the war. Marines would take maximum joy in its good use.

The 26th Marines inadvertently kicked off the "siege of Khe Sanh" on January 20th 1968, when two companies patrolling the saddle between Hills 881-South and 881-North ran into a well-armed NVA battalion. Daylight battles against forces in this strength were uncommon, and the Marines pressed forward aggressively, suffering losses, but maintaining momentum. Captain Dabney was astounded when Colonel Lownds came up on the radio and ordered

him to retire to his positions on Hill 881-South before dark.

Dabney did not know that the regiment had picked up an NVA defector, a lieutenant more than willing to reveal the NVA order of battle and attack plans. This was an intelligence gold mine, but there was no time to spare.

The NVA were in the neighborhood in great strength; the initial attacks were planned for that very night. Lownds could not ill-afford to have Dabney's company strung out 1,000 yards north of its hill base.

The key features of the Khe Sanh battlefield were these. The combat base encircled the airstrip and overlooked the valley of the Rao Quan River to the north. Downhill from the base on the southern side ran Route 9-east (now closed to the NVA) to Ca Lu and Dong Ha, west to the village of Khe Sanh, the Special Forces Camp of Lang Vei, and the Laotian border.

Four miles northwest of the combat base sat two hills whose peculiar topography dominate the battlefield, 861 on the right, 881-South on the left. The NVA now occupied 881-North in force.

Dabney's patrol had derailed the planned enemy strike against 881-South, but shortly after midnight a battalion of NVA hit Hill 861 and soon a battle royal was underway.

To be continued

MCLA Southern Belles Unit 441

Dani Cook, President



I hope you had a wonderful fun filled family time for Christmas and a safe New Year. The Auxiliary had our Fulton Ave Boys & Girls Club Christmas Party. All of the kids had a great time. THANK YOU to John Williams for being our Santa again this year.

The kids just love him to pieces.

At this time we are taking orders through January 22nd for our Annual Pizza Fundraiser. We will make the pizzas on February 3rd up at AmVets on Broadway at 8:00 a.m. and individuals who ordered can

pick up between 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Also, we are selling Military Bracelets for \$5 each as a Fundraiser. Please see an Auxiliary member to purchase yours and some for your whole family.

Always remember to try and recruit new members. Invite them to come to a meeting to see what we do around the community. I would love to see a huge group at our next meeting on January 22nd up at AmVets Post #84 on the corner of Broadway and Barker. Meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

Semper Fi

MCLA Southern Belles Unit 441 *continued from pg 2*



Southern Belles Special Order Pizza



Place an order now for your **SUPER BOWL PARTY**.
We will be taking orders through January 22, 2018.

Made fresh and ready or pick up on February 3, 2018.

All pizzas are 12" and stacked high with your favorite ingredients.

NO WIMPY PIZZAS HERE!!

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All branches of the military are honored on this versatile wooden bracelets for men and women. These would make great gifts for any occasion and the price is only \$5.00 each. You may contact any MCLA member or use the order form below to make your purchase. Thank you for your support.

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

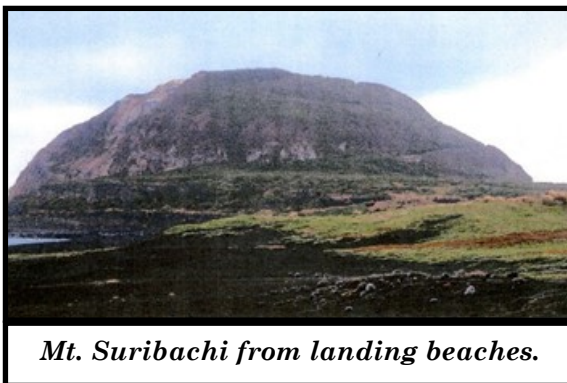
A Soldier's Son Visits Iwo Jima

By Scott Hanson

I was privileged to travel to the island of Iwo Jima earlier this year (April 2017.) As most of you know, the US returned possession of the island to the Japanese a few years ago. The first thing the Japanese did was ban any Americans from going there. The Marine Corps, American Legion and other services raises such a protest that the Japanese were forced to back down...but as is their custom, they just relented enough to "save face." They then agreed that **one plane** per year would be allowed to land on the island and the visitors must be veterans of the battle.

This year marked 72 years since the battle and there are no longer any veterans capable of making the trip. It's very remote, hot, humid and services are non-existent there. Therefore they have opened the visas to include "survivors of veterans (of the battle.)" My father was in the Army and was stationed there for ten and a half months arriving in May 1945.

The Japanese, despite allowing this planeload of visitor, made it very obvious that they did not like nor want Americans on the island. While always smiling and outwardly cordial they made their feelings known in discreet ways. For instance **no one** is allow to fly there without wearing a jacket and tie. (Being America, my first thought was "no way..." I might have worn a tie if I **wanted** to do so but not because someone was telling me I **had** to do it. But then I was told that there is a person checking everyone boarding the plane and anyone not wearing a tie will not be allowed to board.



Mt. Suribachi from landing beaches.

I went to my closet and began looking through my ties. I have dozens of them. The first few that I looked at all had red somewhere in them. I decided I wouldn't wear anything red since that is considered the "Japanese color" and I didn't want to give them the satisfaction. I dug deeper into the stack of ties and found the one I though was most appropriate. (see picture.) Sure enough, when I arrived at the boarding gate there was a was "appropriately attired." When I walked up to him I could see him looking at my tie. He remained expressionless but I "knew that he knew." But I was wearing a tie and there wasn't much he could do about it. I boarded without incident.



On the airplane I happened to be seated next to a man who, it turned out, was a Lt. Colonel in the US Army. Like me, he was traveling there just out of a sense of history and curiosity. We had an enjoyable conversation during the two and a half hour flight.

The Japanese had the entire trip scheduled and mapped out for us. Immediately upon arriving we were escorted to a large hangar for a wreath-laying ceremony, speeches by both Japanese and American dignitaries. They had our entire day-long stay planned for us.

As soon as the colonel and I entered the hangar we immediately bolted out a side door and headed for Mt. Suribachi. From the airfield it's about a two mile hike. There is a road that goes the entire distance to the mountain as well as around the island. It was hot but not unbearable. We walked straight to the top without incident.

(to be continued next month)

Marines in the Public Eye

Bob Reutter

Sunday, 25 1942 The Night A Marine Legend Was Born



Guadalcanal was a fierce clash of national wills. Bloodied and humiliated by the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, American armed forces were on the comeback trail less than six months after the debacle. At Guadalcanal, a disease-infested island, two superb military organizations met each other for the first time in land combat -- bayonet to bayonet -- in a contest only one army could win.

At Lunga Ridge -- about 1,000 yards south of Henderson Field it was raining torrents, creating miserable, bottomless mud -- typical Guadalcanal weather. The MARINES manning the main line of defense were exhausted. For two days Japanese human wave assaults had been flung against them. Each time the charging enemy had been driven off -- but the weary MARINES knew their tough adversaries weren't through. The Japanese would gather reinforcements and return.

About midnight, from the gloom of ink-black darkness came hundreds of screaming Japanese troops. Throwing themselves on the flesh-cutting barbed wire, the first of the waves formed human bridges for their comrades to leap across. One of the Marine section leaders facing them was Sergeant "Manila John" Basilone. An experienced machine gunner, Basilone knew his guns would be tested to their mechanical limits. It would be up to him to keep them firing.

During the attack when grenades, small arms and machine guns were ripping the night and exploding human flesh splattered friend and foe, Sergeant Basilone stayed with his malaria-ridden men. Repeatedly repairing guns and changing barrels in almost total darkness, he ran for ammo or steadied his terrified men who were firing full trigger to keep a sheet of white-hot lead pouring into the ranks of the charging Japanese.

Bodies piled so high in front of his weapons pits they had to be reset so the barrels could fire over the piles of corpses. Not even the famous water-cooled heavy machine guns could stop all the assaults and one section of guns were overrun. Two men killed, three others wounded.

Basilone took one of his guns on his back and raced for the breach in the line. Eight Japanese were surprised and killed. The guns were jammed by mud and water and a few yards away the Japanese were forming for another charge. Frantically stripping mud from the ammo belts men fed them into the guns as Basilone cleared jams and sprayed the fiendish troops rushing at his positions with razor sharp bayonets and hands full of grenades.

Sometime after 0200 the firing died down. No one relaxed. At 0300 the final remnants of the Sendai Regiments with their officers prepared themselves for a final Banzai charge. The full weight of the fanatical Japanese seemed to fall on Basilone's men. But he had set up a cross fire which smashed the charge. Dropping to the mud, still screaming Colonel Sendai's remnants crawled forward trying to reach their tormentors. Depressing the muzzles of his weapons -- Basilone destroyed them. With dawn the battlefield was strewn with dead and wounded Americans and Japanese -- but Henderson Field still belonged to the Americans and its ownership would never be seriously challenged again. At least 38 dead Japanese were credited to Sergeant Basilone -- many were killed with his Colt .45 at almost arms length. Just 26 years old, Manila John Basilone had entered the ranks of the Marine Corps pantheon of heroes -- and shortly America would take the big, handsome Marine with jug ears and a smile like a neon sign to their hearts. The legend of a "Fighting Sergeant" was born.



When he received the nation's highest decoration, John Basilone replied modestly, "Only part of this medal belongs to me. Pieces of it belong to the boys who are still on Guadalcanal. It was rough as hell down there." On the 1943 War Bond Tour Sergeant Basilone was to say, "Doing a 'stateside tour is tougher than fighting Japs." Gunnery Sergeant Manila John Basilone was the only Marine in WWII to receive both the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross.



When Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone voluntarily returned to the Pacific war it would be on the sands of Iwo Jima 19, February, 1945. At the head of another machine gun squad, he would drive hundreds of frightened raw troops off the beaches toward their assigned objectives. Iwo would be his toughest fight. Barely on the island two hours, he was killed leading his men.

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National Bylaws Article Six - Members, Section 645 - Life Members:

Any member of the Marine Corps League who is in good standing may become a Life Member, upon proper payment of the fee, as is required herein. A Life Member shall be subject to payment of no further dues of a Detachment, or National, such member shall have all the privileges, rights, and benefits enjoyed as a member so long as that Life Member shall live.

***In Memory of
 Marine Tommy Collins
 And Deceased
 Detachment Members***



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



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Semper Fi

January 2018

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	3	4 MCLA Southern Belles VA Clinic 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.	5	6
7	8 MODD Growl Logans West 1830	9 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	17	18	19	20
21	22 MCLA Southern Belles Unit #441 AmVets 84 6:30 p.m.	23 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	24 MCL River Cities Det. #1090 VFW 1114 1900	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Newsletter Articles, Ads, and Pictures For February 2018 are due NO LATER THAN January 22, 2018		