



# River Cities News

River Cities Detachment #1090  
Marine Corps League, Inc.  
Evansville, Indiana

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January 2019

## Commandant's Corner

Bob Reutter, Commandant

We have put another Toys for Tots campaign to bed and once again the southwest Indiana community stepped up to help children less fortunate than themselves. Not only did many of the Marines of the River Cities Detachment step up to work on distribution day but several helped with collection box distribution and collection. We had 6 women help with family registration from the first of October to the end of November, including two Marines – Barb Kortz and Melissa Gill – my wife Linda, Alice Kick, Donna Hartig and Carol Jo Droege. I am still working on the After Action Report and will have final numbers by our next issue.

I am going to step off the normal path this month and talk about the state of our society today. I was watching television recently and within the space of just a few hours I saw the following commercials. First was a lawyer telling you that if the doctor had prescribed a certain life-saving medicine, you should call so you could sue the doctor, medicine maker, hospital and anyone else he (the lawyer) could find. Next was someone telling you that if you spent more to purchase your home than you could afford, you could call to get money from the government to pay your mortgage. That was followed by one telling you that if you used your credit cards for more than \$10,000 and didn't want to make the payments (not that you ever could afford them, you just wanted the 'stuff' you bought) that there were government programs to reduce what you owed. Next was from a company that could reduce your tax burden if you had decided not to pay your taxes for a while. Do you want free cell phone and minutes? Free dental and medical care? Free prescriptions, knee braces, back braces, elbow braces? All these things are **FREE!!**

You and I both know that nothing is free in society. Someone pays for everything. That someone is us. We have allowed people to give up all responsibility for themselves. "Its not my fault," is the mantra of today's generation. If you bought a house you couldn't afford, it was the fault of the lender who let you do so. If you spent a ton of money on your credit card, it was the card company that didn't tell you not to. If you spent all your money on booze and cigarettes and can't afford health insurance, cell phone etc. it is not your fault. Someone **let** you. What happened to the day that if **you** did something stupid, you were expected to pay the consequences?

Make English the only language spoken in the US. No more dual languages on signs, businesses and especially in government. If you want to legally come to this country and become part of our society, I am all for you. If you want to learn English, there should be help. If you want to pull your own weight, you shouldn't have any problem finding people who want to assist you in doing so. If you want to come here and expect our society to adapt to you, stay home. No rational person in the United States has a real objection to immigrants. Other than a few descendants of American Indians, we are all from immigrant stock. Our ancestors were drawn here by the lure of fitting in to life in the best country in the world. They struggled, learned English, brought skills to the work place and earned their place here.

At some point we, the majority, need to stand up and say, "I'm mad as h\*\*\* and I'm not gonna take it anymore." Rather than just complain about it, we need to contact our local, state and national politicians and let them know they need to start proposing, passing and enforcing laws to bring back personal responsibility. No more free everything. If you need short term help because of circumstances, you should get it. If you have never had a job and have had 7 children because you get paid more for each, we have a problem. Instead of passing out money to dead beats, we need to go back to distributing surplus food. Our Constitution promises you 'the pursuit of happiness' and 'freedom of religion' not 'free everything and freedom **from** religion.' It is time to be responsible for **your** actions.

As long as I am on this soapbox, it is time to hold our politicians – at every level – to the same standards as us. No more lifelong pensions for politicians. No more free everything for them either. Two term limits for every position. Replace the money taken from the Social Security fund and pass a law that it cannot be used for anything except paying those who worked, paid into it, and are now ready to draw a livable amount from it. Finally – and most important to us – pay our military a decent wage and take care of them like we know we should.

Semper Fi

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## The Battle of the Chosin Reservoir

Researched By Bob Reutter

*This is the second installment of a four part series on one of the signature battles of Marine Corps history and legend. Not only is it an important battle in Marine history, we are fortunate enough to have one of our Marines who was in the middle of the campaign. John Mills is one of the 'Chosin Few' who endured and persevered during this incredibly difficult time.*

**The Battle:** *On the night of 27 November, the PVA 20th and 27th Corps of the 9th Corps Army launched multiple attacks and ambushes along the road between the Chosin Reservoir and Kot'o-ri. At Yudam-ni, the 5th, 7th and 11th Marines were surrounded and attacked by the PVA 79th and 89th Divisions, with the 59th Division attacking the road between Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri to cut off communication. Similarly, RCT-31 was isolated and ambushed at Sinhung-ni by the PVA 80th, 81st and 94th Divisions. At Hagaru-ri, the 1st Marine Division command headquarters was attacked by the PVA 58th Division. Finally, the PVA 60th Division surrounded elements of the 1st Marines at Kot'o-ri from the north. Caught by complete surprise, the UN forces were cut off at Yudam-ni, Sinhung-ni, Hagaru-ri and Kot'o-ri by 28 November.*

**Actions at Yudam-ni:** Acting on Almond's instruction, Smith ordered the 5th Marines to attack west toward Mupyong-ni on 27 November. The attack was soon stalled by the PVA 89th Division and forced the Marines to dig in on the ridges surrounding Yudam-ni. As night came, three Chinese regiments of the 79th Division attacked the ridges on the north and northwest of Yudam-ni, hoping to annihilate the garrison in one stroke. Close range fighting soon developed as the attackers infiltrated Marine positions, but the 5th and 7th Marines held the line while inflicting heavy casualties on the Chinese. As day broke on 28 November, the Chinese and Americans were locked in a stalemate around the Yudam-ni perimeter.

While the battle was underway at Yudam-ni, the PVA 59th Division blocked the road between Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri by attacking the defending Charlie and Fox Companies of the 7th Marines. The successful assault forced Charlie Company to retreat into Yudam-ni, which left Fox Company commanded by Captain William E. Barber isolated on a hill overlooking the Toktong Pass, a vital pass that controlled the road. On 29 November, several efforts by the 7th Marines failed to rescue Fox Company, despite inflicting heavy casualties on the Chinese. Aided by artillery from Hagaru-ri and Marine Corsair fighters, Fox Company managed to hold out for five days while enduring constant attacks by the PVA 59th Division.

After the heavy losses suffered by the PVA 79th Division at Yudam-ni, 9th Corps Army headquarters realized that the bulk of the 1st Marine Division was stationed at Yudam-ni, with a garrison strength that was double the initial estimate. Believing that any further assaults would be futile, Song Shilun ordered the 9th Army to switch their main attacks toward Sinhung-ni and Hagaru-ri, leaving

Yudam-ni alone from 28 to 30 November. At the same time, the US Eighth Army on the Korean western front was forced into full retreat at the Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River, and MacArthur ordered Almond to withdraw the US X Corps to the port of Hungnam. Acting on the instruction of Almond and Smith, Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. Murray and Colonel Homer L. Litzenberg, commanders of the 5th and 7th Marines, respectively, issued a joint order to break out from Yudam-ni to Hagaru-ri on 30 November. Faced with tough fighting between the blocking Chinese divisions and the withdrawing Marines, Smith remarked: "Retreat, hell! We're not retreating, we're just advancing in a different direction."

For the breakout, the Marines formed into a convoy with a single M4A3 Sherman tank as the lead. The plan was to have 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines (3/5) as the vanguard of the convoy, with three battalions covering the rear. At the same time, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines (1/7) would attack towards Fox Company in order to open the road at Toktong Pass. To start the breakout, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines (3/7) had to first attack south and capture Hills 1542 and 1419 in order to cover the road from Chinese attacks. The breakout was carried out under the air cover of the 1st Marine Air Wing.

On the morning of 1 December, 3/7 Marines engaged the PVA 175th Regiment of the 59th Division at Hills 1542 and 1419. The Chinese defenders soon forced the Marines to dig in on the slopes between the road and the peaks when the convoy passed 3/7's position by the afternoon. With Hagaru-ri still not captured, the PVA High Command scrambled the 79th Division to resume attacks on Yudam-ni, while the 89th Division rushed south towards Kot'o-ri. The Chinese struck at night, and the ferocity of the fighting forced the rear covering forces to call in night fighters to suppress the attacks. The fighting lasted well into the morning of 2 December until all the Marines had managed to withdraw from Yudam-ni.

At the same time, 1/7 Marines also tried to break the Chinese blockade at Hill 1419 on 1 December. Despite being badly reduced by combat, hunger and frostbite, the PVA 59th Division sent in its last five platoons and refused to yield. As night approached, 1/7 finally captured the peak and started to march through the hills on the east side of the road. Relying on the element of surprise, they managed to destroy several Chinese positions along the road. On the morning of 2 December, a joint attack by Fox Company and 1/7 secured the Toktong Pass, thus opening the road between Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri.

Although the road had been opened between Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri, the convoy still had to fight through the numerous Chinese positions on the hills overlooking the road. On the first night of the retreat, the Chinese struck the convoy in force and inflicted heavy casualties on 3/5

## Marine Corps History

### Gary Burk

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

#### GULF WAR/DESERT STORM (continued)

Shortly after dark, Lieutenant Colonel James Fulks led his Task Force Grizzly across the valuable A1 Jaber Airfield despite a dozen casualties to Iraqi rocket salvos.

The 2d Marine Division advanced rapidly through Kuwait, the 6<sup>th</sup> Marines capturing Iraqi defenses in "The Ice Tray," the 8<sup>th</sup> Marines taking "The Ice Cube," both built-up areas laid out in grids that resembled their names.

The third day finished crushing the Iraqis in Kuwait.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division engaged in another enormous and lopsided tank battle at Kuwait International Airport, knocking out an incredible 320 tanks, including 70 of the previously feared Soviet-made T-72s. The 2d Division swung farther north, seizing Mutla Ridge, effectively cutting off the escape of Iraqis from Kuwait City.

Many Iraqis had not bothered to wait for this development; the highway north of Basra was clogged with Iraqi vehicles, military and civilian, laden with booty, trying to escape the hell-bent-for-leather Marines. Here was a right target for Marine attack aircraft.

A-6E Intruders bottled up the "moving parking lot" by dropping CBU-78 Gator aerial mines up ahead. Then the Hornets and Harriers swept in, 300 sorties, all day long.

Hundreds of Iraqi soldiers met a quick end. Thousands more fled across the sands, leaving their loot

behind. The Western media quickly dubbed the carnage "The Highway to Hell."

The best flying of the third day belonged to the helicopter pilots, especially Lieutenant Colonel Michael Kurth. With Task Force Ripper needing gunship support beyond Al Jaber Airfield, and with unholy smoke and fog the worst yet, Kurth took off in a Huey jury-rigged with laser designation gear, leaving five Sea Cobra.

Flying low—so low that his skid marks nearly touched the sand, flying *beneath* three sets of high-tension power lines, Kurth led his Cobras to Ripper to deliver their goods. He did this twice.

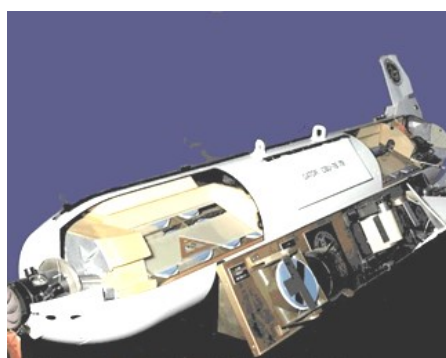
The 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade, still afloat off the coast and hankering for action, contributed by executing a series of fake landings demonstrations that fooled the Iraqis into deploying a fourth division near the coast. The last two battleships fighting on earth, *Missouri* and *Wisconsin*, reactivated for this special occasion, came in close and delivered thunderous sixteen-inch volleys into Iraqi troop concentrations below the capital. The Iraqi countered with two Chinese Silkworm antiship missiles. The battleships and their escorts calmly shot both missiles out of the air. Even the American antiques were killing the increasingly discouraged Iraqis.

The Marines deferred the honor of recapturing Kuwait City to their Kuwait and Arab allies, but a Marine recon team flew into the U.S. Embassy early and found the American flag still flying bravely. They replaced it with a large flag that had last flown in Vietnam. Honor restored.

No Marine would ever forget the cheers of welcome and gratitude from the Kuwaitis.



President Bush visiting troops during the Gulf war.



CBU-78 Gator Aerial Mine



Soviet Tank T-2s

## The Battle of the Chosin Reservoir continued from pg 2

Marines. Although strong air cover suppressed most of the Chinese forces for the rest of the march, the cold weather, harassing fire, raiding parties, and roadblocks slowed the retreat to a crawl, while inflicting numerous casualties. Despite those difficulties, the convoy reached Hagaru-ri in an orderly fashion on the afternoon of 3 December, with the withdrawal completed on 4 December.

**East of the reservoir:** RCT-31, later known as "Task Force Faith," was a hastily formed regimental combat team from the 7th Infantry Division that guarded the right flank of the Marine advance towards Mupyong-ni. Before the battle, RCT-31 was spread thin, with main elements separated on the hills north of Sinhung-ni, the Pyungnyuri Inlet west of Sinhung-ni, and the town of Hudong-ni south of Sinhung-ni. Although the Chinese believed RCT-31 to be a reinforced regiment, the task force was actually understrength, with one battalion missing, due to the bulk of the 7th Infantry Division being scattered over northeast Korea. On the night of 27 November, three regiments from the 80th Division attacked the northern hills and the inlet, completely surprising the defenders. The ensuing battle inflicted heavy casualties on the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry, to the north of Sinhung-ni, while the 57th Field Artillery Battalion and the 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry, were almost overrun at the Pyungnyuri Inlet. The Chinese also sent the 242nd Regiment of the 81st Division towards Hill 1221, an undefended hill that controlled the road between Sinhung-ni and Hudong-ni. As the night's fighting ended, RCT-31 was separated into three elements. Believing that the defenders had been completely destroyed at the inlet, the Chinese stopped their attacks and proceeded to loot the US positions for food and clothing. As morning came on 28 November, the 3/31st Infantry counter-attacked the PVA 239th Regiment at the inlet, sending the surprised Chinese back in a complete rout. In the afternoon, Almond flew into the Sinhung-ni perimeter of RCT-31, convinced that RCT-31 was strong enough to begin its attack north and deal with whatever "remnants" of Chinese forces that were in their way. Almond ordered Colonel Allan D. Maclean, the commander of RCT-31, to resume the offensive north while presenting Silver Stars to three of Maclean's officers. In disgust, Lieutenant Colonel Don C. Faith, Jr., the commander of the 1/32nd Infantry, threw his medal into the snow.

On the night of 28 November, the PVA 80th Division attacked again with four regiments. At the inlet, the Chinese assault became a disaster as communications broke down, while devastating fire from the M16 and M19 anti-aircraft (AA) guns attached to the 57th Field Artillery Battalion swept the Chinese ranks. In the aftermath of the fighting, the PVA 238th and the 239th Regiment together had fewer than 600 soldiers. The attacks by PVA 240th Regiment, on the other hand, forced Maclean to order a retreat from the northern hills towards Sinhung-ni. On 29 November, the 1st Battalion managed to break through the Chinese blockade and reached the Sinhung-ni perimeter, but Maclean was lost when he mistook some Chinese soldiers for American. The Chinese finally stopped their attacks on the night of 29 No-

vember, while waiting for fresh reinforcements.

While RCT-31 was under siege, Almond finally instructed the 1st Marine Division to rescue RCT-31 by breaking out of Yudam-ni, an impossible order for Smith to implement. Only the 31st Tank Company tried to rescue RCT-31 by attacking Hill 1221 from Hudong-ni, but without infantry support, the two armored attacks on 28 and 29 November were stalled by slippery roads, rough terrain, and close infantry assaults. By 30 November, the US forces evacuated Hudong-ni in order to defend Hagaru-ri, leaving the rest of RCT-31 completely stranded.

On 30 November, Major General David G. Barr, the commander of the 7th Infantry Division, flew into Sinhung-ni and met with Faith, who by now had assumed command of RCT-31. Faith expressed the difficulties for a breakout, particularly the 500 wounded that RCT-31 had to bring along. On the same day, parts of the PVA 94th Division and the rest of the 81st Division arrived as reinforcements for the 80th Division. By midnight, six Chinese regiments renewed their attacks, and Zhan Danan, the commander of the 80th Division, ordered the complete destruction of RCT-31 before dawn. Again, the 57th Battalion's AA guns held the Chinese at bay, but the shell supplies were running desperately low. On the day of 1 December, Faith finally ordered RCT-31 to breakout from Sinhung-ni and withdraw to Hagaru-ri.

The breakout began as soon as the weather allowed the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing to provide air cover on 1 December. As the soldiers formed a convoy and tried to leave the Sudong-ni perimeter, the PVA 241st Regiment immediately swarmed over the American forces, with three other regiments closing in. Left with no choice, the covering aircraft dropped napalm right in front of RCT-31, causing casualties among both Chinese and US troops. The resulting firestorm wiped out the blocking Chinese company, allowing the convoy to advance. As the front of RCT-31 made their way forward, heavy small arms fire caused many members of the rear guard to seek shelter below the road instead of protecting the trucks. Chinese fire also killed or wounded those already in the trucks as well as the drivers, who viewed the job as a form of suicide. Slowly, the convoy approached a roadblock under Hill 1221 in the late afternoon. Several parties tried to clear Hill 1221, but after taking part of the hill, the leaderless soldiers continued out onto the frozen reservoir instead of returning to the column. As Faith led an assault on the roadblock, he was hit by a Chinese grenade and subsequently died of his wounds. The convoy managed to fight past the first roadblock, but as it reached the second at Hudong-ni, RCT-31 disintegrated under Chinese attacks. Out of the original 2,500 soldiers, about 1,050 managed to reach Hagaru-ri, and only 385 survivors were deemed able-bodied. The remnants of RCT-31 were formed into a provisional army battalion for the rest of the battle.

Next month: Breakout



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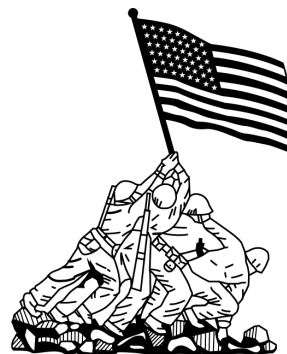
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***In Memory of  
Marine Tommy Collins  
And Deceased  
Detachment Members***



**Semper Fi**

03/2019

**Q:** How many Marines does it take to change a light bulb?

**A:** Just One Good Marine because we know the World is ours and it revolves around us.



*"Actually, I think our foxholes are supposed to be open at the top."*

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



**2018**  
 Larry Scott

04/2021

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06/2021

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

All membership dues are currently due. Last year National changed the due date so that everyone is paying at the same time.

If you have not already paid your annual membership please mail \$35 to

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**Semper Ji**

**January 2019**

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Newsletter Articles, Ads, and Pictures for February 2019 are due <b>NO LATER THAN January 22, 2019</b> <i>Starting in January there will be No Exceptions to this deadline</i>						
			2	3 MCLA Southern Belles VA Clinic 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.	4	5
6	7	8 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	9	10	11	12
13	14 MODD No Growl	15 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	23 MCL River Cities Det. #1090 VFW 1114 1900	24	25	26
27	28 MCLA Southern Belles Unit #441 AmVets #84 6:30 p.m.	29 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe	30	31		