



# River Cities News

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

Volume 17, Issue 3

March 2020

## The Lore of the Corps

Bob Reutter

*February 19, 2020 is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of the battles that has become an integral part of the history and tradition of the United States Marine Corps. I have read many books about the battle and have talked to three families of Marines that were involved. The following story was not told to me from a first-hand account. It is compiled from stories I have read by young men who were there and is based on their stories. I hope they look down and approve what I have written. Bob Reutter*

It is before dawn on Monday, February 19, 1945. Standing on the deck of a Landing Ship, Tank (LST) are a group of young men, most of whom are between 17 and 25 years of age. If they look out to sea, they can see a mighty armada of nearly 800 ships of all types and sizes. Many of these ships have been firing at the tiny island for three days. It was supposed to be 9 days but the Navy Brass felt that 3 was enough. Besides, the island has been under bombardment for almost 8 months. Surely that was enough, right? They have had the traditional pre-landing breakfast of steak and eggs and are preparing to climb down the nets into the LVPTs, LCIs and Higgins boats. Like young men everywhere, they are confident but scared, cocky but unsure, macho but secretly worried that they will not be up to what Marines before them for 170 years have accomplished. The boats begin to circle, then line up in waves for the invasion.

Finally it was 0900, the signal to advance is given and the lines of assault craft began the trip to the beach. The Brass has assured them that the sand would be no obstacle to their passage inland. They would be proven dead wrong. Resistance is light as the first waves hit the beach. In a very short time 6,000 Marines are on the beaches, crammed together by vehicles,

wheeled and tracked, that are bogged down by the volcanic ash that is more like quicksand than beach sand. Each step you took sinks your legs to the ankles. One Marine later described it as trying to walk on loose ball bearings. It is impossible to dig a fighting hole in it. The Japanese commander had abandoned the normal tactic of resisting the landing, opting instead to allow this 'traffic jam' at the beach line. Between 1000 and 1030, the Japanese open up with everything they have. Artillery that has been hidden deep in caves, impervious to the pre-invasion shelling, are rolled out to prepared lanes of fire down the beaches. Machine guns that had been pre-sighted to interlaced fields of fire rake the beaches cutting down Marines struggling to move in the clutching volcanic sand. You can't dig holes, so you run from one shell crater to the next. When you drop into the next hole, you tap the shoulder of the guy before you. He then runs to the following hole. Too often, you pass the guy in front of you laying in the sand where he has died. The only thing that keeps you going is training and that fact that you are a Marine. Although you don't know it at the time more than 500 Marines will die on this first day with over 2,400 casualties. By the end of your first day, there are 17 remaining of the 279 members of your company that climbed down those nets less than 24 hours ago.

It is now day four and the fight is off the beaches and has progressed further inland. Late in the morning you hear a cheer and look as Old Glory is raised on a pole atop Mt. Suribachi. It is a small flag but it stands proud. A short later, that

Continued on pg 2

### Detachment Officers

Commandant  
Jim Johnson

Sr. Vice Commandant  
John Bryant

Jr. Vice Commandant  
Jack Kincaide

Jr. Past Commandant  
Bob Reutter

Paymaster  
Don Landers Sr. (812) 483-3014

Adjutant  
Tim Jones (812) 454-8717

Judge Advocate  
T C Shane

Chaplain  
Bob Reutter (270) 314-9484

Sgt At Arms  
Melissa West

Newsletter Editor  
Paula Landers

Web Sergeant  
Paula Landers

## Lore of the Corps - continued from Pg 1

flag is replaced by a larger one so that “it will be seen by everyone on the island.” You are on a work detail ‘behind the lines,’ which is a joke because nowhere on this island is safe. Mail is being distributed for the first time and you are passing bags of mail over the trench that has been dug for some protection. Just as you pass a bag of mail over, you feel the Jap bullet pass between your open lips, take out a few teeth and exit the side of your left cheek. When you wake up you are back on a landing craft headed away from the fighting. Your time in Hell is over.

The real-life subject of this fictional account (like they say in the movies “based on actual events,” was Arvin T. “Mac” McRae. Mac was born on November 23, 1925 in New Harmony, Indiana. He celebrated his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday just 3 months before this landing. On Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, John Mills (himself a veteran of the

Frozen Chosin, having been wounded multiple times during the battle and having his frostbitten legs crushed when the truck in which he was being evacuated was hit by a Chinese artillery round. John would spend the next 13 months in hospitals in Japan and Tennessee) and I were the only Detachment members who were able to go to the funeral home to honor this 94-year-old Marine’s life. His sons told us of Mac’s pride in being a Marine. They also told us that until the last few years of his life, Mac did not talk about Iwo and what he endured there. I took one of the “**Sands of Iwo Jima**” posters with a vial of actual Iwo volcanic ash. It was an emotional scene when I presented it to Mac’s wife of 62 years, Georgia, and his sons Lee and Noel. They were very grateful to know that we have not forgotten what those Marines did 75 years ago. **Semper Fi, Mac.**



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**River Cities Detachment 1090  
Ship Store Surplus**

The items listed below are surplus from various Birthday Balls in the past. They are available on a 'first come, first served' basis and are in limited quantities. They are available for pickup in Evansville with prior arrangement. Shipping rates are listed.

*When they are gone, they are gone.*

	243 <sup>rd</sup> Ball 7 1/2 in K-bar style letter opener with canvas sheath. Each \$ 10.00 Shipping add \$ 4.00		243 <sup>rd</sup> Ball Glass Picture Frame 8" x 11" holds 4"x6" picture  Each \$10.00 Shipping add \$ 5.00
	US Flag and Marine Flag Lapel Pin/Tie Tac Each \$ 5.00 Shipping add \$ 2.00		244 <sup>th</sup> Ball Challenge Coin (shown front and back) Each \$ 10.00 Shipping add \$ 2.00
	River Cities Detachment 1090 15 ounce Stemless Wine Glass Each \$ 8.00 Shipping add \$ 3.00	15 ounce Stemless Wine Glass Set of 4 \$ 30.00 Shipping add \$6.00 Set of 8 \$ 50.00 Shipping add \$10.00	

**Ship Store Surplus**

- 243<sup>rd</sup> Ball 7 1/2 in K-bar style letter opener *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$10.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$4.00 Shipping*
- 243<sup>rd</sup> Ball Glass Picture Frame *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$10.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$5.00 Shipping*
- US Flag and Marine Flag Lapel Pin *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$5.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$2.00 Shipping*
- 244<sup>th</sup> Ball Challenge Coin *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$10.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$2.00 Shipping*
- 15 ounce Stemless Wine Glass Each *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$8.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$3.00 Shipping*
- 15 ounce Stemless Wine Glass Set 4 *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$30.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$6.00 Shipping*
- 15 ounce Stemless Wine Glass Set 8 *Quantity:* \_\_\_\_\_ *X \$50.00* *Total:* \_\_\_\_\_ *+ \$10.00 Shipping*

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ST:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

Grand Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to:** River Cities Det. #1090  
**Please Mail with Payment to:** Attention: Ship Store  
 P.O. Box 6581  
 Evansville, IN 47719-0581

*Please add the appropriate shipping, if not a local pick up. Shipping charges above are for 1 item or 1 set. Example, if you order 2 coins the shipping is \$4.00*



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proudly support our veterans*

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Serving those who have served our nation*

*Your Local Firefighters and Law Enforcement Officers are  
proud to support the River Cities Detachment*

*Semper Fidelis from the members of  
IAFF Local 357 and FOP Lodge 73*

04/2020

***Compliments of  
Joe and Kathy Filipczak***  
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*River Cities Detachment #1090*

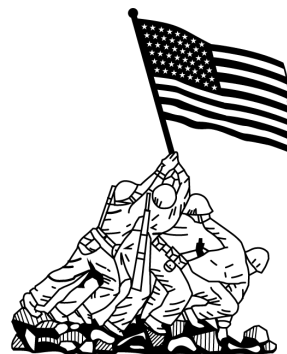
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***Compliments of  
Gary Burk, Life Member***  
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07/2020

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



**Semper Fi**

09/2020

***Support our Sponsors***  
**They help make this Newsletter possible**



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



**2019**

Jasper Marshal  
 Bill Bitter  
 Pat Dillback  
 (Associate Member)

04/2021

***Compliments of  
 Casey Canfield***

*Life Member  
 River Cities Detachment #1090*

01/2021

***Compliments of  
 Bob and Linda Reutter***

*Life Members  
 River Cities Detachment #1090*

06/2021

**DAVID L. JONES**

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08/2020

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**Southern Belles Unit 441**

10/2020

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**IMPORTANT**  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

National changed the due date,  
 so that everyone is  
 paying at the same time.

Dues for 2019 - 2020  
 Before August 1st - \$25  
 After August 1st - \$35

Initial Membership Dues are \$35

Mail your annual membership fees to:

River Cities Det. #1090  
 Attn: Membership  
 PO Box 6581  
 Evansville IN 47719-0581

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**Check out the Ship Store  
 On Page 4**

«AddressBlock»

# Semper Ji

## March 2020

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	4	5 MCLA Southern Belles VA Clinic 8 a.m.-11 a.m.	6	7 MCLA Spring Craft Fair 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Veterans Memorial Coliseum
8	9 No MODD Growl	10 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	18	19	20	21
22	23 MCLA Southern Belles Unit #441 AmVets #84 6:30 p.m.	24 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	25 MCL River Cities Det. #1090 VFW 1114 1900	26	27	28
29	30	31 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	Newsletter Articles, Ads, and Pictures for April 2020 are due NO LATER THAN March 22, 2020 There are No Exceptions to this deadline.			