



River Cities News

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

Volume 16, Issue 9
September 2019

Commandant's Corner

Jim Johnson

On July 11th 2019 General David H. Berger assumed the duties as the 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps. Upon assuming command General Berger graciously thanked the Marines who have mentored and guided him throughout his career. " I consider it a privilege just to wear the uniform, just to stand in their ranks, calling yourself a Marine - it's an honor". He went on to say "I believe in my soul that Marines are different. We are not like everyone else and the Marine Corps is not like any other organization. This is the force that will always adapt and overcome. No matter the circumstance are--we will fight and win in any clime and place. That's what we do and that's who we are".

General Berger took command from General Robert B. Neller who is retiring after 44 years in our beloved Corps. He stated that he was proud to be part of an organization that is held in high esteem by our nation because they believe we do what we say and say what we do, and we hold ourselves accountable. We are men and women of virtue and character.

Our new SgtMaj of the Marine Corps is SgtMaj Green. I do not have any information on him.

Don't forget the Marine Corps Birthday Ball on 9 November. Tickets will be on sale for \$50 on our website. The Ball will be held at the Double Tree by Hilton downtown Evansville.

Semper Fi

From the Editor

Paula Landers

I would like to remind everyone that any questions or concerns regarding the newsletter can be sent to MCLRIVERCITIES@GMAIL. As editor it is my job to answer your questions.

The work day on the food booth will be Saturday, September 14th from 0900 until done. We will be making some repairs and updates along with general cleaning. Please bring your own hand tools. More information will be sent out via e-mail. Please send an e-mail to mclrivercities@gmail.com with you current contact information. So I can update the e-mail list.

Also as the secretary/treasurer of MCLA Southern Belles Unit 441, I want to invited all the ladies to our September meeting. We are having

a membership drive in September and October. Anyone joining will only need to pay \$20 for National and Department dues.

Our meetings are held on the 4 Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at AmVets #84, 2912 Broadway in Evansville.



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Paymaster
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Jr. Vice Commandant
Jack Kincaide

Judge Advocate
T C Shane

Web Sergeant
Paula Landers

Jr. Past Commandant
Bob Reutter

Chaplain
Bob Reutter (270) 314-9484

Marine Corps History

Gary Burk

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

STRANGLING RABAU (1943)

Marine night fighters made their debut in the South Pacific in 1943, early pioneers of a tactic which would grow in value as technology improved. The essence of effective night fighter operations is the marriage between a ground control intercept (GCI) radar and an airborne interceptor. But the jungle canopy hindered GCI effectiveness, and the Marines’ second-hand, twin-engined Vega PV-1 Venturas were marginal in locking-on distant targets in the tropical darkness.

The few night kills came at the hands of extremely brave pilots at outrageously short ranges. One Marine returned to base with his windshield smeared with Japanese blood and oil; another landed with pieces of his opponent’s plane embedded in his engine cowling.

Later in the war, the Corps would employ modified F4U Corsairs and even F6F Hellcats as night fighters with deadly efficiency. In the Rabaul campaign, the Marines at least learned an invaluable lesson for amphibious warfare: Air defense of the newly captured beachhead was most critical the first night, when ships had to retreat over the horizon, leaving the assault force to its own devices against the inevitable waves of Japanese bombers. Getting the bulky GCI unit ashore and operational before dark on D-Day became an essential priority.

In April a handpicked section of USAAF-38 pilots achieved the greatest coup of the year when they shot down the irreplaceable Admiral Yamamoto over Bougainville in a well-executed aerial ambush.

Marine Major John Condon bore a hand in the intercept. Condon, operations officer for the joint fighter command on Guadalcanal, piloted the course for the Lightnings to take from Henderson Field to Bougainville—directing them to fly outside The Slot, west of New Georgia, fifty feet off the deck. The plan worked to perfection. “Sounds as though one of the ducks in their bag was a peacock,” signaled Bull Halsey at the

news of Yamamoto’s plane crashing in flames in the jungle.

In truth, flying any aircraft over the hostile skies of the Solomons and Bismarcks in 1943 placed a premium on skill and raw courage. Each week the aviators recounted great victories, stinging defeats, mysterious losses, miraculous losses, miraculous survivals.

Such incidents became the stuff of legends, but in fact Marine aviators of all persuasions were earning their combat spurs in this protracted campaign. The infantry remained skeptical. In the Marine rifleman’s somewhat provincial view, the ultimate measure of any pilot’s effectiveness was his ability to support the guy on the ground.

To do the job right—and avoid killing friendly ground troops—required reliable communications between an experienced aviation ground party, hunkered at the side of the infantry commander. It was a hell of investment, taking seasoned pilots out of their beloved cockpits and deploying them with “the grunts,” but the value of having a seasoned dive-bomber pilot on the ground, assessing the target and talking his former cohorts into the attack, could not be beat. The 3d Marine Division at Bougainville experimented with ground-based air liaison teams with considerable success, an encouraging start.

(to be continued)

Strange Tales of the Air War

Marine Sergeant Gilbert Henze, a rear-seat gunner in a TBD Avenger, uneasily took over the controls when AA fire killed his pilot.

The wingman hovered nearby, giving Henze basic flight instruction and encouragement by radio. Sergeant Henze almost made it back to base on this, his “maiden flight,” but the radios failed, the TBF ran out of gas, and he had to ditch. In his haste, Henze struck the stabilizer as he bailed out; the impact cut off his leg below the knee. He had the presence of mind to bind up the stump with an improvised tourniquet before he hit the water. Native Solomon Islanders rescued him off Tulagi.

In another incident, Marine Lieutenant Gilbert Percy bailed out of his crippled plane at 2000 feet. His chute streamed but failed to open. Percy fell into the sea, striking the water feet first, and somehow survived falling twice a distance twice the height of the Empire State Building.

The Lore of the Corps

Bob Reutter

Our new commandant has taken little time in letting the military, the country and his Marines know what to expect from the Corps in the near future. It appears that he has a grasp on what we should be doing and a vision as to how to achieve what is asked of the Marines. The following appeared in Military.com.

By [Gina Harkins](#)



Just days into his term as commandant, Gen. David Berger has unveiled a bold new plan for the Marine Corps that could put an end to swirling debate that the service is trying to be everything to everyone.

The service can't afford to build tailor-trained units designed to fight specific missions, such as urban, desert or Arctic operations, Berger wrote in his planning guidance, which was released Tuesday.

Instead, he said, "We will build one force -- optimized for naval expeditionary warfare in contested spaces, purpose-built to facilitate sea denial and assured access in support of the fleets.

"That single purpose-built future force," Berger added, "will be applied against other challenges across the globe; however, we will not seek to hedge or balance our investments to account for those contingencies."

In other words, Marines will be able to operate in urban or cold-weather environments, but they'll be trained and equipped first and foremost as a naval expeditionary force. The commandant's vision follows several new global threats, including China's buildup of militarized islands in the South China Sea; Russia's naval plus-up in the Black Sea, Arctic and other locations; and Iran's recent aggression near a vital international shipping route.

Berger's announcement is also a big change from what one officer described earlier this

year as the Marine Corps' attempt to prepare for a "dizzying array" of missions.

Maj. Leo Spaeder, an air-ground task force planner at the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, said the service was at a crossroads of multiple personality disorder in a commentary he wrote for War on the Rocks titled, "Sir, Who Am I? An Open Letter to the Incoming Commandant of the Marine Corps."

"Urban/megacities, jungle, sea control, forcible entry operations, amphibious, expeditionary, naval, crisis responders," Spaeder wrote, referencing just some of the missions he'd heard the Marine Corps would pursue. "... I could go on, but it's starting to feel absurd."

Military.com asked Berger about that major's concerns during a recent interview at the Pentagon, and the commandant promised the Marine would get the direction he sought.

"There is an answer, and I'm ready to lay it out," Berger said. "But I have to have that discussion with senior leaders first. I know exactly what he's asking, and [my answer] will be very clear."

The coming decade, Berger writes in his guidance to the force, is going to be characterized by conflict, crisis and rapid change. The future operating environment will put "heavy demands" on the nation's sea services, he adds, and Marines need to be prepared for what's to come.

"Marines cannot be passive passengers en-route to the amphibious objective area," Berger said. "As long-range precision stand-off weapons improve and diffuse along the world's littorals, Marines must contribute to the fight alongside our Navy shipmates from the moment we embark." The fight alongside the Navy fleet will continue when Marines are ashore, he said. And Marines are going to need to study up on how they can best support that kind of fight.

While Marines should take pride in all they know about counterinsurgency operations, Berger said it's time to direct their attention elsewhere. "As a service, we lack the requisite naval education to engage our fellow naval officers and peers constructively in discussions on naval

Continued on pg 4

The Lore of the Corps - continued from pg 3

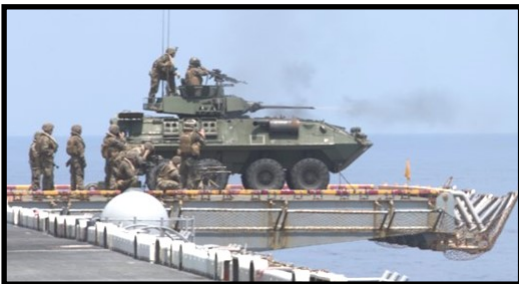
concepts, naval programs, or naval warfare," he wrote. "... All our formal schools must and will change their programs of instruction to include a greater naval orientation."

The next four years will be a period of "substantive change," the commandant told Marines. But, he stressed, the service is not facing risk of irrelevance, as some have said, after nearly two decades of ground occupations.

"Let me be clear -- we are not experiencing an identity crisis," Berger wrote. "... We are a naval expeditionary force capable of deterring malign behavior and, when necessary, fighting inside our adversary's weapons-engagement-zone to facilitate sea denial in support of fleet operation and joint force horizontal escalation."

The Marine Corps is strapping armored vehicles to the top of Navy ships to fend off small boats and other threats.

The Corps already has fired its rocket artillery from a Navy ship. Now the Corps is experiment-



Marines sit on a Light Armored Vehicle atop the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp.

ing with strapping [light armored vehicles](#), or LAVs, to the flight deck to counter small boat and other threats.

In September, Marines with the [31st Marine Expeditionary](#), or MEU, embarked aboard the amphibious assault ship Wasp parked LAVs on the flight deck for a ship defense drill in the South China Sea that was designed to mimic the MEU's voyage through dangerous waters. While the use of the Corps' LAVs aboard the amphib ship was innovative, it opens a slew of questions about the security and capabilities of large US Navy and transport ships operating in dangerous waters across the globe that may have to rely on [aging Marine assets](#) to counter some surface threats.

"This was the first time that an LAV-25 platoon with the 31st MEU performed this level of integrated targeting and live-fire from the flight deck of a ship such as the Wasp with combined arms," McArthur said.



A Marine uses the M41A4 SABER system to observe impacts from a Light Armored Vehicle's M242 Bushmaster 25 mm chain gun.

In Oct. 2017, the Corps successfully tested the [High Mobility Artillery Rocket System](#) on the deck of the amphibious transport dock Anchorage. The rocket artillery system destroyed a land-based target 70 km [away](#).

Humor in (Marine) Uniform

Hunting Safety

And while we are talking about hunting this: a group from a local Air Force base decided to go deer hunting. They talked about the risk of getting lost in the woods so they decided that if they did get lost they would stop in place and fire three shots into the air every 15 minutes until located. Of course being airmen, a while later one of the pair found themselves unable to find their way back.

As arranged, they fired three shots into the air. 15 minutes later they fired three more shots. 15 minutes – three more shots and so on. After two hours they were still unfound. Finally, one of the airmen looked at the other and said "I hope they find us soon, I am almost out of arrows."

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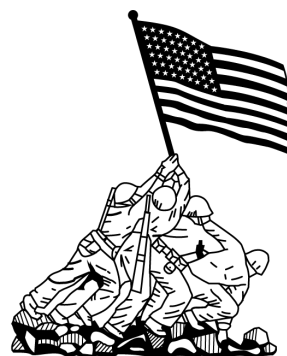
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Carolyn McWilliams*

In honor and memory of the
17th Rifle Company
2700 West Illinois Street
Evansville, IN

For all the men who served
diligently, and with dedication.



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



Semper Fi

09/2020

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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)

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***Compliments of
 Casey Canfield***

*Life Member
 River Cities Detachment #1090*

01/2020

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

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06/2021

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Southern Belles Unit 441

12/2019

***Compliments of
 John and Judy Bryant***

*Life Member
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02/2020

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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

Marine Corps Birthday Ball
Saturday, November 9, 2019

Double Tree Hotel
 601 Walnut Street
 Evansville, IN 47708
 Phone: (812) 423-5002

Tickets will be \$50

Check the Web Site for the most current
 information and to purchase your tickets,
 when they become available.

«AddressBlock»

Semper Fi

September 2019

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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
8	9 No MODD Growl	10 Det. 1090 Breakfast Libby's and Mom's Cafe 0800	11	12	13	14 Food Booth Work Detail 9 to ?? TFT Warehouse parking lot
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	Newsletter Articles, Ads, and Pictures for October 2019 are due NO LATER THAN September 22, 2019 There are No Exceptions to this deadline				