

ONCE A MARINE, ALWAYS A MARINE

Vol. 80 No. 3 • SUMMER 2024

SEMPER PARATI



The Magazine of the Marine Corps League

Memoirs of the Chosin Reservoir

**General Gray's Long
History with the
YPF: A Tribute to
a Marine's Marine**

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Marines of the 5th and 7th regiments who hurled back a surprise onslaught by three Chinese communist divisions wait to withdraw from the Chosin Reservoir area circa December 1950. National Archives photo



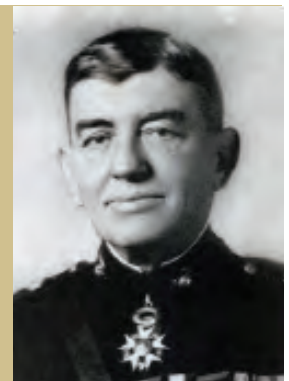
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Founded in 1923 by Lieutenant General John A. Lejeune (\LUH-jern\), the Marine Corps League is the only federally chartered Marine Corps-related veterans organization in the United States.



NATIONAL COMMANDANT'S LETTER

WARREN "GRIFF" GRIFFIN

You Are Making a Difference

MARINES: We are closing out another year with conventions and conferences around the country. Thanks to our national staff led by Bob Borka, these gatherings are not just needed social events but also needed informative sessions. They provide a learning benefit for all of us.



The 2024 Modern Day Marine is now in the books. Thank you to all who volunteered to represent the League and work in various capacities to make this event the most successful in history. U.S. Marine Corps representatives, other partners, and allies from around the globe were able to connect with our people and gain a better understanding of what the MCL is all about. We

can all be proud of who we are and what we do. We wanted to put on a good face, and we truly had an extraordinary event.

This year, we were able to expand our outreach to those of our brothers and sisters who are in crisis or simply in need. This is the most impactful service we can provide. Most of us reading this are in decent shape but we know that there are those we served with who need support. We are here for you.

Our Youth Physical Fitness program is back after suffering from the blight caused by COVID and the non-contact society under which we were operating. The YPF program is in very capable hands and will continue to grow and provide a much-needed program for the youth of America.

Our National Convention will be in Rancho Mirage, California, and everyone is looking forward to enjoying the California experience. One of the excursions is to visit a resort called Twentynine Palms. I hear many Marines have been able to enjoy this luxurious location. For myself, this will be my first occasion to see what everyone has been talking about. When we went through staging for Vietnam, our training was only within the confines of Camp Pendleton. Nature provided us with a lovely mountain to train on with a funny name.

This year, with our National Convention, will come a new slate of officers to lead us into the future. Personal issues over the past year have kept me from reaching my full potential as your leader. Thus, I will not be a candidate for reelection as your National Commandant. There is a very capable and worthy slate of officers who have stepped up to accept new responsibilities. You will be well cared for with these Marines. I appreciate the good fortune you have provided me in allowing me to represent you as your 65th National Commandant. I have had the opportunity to meet many new Marines and they have touched my heart in an incredibly special way. **Semper Fi!**



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The Marine Corps League Inc. is a Congressionally chartered, non-profit organization.

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Semper Fi is published quarterly for the Marine Corps League by:
Chipotle Publishing, LLC

Ph: (702) 565-0746 • www.chipotlepublishing.com

Semper Fi, The Magazine of the Marine Corps League™

(USPS712050, ISSN 1933-2327), copyright ©2024 by the Marine Corps League, is published quarterly (4 times per year) in January, April, July and October by Chipotle Publishing, 631 N. Stephanie Street - Box 282, Henderson, NV 89014 for the Marine Corps League. Marine Corps League Business Office: MCL National Headquarters, P.O. Box 1990, Stafford, VA 22555-1990. Telephone: (703) 207-9588. Website: www.mclnational.org. Email: COO@MCLLeague.org

Subscriptions: Members' national dues include a free subscription to **Semper Fi**. For non-members, single-copy price is \$10; yearly subscription is \$30. Call (703) 207-9588 for any issues related to Marine Corps League membership, **Semper Fi** subscriptions or changes of address.

Editorial Contributions: Letters, manuscripts, stories, materials or photographs are welcomed but cannot be returned unless sender provides SASE. **Semper Fi, The Magazine of the Marine Corps League™** will not be responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photos and drawings. Submission of articles and letters implies the right to edit and publish all or in part. Feature articles must be approved before submission. High-resolution digital photos preferred. For complete editorial and photo guidelines, contact Chipotle Publishing, LLC at semperfi@chipotlepublishing.com or (702) 565-0746.

Postmaster: Send address changes to 3619 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 115, Stafford, VA 22554.

Periodicals postage paid at Henderson, NV and additional mailing offices. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and are not to be construed as those of the publisher nor as the official views of the Marine Corps League, the United States Marine Corps, the U.S. Department of Defense or any of its agencies, unless otherwise made manifest by writers or spokespersons acting on behalf of the foregoing. Advertising of products and services herein does not imply endorsement or approval by the Marine Corps League. No portion of the magazine may be reproduced in whole or in part without written consent.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/COO

BOB BORKA

Does a Leader Need To Be Inspired To Be Inspirational?



MARINES: Organizational leaders should be going the extra MILE. They Motivate, Inspire, Lead, and Engage. This helps guide a team toward its goals. Being an inspirational leader doesn't mean you have to be the best at wearing a suit and standing on stage, and while those may be great qualities in a boss, there are important characteristics needed behind the scenes.

It is important for a leader to have a good idea of what direction they are headed (a vision), have the heart of a servant leader, and foundational integrity.

The vision of the organization will naturally change over time, but it should have a construct that provides guidance for those with responsibility of fiduciary oversight and governance.

Members of the MCL have the heart of a servant leader. Our members give their time and energy daily in their communities, benefiting the social welfare of its citizens (veterans and family members of the veteran). Our members volunteer with youth (YPF, Young Marines, JROTC) to guide and mentor; they support toy collection and donations that spread joy during the holidays; render honors at funerals; help veterans with the V.A.; visit veterans in the hospital; and provide countless other services. Our Marines, FMF Sailors, and associate members are servant leaders and are remarkable!

Foundational integrity is rooted in our upbringing, but can be changed as the circumstances in our life build new foundations. A book that is special to me says to train a child in the way they should go and when they get old, they will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6). That is, of course, assuming someone was trained correctly. In the Marine Corps, we are reborn as Marines. During our upbringing (new and junior Marines) we are also taught the way we should go. Sometimes that works and sometimes it results in office hours. Integrity is one of the traits taught in recruit training. While some may have missed it growing up, they certainly learned about it when they joined the military. This does not mean people are perfect. Of course, people make mistakes and hopefully that can bring some forgiveness.

The extra MILE you take in your detachment does not go unnoticed. Your vision, service, and integrity are appreciated and inspire us to keep moving forward. **Semper Fi!**

NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF EVENTS AND VETERANS SERVICE

TOM MUELLER, USMC (RET)

A Sea of Red

MARINES: Many thanks to the MCL members who supported Modern Day Marine this year. The MCL's presence at and value to the expo is vitally important. Thank you for being there to help make this year's expo a great success.

If you read about Modern Day Marine in the May issue of *Semper Fi*, you

Continued Next Page



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EVENTS AND VETERANS SERVICE

From Previous Page

know that this annual expo facilitates collaboration between Marines and industry professionals to explore and advance the most effective solutions for accelerating innovation within the Marine Corps. It is the largest military equipment, systems, services, and technology exposition exclusively targeted to Marines and the Corps. For Modern Day Marine 2025, to be held 29 April – 1 May 2025, and commemorating the 250th anniversary year of the founding of our Corps, I would love to see each MCL detachment represented! Such an overwhelming Marine Corps veteran presence would be unprecedented for military expos, and what an honor it would be for our members to represent the League and their detachment at this event, held in our nation's capital.

How do we make it happen? The estimated per-person cost for transportation, hotel, and registration fee should be no more than \$2500 for a three-day, three-night TAD. For those detachments that are located close to D.C., the amount would be significantly less. I know detachment funds support worthy causes like local scholarship funds and community veterans, and sending a representative to Modern Day Marine may be challenging, but we are trained to improvise, adapt, and overcome. We fight and keep fighting until victory is assured! Your support is a small investment in the future of the MCL. Modern Day Marine is a tre-



mendous opportunity to connect and share our stories with the Marines in uniform and get the latest information on the state of the Corps from its senior leaders. Old Corps connecting with New Corps is a fantastic way to promote interest in the MCL, preserve the traditions of the Marine Corps, and strengthen the fraternity of Marines and their families.

UPDATE ON OUR SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM

During the past few months, a lot of groundwork has been laid to strengthen our service officer program. One notable accomplishment is updating the "Veterans Service" webpage on www.mcleaguelibrary.org. The new content publicly declares our service officer program mission and vision. This mission statement is the reason why our service officers exist. The vision statement is where we aspire to go and what we hope to accomplish in the next several years.

Another improvement to our website is the content that explains the differences in the roles and responsibilities of a Veterans Service Officer (VSO) and a Detachment Service Officer (DSO). These two critical and complementary roles help veterans and their family members obtain the post-service benefits they have rightfully earned. The distinction? VSOs are formally accredited to represent a claimant, whereas DSOs can assist a claimant, but cannot represent a claimant in matters before the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Lastly, in collaboration with a few of our MCL members, and drawing on the resources of other VSOs and the Department of Veterans Affairs, we have drafted a DSO guidebook. This guidebook is intended to serve as a ready resource to assist the men and women who voluntarily serve as a DSO.

Our Service Officer Program is making good headway. Buckle up and stay tuned for additional updates. **Semper Fi!**

NATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

VICTORIA MCCOY

Thanks for the Memories

MARINES: It's time for another transition within the Marine Corps League National Public Relations Committee. I am a firm believer that in any organization, fresh, new ideas should be welcomed. This is one of the many reasons that I will not be accepting another appointment as the chairperson of this committee. In my departure, I will always be available to help in any way as I, too, must leave this position to continue to advance the MCL.

The NPRC has brought the MCL into many new platforms as we all grow with the technology and resources available to us.

It's been my honor and privilege to work with some of the finest members in the MCL on this committee. Together, we have grown some of the already existing social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube to name a few.



We've introduced the "MCL Scuttlebutt" Zoom sessions, formerly known as "Commandant's Corner," and have pushed several series of informational sessions. These are just a couple of action items we have achieved, together.

Although this committee has gained and lost members over the years, none of those who have left the committee did so because it was too much work. We've all had enormous fun and learned so much from each other, as well as others, during our monthly Zoom meetings.

I leave you all with a quote that I hope will help you grow your membership; "Recruit the member, retain the family." If we ask too much of the membership, we could lose them to their personal commitments to family, friends, and careers. Include your spouses, neighbors, and community members more often. Show them that fun and giving back is what we are all about.

For those who attend or view the monthly MCL Scuttlebutt sessions, you will know what I mean when I bid you farewell with "Good night Chesty, wherever you are." **Semper Fi!**

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NATIONAL PRESIDENT, MCL AUXILIARY

LINDA S. CHAMBERLAIN

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Heroes



AUXILIARY AND LEAGUE MEMBERS: As I write my final article, I'm preparing to leave for Modern Day Marine, which is always an educational and fun time. Educational because you get a sneak preview of all the newest products and services to keep our Marines safe, and fun because you get to meet and greet thousands of people.

By the time this article goes to print, and you're reading the summer issue of *Semper Fi* Magazine, Memorial Day ceremonies will be over, the year's July 4th parades, barbeques and fireworks will be history, and you may have taken your son or daughter to college for the first time or saw a grandchild start school for the first time. Finally, you may be preparing to attend (or just returning from) the National Convention in Palm Springs. Time sure does fly when you are involved and having fun, but all of this is not what my article is about.

While having lunch with friends the other day, something on display caught my eye... just a little something that made me stop and think. Before I go on, I would like you to think back to the heroes of your youth. Mighty Mouse, Spider-Man, Batman, Wonder Woman, Batgirl... do you see any similarities? Other



than being fictitious, they all wore capes. Well, these real-life people are heroes also; Bea Arthur, Steve McQueen, Gene Hackman, Drew Carey, John Basilone, Commandant Warren Griffin, COO Bob Borka, PNC Johnny Baker, PNC Helen Hicks, to name a few, are heroes, as well. No, they didn't wear a cape, but they all did wear DOG TAGS and served in the USMC. What caught my eye and made me stop and think was a sign with a chain that read, "HEROES Don't Wear Capes. They Wear DOG TAGS." How true this is!

Flag placement and attending the Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington this year had an altogether different meaning. I always appreciated the sacrifices made by so many so I could live in the "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," but I never really considered all of them heroes before. So, next time you see a member of the United States military, do not only thank them for their service, but let them know they are your hero. It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the MCL Auxiliary National President for the past two years. Thank you to all my Heroes. Stay safe, and until next time,

Semper Fi!

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HOWARD C. SCHAEFFER

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A Beacon of Support

MARINES: As President of our esteemed Marine Corps League Foundation, it's with great pride and a deep sense of duty that I address you today. Our Foundation stands as a beacon of support and solidarity, embodying the very essence of what it means to belong to the League.

At the core of our Foundation lies a profound commitment to our members – the backbone of our organization. Each of us, bound by the shared values instilled in us during our service, understands the importance of standing together in times of need. Whether in times of crisis or moments of celebration, the Marine Corps spirit thrives on the principle of leaving no one behind.

Our Foundation exists to ensure that this principle is upheld, providing vital support to our members and their families when they face hardships or challenges. From financial assistance for medical bills to educational scholarships for our veterans and their descendants, we strive to alleviate the burdens that may weigh heavily on our comrades' shoulders.

But beyond the tangible support we offer, the MCL Foundation



serves as a symbol of unity and camaraderie. It is a testament to the enduring bond that connects us all – a bond forged in the crucible of shared sacrifice and unwavering dedication to our nation.

As members of the League, we understand that our duty does not end with the completion of our service. It is a lifelong commitment to service, to each other, and to the ideals for which we proudly fought. In upholding this commitment, our Foundation plays a pivotal role, ensuring that no Marine or Marine family member is left to face life's challenges alone.

In these tumultuous times, marked by uncertainty and change, the importance of our Foundation cannot be overstated. It stands as a steady pillar of support amidst the storm, offering reassurance and aid to those who need it most. And as we navigate the complexities of the world around us, we can take solace in the knowledge that, as members of the Marine Corps League, we are never truly alone.

So let us stand together, united in service and solidarity, as we continue to uphold the values that define us as Marines. Let us reaffirm our commitment to each other and to the mission of our Foundation, knowing that, by supporting one another, we honor the legacy of those who came before us and pave the way for future generations of Marines. Marines, I implore you to please be generous to your Foundation. We need your commitment and help. **Semper Fi!**

YOUNG MARINES

BILL DAVIS

Volunteering with the Young Marines Is So Important

MARINES: *Written by guest author Susan Suber* On October 17, 1959, in the small town of Waterbury, Connecticut, the Brass City Marine Corps League started the Young Marines program. The goal for these Marines was to teach young boys about leadership and life skills. Six years later, the Young Marines of the Marine Corp League was officially born. Over the last 65 years, the Young Marines have grown extraordinarily into the nationwide program it is today.

I am Young Marine Sgt. Maj. Susan Suber, the 2024-2025 National Young Marine of the Year. I am a part of the Lancaster County Young Marines in Holtwood, Pennsylvania. I first learned about the program when I was seven years old. My brother had joined the program and inspired me to join when I was old enough. Although it was a couple of years until I joined, becoming a Young Marine has truly been one of my best decisions. Through my eight years in the program, I have learned so much, met so many amazing people, and had so many once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.



I am fortunate to work with the Marine Corps League members and make a difference in many lives. Not only have I learned a lot from the members I have met, but I have also made lifelong connections. I now have wonderful memories of working with Marine Corps League members from the 2024 New England Division Conference and State Convention. There, I performed in a color guard and had the opportunity to speak at the banquet about the Young Marines Program. This convention presented me with such an amazing opportunity to get to know some of the MCL members and hear their stories. Besides MCL members volunteering in the program, one of the best parts of the relationship that exists between the two organizations is the sharing of stories and the relationships that are built. Words cannot explain the appreciation that we Young Marines have for the member of the MCL. I would like to thank you each of you for your support of the Young Marines program. Our connection is so important and will never be forgotten. **Semper Fi!**

CHIEF DEVIL DOG

ALAN SANNING, 60TH CHIEF DEVIL DOG

Pack Your Bags, Grab Your Sunglasses, and Head West Dogs!



MARINES: Time is flying and for dogs attending the supreme growl in Rancho Mirage, it should be time to pack your bags as you receive this issue of Semper Fi. As I near the end of my tour as the 60th CDD, I want to express my gratitude for all the hard work and dedication from so many dogs around the country, and for the hospitality, camaraderie and fun extended at your division conferences and department conventions I've attended. It's been rewarding to see so many coming together to support great causes like the Children's Hospital fund, Operation Chow Hound, and Toys for Tots in addition to your local projects. Special thanks to your superb kennel staff for the positive changes they've brought such as online raffles and Operation Chow Hound, along with the many hours they put in to ensure successful supreme and mini-growls. WOOF-WOOF!

Attending different pack and pound growls nationwide, other Kennel Board of Trustees (KBOT) members and myself have received questions on a change to the opening ceremony regarding the Pledge of Allegiance. The KBOT unanimously voted to make the change to put us in line with the oath we swear as pups, and again as DD and PDD, "...do solemnly swear that I will uphold

and defend the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America..."

As many of you may know, the United States Code outlines our nation's general and permanent laws, including "Pledge of allegiance to the flag; manner of delivery" (Title 4 U.S. Code, Chapter 1, Section 4).

The section starts with the Pledge of Allegiance and explains that it, "should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove any non-religious headwear with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand over the heart. Those in uniform should stay silent, face the flag, and render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces not in uniform and veterans may render the military salute as those in uniform."

At this point in the opening ceremony, we have already rendered honors to the flag with a hand salute. The purpose now is to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, which we cannot do while covered, holding the hand salute and remaining silent per the law and Marine Corps tradition.

The easy fix: remove our covers, place our hands over our hearts, recite the Pledge together, and then move



PCDD Fisk & losing
team NH 2024-04



How many Deputy Ops Dogs does it take?

on. We discussed having one person uncover to recite the pledge as everyone else kept their covers on and silently rendered a hand salute. This didn't make sense, as one person can't pledge

something for all others in the room, any more than one person could swear the oath of office for everyone else elected to office. Additionally, we would be asking one person to do something



Watch Dog & Minions.

we were unwilling to do ourselves, recite the Pledge of Allegiance with cover off and hand over the heart.

Once explained, the few dogs who initially had questions at these growls said they were satisfied with the new procedure, and, when asked, there were no further questions or concerns.

I appreciate the time, talent, and support each of you bring to the Order. Keep an eye out for potential new members and remember to keep it fun! **Semper Woof!**

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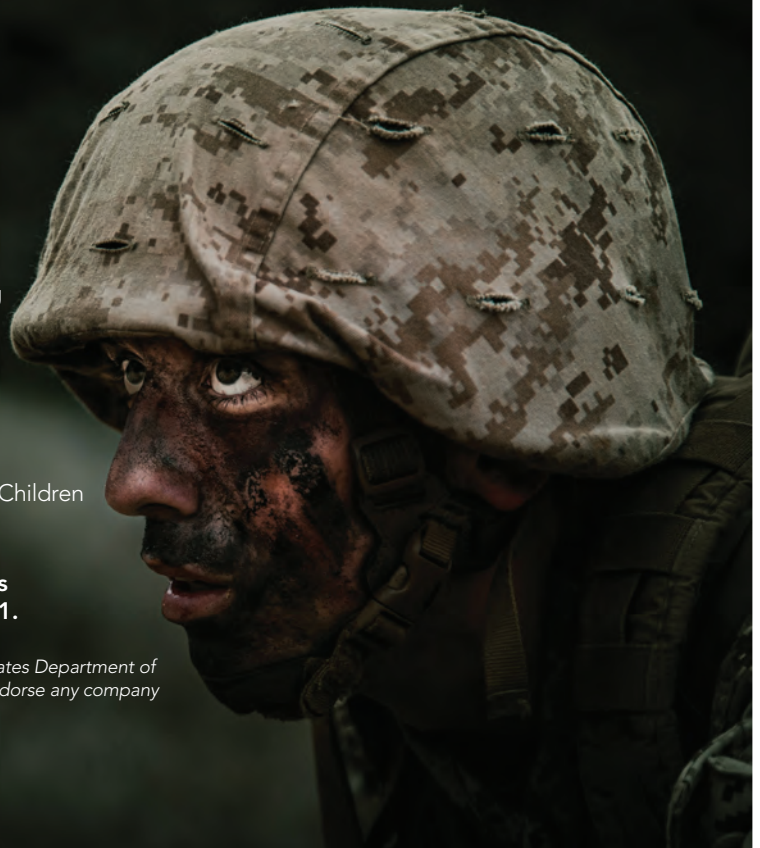
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NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE

DAVID PORTER

Your Time Is Valuable

MARINES: Surrounding ourselves with people who inspire us and hold us to high standards further motivates us to strive for excellence. It's all about embracing our potential and making the most of the time we have.

John "JR" Rutovich was that Marine who helped others become the better version of themselves. JR answered his final call on 25 April 2024. Though he is gone, he is not forgotten. JR always reminded us, what we are a part of and how valuable our time was. For every convention or conference we had to travel to, he would already have a route to visit a member of his detachment who had moved. JR understood his purpose.

Feeling seen, heard, and valued is crucial for individuals to thrive and feel fulfilled. Being present and attentive to our fellow brothers and sisters can make a significant difference in their lives. It's essential to recognize that the impact we have on others often comes from the small, everyday actions we take. Whether it's offering a kind word, lending an ear, or providing support, these gestures can leave a lasting impression.

When we shift our focus from measuring productivity to **valuing presence**, it allows us to appreciate the quality of our time with others. It encourages us to prioritize meaningful connections and moments over simply checking off tasks. Ultimately, it's these moments of gen-



uine connection that enrich our lives and the lives of those around us.

Why am I saying all of this? You may be thinking, "This doesn't sound like what a National Judge Advocate would cover?" But it does. My goal is to try to get ahead of things before we get to a Chapter Nine. We have come so far and must not allow friction to arise from two personalities butting heads. I heard in a homily one day, try not to say, "this

is always the way we did it" instead say, "I want to make it stronger and better."

Starting with our mindset is key. Our perspective shapes how we perceive and interact with the world around us. Cultivating a positive mindset allows us to focus on what truly matters and find value in both big achievements and small moments.

Embracing our mistakes and being open to learning from them helps us become better versions of ourselves. Seeking help and feedback from others, whether they're mentors, peers, or neutral parties, provides valuable perspective and insight that we might not have considered on our own. **Semper Fi!**

JUNIOR PAST NATIONAL COMMANDANT

JOHNNY BAKER

Communication Is the Key to Success!

MARINES: The National Mid-Winter Conference was held for the first time in Pentagon City, VA and was a great event. A lot of information was passed, and we were very fortunate to have Gen. John Kelly, former White House Chief of Staff, and a USMC general officer as our guest of honor. He gave a very motivational speech.

During the two days of briefings and updates on most of our MCL programs, we received a lot of vital information that needs to be spread throughout the divisions, departments, and detachments. That information is paramount to each member of the League.

In today's MCL, communication is the key to our success. Communication is defined as conveying knowledge or information; to make known; to share; and to transmit information, thought or feeling so that it is satisfactorily received.

How often do we attend a department convention or quarterly meeting, a division conference, or even the National convention and the information never gets back to the Marines in our detachment? Many detachments and departments send a representative to these conferences and conventions to represent the detachment. Often, the units may even cover the expenses of these representatives to attend. But my question is, what information was brought back and shared? We often hear of the good times and camaraderie that we shared at these events. But what about the information



and knowledge that was passed?

Marines attending these conferences and conventions should return to their units and present an after-action report of what was passed, new rules and regulations, as well as other important information. It should be their responsibility to communicate what they learned back to the members that could not attend. Communication is the key to making our detachments

and the MCL stronger. Please convey your knowledge or information to other members; make that information known to all members; share as much information as you possible can; and, finally, ensure that your members receive and understand the knowledge you are passing to them. It's all about communication!

Marines, I hope that you are preparing for your annual trip to the MCL's National Convention in Rancho Mirage, CA. The Marines in California have been working hard to make this a memorable event. We hope to see you at the convention. We will pass valuable information that you can take back to your detachments and departments to SHARE! **Semper Fi!**

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NATIONAL SR. VICE COMMANDANT

T.J. MORGAN

Serving with Honor: A Look into the Role of Elected Officers

MARINES: In veteran service organizations, there exists a group of dedicated individuals that plays a crucial role in shaping the direction and impact of these esteemed institutions – the elected officers. These men and women, veterans themselves, take on leadership positions to serve their fellow veterans and advocate for their needs. Serving as an elected officer is a noble commitment that requires dedication, empathy, and a deep sense of duty to those who have served their country.

Elected officers within the Marine Corps League hold responsibilities that are integral to the function and success of the organization. They are tasked with leading meetings, coordinating events and activities, managing finances, and representing the organization in the community. They serve as the face of the organization, advocating for veterans' rights and working to ensure that veterans receive the support and resources they deserve.

One of the key roles of elected officers in the MCL is to provide support and assistance to fellow veterans. This may involve helping veterans navigate the complex web of bureaucracy that can come between them and the benefits and services available to them, offering emotional support to those struggling with the transition to civilian life, or connecting veterans with resources for mental health support or employment opportunities. They often serve as a lifeline for veterans facing challenges, offering a listening ear and a helping hand when needed most.



In addition to providing direct support to veterans, our elected officers also play a crucial role in advocating for veterans' rights at the local, state, and national levels. They work tirelessly to ensure that veterans have access to quality healthcare, education, housing, and employment opportunities. They lobby lawmakers, engage with government agencies, and collaborate with other advocacy groups to push for policies that benefit veterans and their families.

Furthermore, our elected officers are responsible for fostering a sense of camaraderie and community among members. They organize social events, fundraisers, and volunteer activities that bring veterans together, creating a support network and a sense of belonging for those who have served. They work to honor the sacrifices of veterans, celebrate their service, and ensure that their contributions are never forgotten.

Serving as an elected officer is a challenging, yet deeply rewarding experience that comes with great responsibility. Elected officers make a lasting impact on the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring those who have served our country are never forgotten. When your tour of duty is done, leave your office better than you found it and I guarantee you will not regret it! **Semper Fi!**

NATIONAL JR. VICE COMMANDANT

RUSS MILLER

Appreciating Our Associate Members

MARINES: We should make a more concerted effort to appreciate the associate members we have and consider recruiting more. Please don't misconstrue that statement to mean that we should have lopsided detachments with more associates than regular members simply for the sake of collecting dues. Or shoehorn a bunch of our work buddies into the League "so they can drink in our detachment bar on the cheap." It's my hope that family members and friends who care about the Marine or FMF Sailor in their life would relish the opportunity to come work with them in furthering the missions of the MCL and MCL Auxiliary.

Recently, the Rocky Mountain Division bid a final farewell to an outstanding associate member who originally joined because he believed strongly that his best friend and former partner on the police force (a Marine) would benefit from the camaraderie that could be found in being around other Marines in the League. He would drive hours over snow-covered roads to attend detachment meetings alongside his buddy when there were two other detachments within a thirty-minute drive from his home. Over time, he even began to tie into one of those closer detachments because he believed in their mission and wanted to help them as much as he did his home detachment. After eventually moving back to his childhood hometown, he immediately looked for a local detachment to transfer to so he might continue to serve.

In my travels these past years, I spoke with other associate mem-



bers (Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard) who came over from other veteran service organizations. When asked why they chose to join the MCL as an associate rather than as a regular member in one of the other veteran groups, they responded, "because the MCL is the only group that is DOING ANYTHING in our town."

All too often, I recall my grandmother's words about how children are to be seen and not heard. I see these words lived out as they relate to associ-

ate members in detachments and departments across the country. That's a mentality we need to rid ourselves of. We have a large pool of volunteers in our associates who are willing to put up with our shenanigans and desire to take on duties and responsibilities for the good of our League. Associate members, like our regular members, are not always ready to step into roles of responsibility. But with training, education, and realistic expectations from their detachment and department leadership, they too can be an invaluable addition to our organization. Be the member you wish there were twenty more of in your detachment. **Semper Fi!**

MCL NATIONAL YOUNG MARINES LIAISON

JOHNNY BAKER

Young Marines of the Marine Corps League

MARINES: The MCL and the Young Marines of the MCL are partners in America's youth to help them to lead a healthy and drug-free life, focus on leadership, their citizenship through community service, and become productive members of American society. The partnership in our two organizations is paramount in the success of the Young Marines and often to the success of the League. The MCL is the largest individual supporter of the Young Marines. But we can do more!

As the MCL's liaison to the Young Marines, I am your representative to the Young Marines Board of Directors. It's imperative that I take this opportunity to thank the many MCL detachments and individual MCL members that have stepped up to volunteer as adult leaders in the Young Marines. Without your volunteerism, the youth in your area may not have the opportunity to become the men and women that they can be under your guidance and leadership. The MCL currently has over 1,100 detachments around the country but only a small percentage of detachments operate a Young Marine unit. We, as Marine veterans have an obligation and a responsibility to assist in America's youth. We have the expertise, and the patriotism in our hearts to do so.

There are over 230 Young Marine units throughout the nation. The MCL can make a difference in our nation's youth by helping the Young Marines programs throughout the United States. What

can we do? The first and obvious answer is to start up new Young Marine units around our detachments. The Young Marine Program was born from the MCL and their success can really be enhanced with the involvement of more MCL detachments. If your detachment does not have the ability to fully operate a Young Marine unit, then please consider providing financial assistance to YM units in your area or state. They all need the League to make them more successful.

I want to leave you with a positive and compelling oath that each Young Marine must recite and live by. Their oath:

"From this day forward, I sincerely promise, I will set an example for all other youth to follow, and I shall never do anything that would bring disgrace or dishonor upon my God, my country and its flag, my parents, myself, or the Young Marines. These I will honor and respect in a manner that will reflect credit upon them and myself. Semper Fidelis."

This statement is a powerful oath that should always be at the forefront of our minds, along with the strength it provides to the youth of our nation. Today's youth need the Young Marines and the Young Marines need the MCL. The League should stand ready to help the Young Marines develop their core values of leadership, teamwork, and discipline. **Semper Fi!**

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MCL NATIONAL UNIFORM COMMITTEE

RAYMOND S. MORRELL, CHAIRPERSON

Wearing Your Miniature Medals Correctly



MARINES: Miniature medals (DoD or MCL) may only be worn on the MCL Red Blazer-Formal Dress and MCL Evening Dress. Miniature medals are not authorized for wear on the MCL Red Blazer-Casual Dress nor MCL Undress uniforms.

When wearing the MCL Red Blazer-Formal Dress or the MCL Evening Dress (male

or female), miniature medals will be worn approximately one (1) inch below the lapel notch, centered on the left lapel. If regulation size holding bar(s) will not fit on the lapel, medals may extend beyond the lapel edge onto the left breast of the blazer/jacket. Medals/mounted medals will be worn parallel to the deck.

Members refer to the MCL Uniform manual on how to correctly mount miniature medals for male and female configuration.

The DoD order of precedence for awards is detailed in SECNAV M-1650.1 publication. The MCL order of precedence for awards is detailed in MCL National Administrative Procedures: Enclosure Four (4) – MCL Awards Manual.

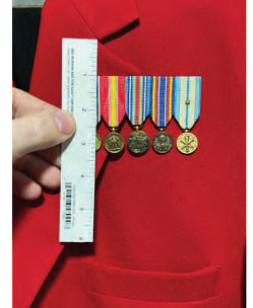
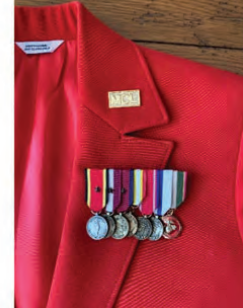
When wearing DoD miniature medals, miniature DoD qualifications badges (scuba badge, aircrew wings, pilot wings, marksmanship badges, presidential service badge, etc.) may also be worn in accordance with applicable DoD regulations. Shooting badges are never worn with miniature medals.

Maximum holding bar length for miniature medals will be four (4) inches (3-ribbon bar); although the holding bar maximum length may suspend a maximum amount of five (5) medals, side-by-side; and can accommodate ten (10) medals, when overlapped. Overlapping will not be more than 50-percent with right (inboard) medal displayed in full.

Subsequent awards for miniature medals are always noted as a 1/8-inch star device; whether as a bronze star device, a gold star device, or a silver star – it will only be at 1/8-inch size. Placement or location of placement for star devices is specific to the medals (large or small) and are not placed as it is with a ribbon.

When wearing DoD miniature medals, the wearer will refrain from wearing a 'like' award as a miniature ribbon 'lapel pin' on the same attire. **Semper Fi!**

Your MCL National Uniform Committee: Raymond Morrell (ND), chairperson, Jeffery Jones (NC), Ivania Mungia (CA), Alison Noger (MD), Bob Sheppard (NJ), Lisa Solarczyk (PA), Mike Waluk, ex-officio BoT liaison



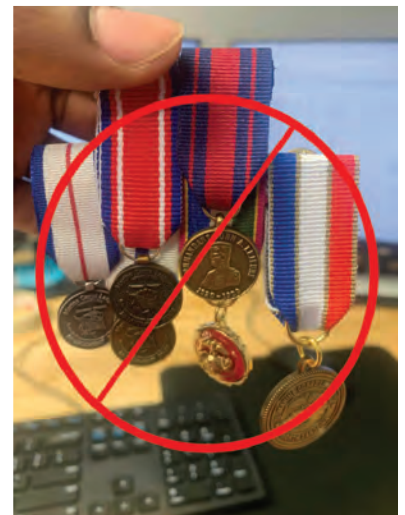
Miniature medals (DoD or MCL) may be worn on the MCL Red Blazer-Formal Dress and MCL Evening Dress uniforms. When wearing DoD miniature medals, DoD miniature badges (breast insignias) will be worn. Shooting badges are never worn when wearing medals (large or miniature). Miniature medals will be placed one (1) inch below the notch of the left lapel, centered on the lapel. They may extend beyond the lapel, if needed.



Miniature medals are worn with a distinct pattern that is different from other veteran service organizations and other branches of service. Members refer to the MCL Uniform manual on how to correctly mount miniature medals for male and female configuration.

When mounting miniature medals, through a private company, they may not mount the medals in the correct fashion. MCL members are encouraged to know how these medals are to be mounted and should communicate this format with the company they choose to mount their miniature medals.

USMC and MCL miniature medals are mounted a specific format.



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DIVISION REPORTS

On to the Next Chapter



Mike Sturch

NVC, Central Division



MARINES: This is my last submission as the NVC Central Division. I have enjoyed serving the last 5 years as both the ADVC and NVC, and have made many new friends throughout the League. But it is time for me to move on. I want to take this time to thank everyone for their support and confidence in me. It has been an honor and privilege to serve and represent the Central Division. We have had some bumpy roads, but I feel we got through these either unscathed or even for the better.

This does not mean I am disappearing. As a past NVC, PDC, and past Pack Leader, I will always be available for guidance and counsel, or just to lend an ear. I may be a little pre-occupied from time to time, as we have our first grandchild on the way, but I am always available.

I know I am turning this over to more than capable hands. I hope I am leaving it in a better state than when I took over. (Not that it was bad, Phil! I just want to build upon what you and our predecessors had done!) Ha, ha!

My ADVC, Dave Englert, will be the new NVC. PDC (WI) Jeff Krakow will be his ADVC. Both of these Marines are knowledgeable, experienced, and tenacious. Please give them the support and trust that you gave me. I'm confident that with their leadership, we will continue to improve.

Please keep up the good work that makes the Central Division a great division. Continue to adapt and improve your detachments and departments. Really focus on recruitment and retention, along with branding and public appearance. We can't get members if no one knows we're here!

Always remember our brothers and sisters who are serving, those who never came home, and those who came home but never really returned. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: mclcentdiv.org

Random Acts of Kindness



Rick Thomason

NVC, Mideast Division



MARINES: We are not normal. No one ever said we had to be mentally stable to be a United States Marine. But then, if we were normal, everyone else would be abnormal. Right? Whether we are normal or abnormal is up to the interpretation of the person we are being compared to. No one typically looks at another, thinking that person must have been in the Marine Corps. We do not wear a warning label. Our daily actions define how others perceive us. You only get one chance to make a first impression. Make it a positive one with a random act of kindness.

Performing a random act of kindness typically costs you nothing but your interaction with an individual who never expected it. Whether it's holding a door open for the person behind you, pumping gas for the senior citizen in the rain, smiling and

saying, "good morning," returning a shopping cart for a mother with children, reaching the upper shelf at the grocery store for a "vertically challenged" shopper or hundreds of other possibilities. The act itself is not as critical as the smile and human interaction. We have isolated ourselves and become absorbed in our own lives and the smartphone in front of us. Let someone know you care enough to interrupt your life for them at this very moment. We, by nature, are herd animals. In the beginning of time, we hunted in packs to bring down the largest of animals and feed our people. We fought collectively to protect our territory and family. We still feel the need to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. We gather at sporting and social events to be among our tribe. We require interaction with other people to fulfill our lives and feel the unity of being a part of something bigger than ourselves. There is no prerequisite that you must know the person you help. Only that you care enough about someone to let them know you were there when they did not expect it. Smile... it's contagious. **Semper Fi!**

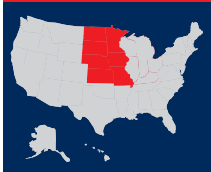
Division Website: mclmideast.com

The Unsung Heroes: Officers' Spouses and Families



Joe Hughes

NVC, Midwest Division



MARINES: In the vast landscape of volunteerism, there exists a silent force that often goes unnoticed—the spouses and families of volunteer officers. While the dedication and selflessness of those who volunteer their time and effort to organizations are widely recognized, it's crucial to shed light on the immense role played by their loved ones behind the scenes. These unsung heroes provide unwavering support, make sacrifices, and contribute significantly to the success of their partner's endeavors.

Volunteering for an organization demands extensive time commitments, late-night meetings, and weekends spent on community projects. Amidst these obligations, the role of the spouse becomes pivotal. They become the backbone of the household, managing daily responsibilities single-handedly, ensuring the smooth functioning of family life while their partner dedicates themselves to their volunteer duties.

One of the most significant sacrifices made by these spouses and families is time. While their loved ones immerse themselves in the noble cause they believe in, spouses are often left to juggle familial responsibilities alone. They sacrifice precious moments with their partners, attending events solo, and celebrating milestones without their significant others by their side. Despite this, they exhibit unwavering support, understanding the greater good their partner's commitment serves.

Moreover, the emotional toll of volunteer work extends beyond the individual volunteer. Spouses often become confidants, lending a listening ear, and offering encouragement during challenging times. They bear witness to the highs and lows, providing a steady source of motivation and comfort to their partners throughout their volunteer journey. Financial sacrifices are also common among the families of volunteer officers, as volunteer roles are unpaid.

Beyond the personal sacrifices, the impact of a supportive family extends to the organization itself. Volunteers who have a strong support system at home are better equipped to fulfill their roles effectively. They can devote themselves wholeheartedly to their responsibilities, knowing that their family stands firmly behind them. Recognizing the vital role played by spouses and families of volunteer officers is paramount for an organization. Organizations should strive to acknowledge and appreciate their contributions.

Behind every dedicated volunteer officer stands a supportive spouse and family, silently championing their cause. Their sacrifices and unwavering support are the unsung pillars of the volunteer community, shaping the success and impact of an organization's mission. It's time to shine a spotlight on these unsung heroes and acknowledge the importance of their role in the realm of volunteerism. I want to thank my wife and family for the opportunity to serve and understand "Once a Marine Always a Marine" in the service of others. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: midwestdivisionmarinecorpsleague.org

We Didn't Know, But We Don't Need To



Pat Maguire

NVC, New England Division



MARINES: I'm not one to put things out there and keep what is happening around me close to the chest. I'm not one of those guys who says "my fish was this big" just to say I caught the bigger fish... not to mention I don't fish. I grew up in the ole catholic, Irish family. Dad served three years in the Corps, got out and became a firefighter. He married Mom and had six children. Their only daughter got married, and her husband served more than 18 years in the U.S. Air Force. When he got out, he became a firefighter.

Their five boys all served in the Marine Corps. The first enlistment was in 1981 and the last enlistment ended in 1993. They honored their enlistments and moved onto civilian life, finding their preferred (or not so preferred) profession. All six of us kids (including Dad) all started our adulthood

with a military connection. Many different roads were traveled for each of us, seeing and learning things we would have never seen or learned, had it not been for the decision to serve.

We didn't know what was going to happen next. We didn't know if we were going to do a single enlistment or

make a career out of it. We didn't know a lot of things as we went through our military careers. We didn't know what life after the military was going to be like. We didn't know that we would lose our parents when we did. We didn't know we would lose our oldest brother on November 10th, 2023.

I do apologize for my last two sentences; I understand that's not what you want to read in *Semper Fi* magazine.

There's a reason I included that though. We didn't know that was going to happen, but we don't need to. We don't need to know when everything in our life is going to happen. What we need to know is that we should be taking advantage of the time we have. As an organization, we need to help each other out, regularly checking in on each other. We are recognized as an organization of brothers and sisters, a family.

We didn't know when we joined that there would be bylaws, administrative procedures, SOPs, and guidelines. Or that there would be so many different positions and committees that you can hold or be a part of. All kinds of conventions, conferences, growls, and gatherings. We didn't know how much we could achieve together. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: mclnederland.com



DIVISION REPORTS

The Purpose of Leadership



Mike Waluk

NVC, Northeast Division



MARINES: Many times, during one's tenure, you will ask yourself questions such as, "What's the difference between leadership and authority?" This question can be simply answered by pointing to a level of expertise in a particular field or a quiet confidence that exudes when a leader is in their element. However, none of this translates directly to authority. We can refer to an expert in the field as being the authority on the subject matter. We can say that someone has the authority to make a decision based on the parameters set forth by a set of expectations to achieve an anticipated outcome. Nonetheless, it's not that easy to marry the two terms together.

From a personal perspective, I have too often found myself thinking the best way to get things done is to do them myself. Effective? Yes. Tiring? Also, yes. Does it provide a sense of satisfaction? Again, yes. But rolling up your

sleeves to do all the work is not the same as sharing the burden of the load. What happens when a decision made goes south? Do you look to the personnel in your charge and blame them? I certainly hope not. In our multitude of positions in the League, there is an intrinsic crossing of leadership and authority. Yet, depending on the situation, authority can either be perceived or genuine. To put it bluntly, genuine authority is earned while perceived authority is based on perception. To that end, it's crucial for us to listen and observe how situations unfold around us. We need to learn not to take things at face value and to question where information is coming from. When mistakes are made—and it is inevitable—it would serve us best to admit to those mistakes, re-evaluate what happened, and then look how to correct them so they don't occur again. It takes character to do this, and one cannot let hubris be a guide as it will only serve to erode any trust or credibility that has been built.

Set the example and be able to cogently articulate a rationale. If you have firsthand knowledge, logically lay out your plan and points of view with cited examples. As leaders, it's incumbent upon us to know the difference between leadership and authority and do what's best for the organization. And one thing we can do to ensure our organization thrives is to develop future leaders. Though, we would all do well to subscribe to Simon Sinek's advice, "Don't give to get. Give to inspire others to give." **Semper Fi!**

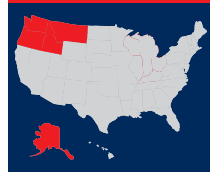
Division Website: nedmcl.org

Remembering is Rewarding



Mike Flynn

NVC, Northwest Division



MARINES: One thing Marines do very well is recognizing the sacrifice that we and members of our other service branches have experienced. We see honoring national holidays such as Veterans Day, and especially Memorial Day, as a routine way of thanking them. One could even say it's almost second nature to us because we see how easily it could have been one of us being honored.

I have the honor and privilege of being involved in one such memorial service every year in Marana, Arizona. 24 years ago, a V22 Osprey crashed during a night training mission at the Marana Regional Airport. The result of the mishap was the tragic loss of the entire platoon and the air crew on board, 19 Marines.

Every year, on the Saturday closest to April 8th, residents of Marana and members of MCL Detachment Nighthawk 72 (named for

the call sign of the downed aircraft) 1344, with assistance from Tucson Detachment 007 and Lance Cpl. Joshua Lucero Detachment 1469, hold a memorial service recognizing the fallen Marines. One of the greatest benefits of the memorial is the healing it provides to those in attendance.

Those attending the service have included many members of the community who were directly affected by the accident. From 911 operators on duty that evening, members of the fire and rescue crews who responded, and neighbors of the airfield who could see firsthand the results of the accident. In the audience have also been members of the Marines from the aircraft accompanying Nighthawk 72 that night and family members of the victims.

All those involved have something in common, they are all thankful for the memorial and how it preserves the memories of the fallen. This alone is enough for me to continue my involvement. It's one thing I can personally do as a way to thank this group of Marines who made the ultimate sacrifice close to where I lived for almost 30 years.

There are many communities around the country with similar stories, honoring members of the armed forces that gave their lives in sacrifice to our country, whether in combat or in training. If you can be involved, I encourage you to do so. Even if it's just one hour a year to thank someone that agreed to place themselves in harm's way to protect our shared freedom. Below is a URL and a QR code that will take you to local news coverage of this year's memorial service. If you wish to help this specific event, go to www.friendsofnighthawk-72.org. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: mcl-nwdiv.org



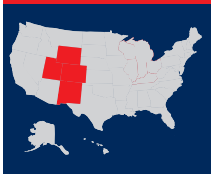
www.kgun9.com/news/community-inspired-journalism/marana/remembering-19-marines-who-died-during-training-mission-24-years-ago

Continuing the Mission



Tom Krueger

NVC, Rocky Mountain Division



MARINES: As I sit here to write this article, I consider what's been happening in our beloved MCL. Over the past few weeks, months have passed. Most departments have held their conventions and divisions have conducted their conferences. This time of year brings a shift or change in leadership. We all have been down this road a time or two. The one thing to remember is why we do what we do and who we are doing this for, veterans.

With the hiring of Tom Mueller and this Marine taking the lead in the Veterans Service Officer position, he's presented an outstanding slide presentation for all to view. Please take the time to see it.

In the members library, there are many slide presentations provided to help paymasters at all levels. Please take the time to review these, as well. As of 1 July, department paymasters will have the task of retrieving their department rosters. This is a task that

needs to be taken seriously. If there are any paymasters that need help, call your leadership for help.

I attended the Modern Day Marine Expo and was in awe of the technology that's out there and coming into our beloved Marine Corps. From the days we were on active duty to the Marines of today, there have been massive improvements and advancements at every level of the Corps that help Marines work smarter, not harder. I was proud, too, to talk to young Marines at the expo and find they all still have that warrior spirit that binds us all together.

As I travel through the Rocky Mountain Division, I thank every MCL member for their continued motivation and their contributions that support veterans, regardless of their branch of service. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: rockymountainmcldiv.org

If Your Detachment Closed Today, Would Anybody Notice?



Jerry Holt

NVC, Southeast Division



MARINES: Attracting and retaining new member is one of the challenges nearly all of our detachments face. Those that seem to be the most successful at it are the detachments that are active—either in fundraising, providing support for veterans or other organizations, or regularly participating in community events.

While fundraising isn't our primary purpose, it's often necessary just to support our basic operational needs. Sometimes, however, fundraising activities cannot only provide a source for needed funds, they can serve as a magnet for drawing new members.

It's not uncommon to find young veteran family members getting involved in Toys for Tots merely because it involves kids and generates warm feelings. We know from experience that younger veterans are generally more focused on career and family than joining veteran organizations. If we demonstrate

our social contributions as well as the patriotic aspects of the League, we may attract more members with younger families.

I've heard several stories from various Southeast Division detachments regarding their successful activities. These range from simple activities, such as selling red roses and engaging people in discussions about the League, to hosting events such as golf tournaments, trap shoots, and car shows. In many events, detachments partner with other groups. In the words of one of the commandants, "the landscape of veteran nonprofits is marked by worthy organizations competing for community support. However, I believe in the power of collaboration. By uniting with other groups sharing the same mission, the impact can be magnified exponentially."

One Florida detachment started a Remember Everyone Deployed (RED) shirt program in 2017. Since then, their sales of RED shirts and patriotic wooden-tiled bracelets have raised more than \$100,000. Again, it's not just about the money, it's the engagement in these activities that allows members to meet other veterans and their families. It starts with a discussion about the event, then leads to discussions about our organization and veterans' issues. Ultimately, it becomes a passive form of recruiting that is often more effective than many of our direct recruiting efforts.

Community relations are force multipliers for everything we do in the League. Whether we are fundraising, actively recruiting, or participating in community events, we are effectively displaying our colors, our values, and promoting our mission. The more positive the image we convey, the more successful we'll be in not only improving our finances, but also in growing our membership. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: seddiv.org

DIVISION REPORTS

Back to the Basics



Randy Rigg

**NVC,
Southern
Division**



MARINES: You can never go wrong if you stay with the basics and that is what I would like to address in my first article as your Southern Division vice commandant. One of the most important things that our detachments can do is to make sure they have copies of our organizational bylaws and administrative procedures (National, department, and detachment), read them, understand them, and apply them in their detachment activities. I want to emphasize “understanding them” because sometimes what is written may not be entirely clear, which is why we have judge advocates. A good judge advocate can go a long way in clarifying the intent of what is written and put things in perspective. The bylaws are the rules that we have developed as an organization that dictate how we are going to conduct the business of the organization and that is why we have them at all levels

of our organization.

Another important document that we do not always reference enough is the Marine Corps League Ritual, as it also has very useful information regarding the order of business for a detachment meeting, the oath of membership, officer installation, and services for a fallen member. The order of business requires the participation of all the officers and gives some of the junior officers a chance to develop the skills they will need to lead the organization in the future. A primary responsibility of the commandant should be to mentor their staff and give them the opportunity to grow into the position that they were elected or appointed to.

One officer position that does not receive the attention it deserves is that of the adjutant, which is as important as any other position. The adjutant is tasked with maintaining the records of the organization, and thus, in a way, they maintain the history of the organization, as well. The adjutant takes the minutes of the meetings and documents the decisions made in those meetings for action. We can all help the adjutant by speaking clearly when addressing the body in a business meeting, making a motion clear so that they can document it properly, and stating who we are after being recognized before we speak.

We have a busy year ahead in the Southern Division and I’m looking forward to it. I plan to support the goals of each department and will represent the Southern Division as your NVC to the best of my ability. **Semper Fi!**

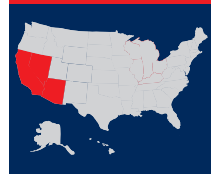
Division Website: southernmcl.org

Growing the MCL Is All of Our Responsibility



Jim Loorya

**NVC,
Southwest
Division**



MARINES: One of the primary goals of all members of the MCL is to spread the word about the League and assist with recruiting to help grow the League. It’s important that, at all levels of the League, we keep this goal in mind. At the detachment level, the junior vice commandant holds the position dedicated to recruiting members. At the department level, our department junior vice commandants are responsible for providing training and assistance to our detachments as well as looking for opportunities within their jurisdiction to facilitate the creation of new detachments. Our National junior vice commandant travels extensively, providing training in recruiting. As the Southwest Division national vice commandant, I’m obligated to “make every continuing effort to establish new detachments and departments within my division.” With this goal in mind, I have the state of Hawaii in my territory.

Today, we have three detachments in the state; but the division does not have a Department of Hawaii. The Aloha Detachment 363 on Oahu is the strongest detachment in Hawaii. The big Island of Hawaii is home to the Camp Tarawa Detachment 1255, which has a small group of Leaguers who remain active. On Kauai, the Kauai Detachment 938 is also small, but active.

Recently, I was approached by two California Leaguers with ties to Maui and we devised a plan to work together to open a detachment in the city of Kihei at the Kihei VFW hall. An interesting aside, the VFW hall building was the commanding general, 4th Marine Division headquarters building which was moved from Camp Maui to its current location in Kihei.

The team has created a three-step plan to set up an informal group, launch a website, and begin recruiting members. Once they reach the goal of 20 regular members, they’ll use our detachment starter kit to start up the new detachment. The plan faced a minor setback with the Lahaina fire delaying one of the team members from moving full time to the island; but it is now getting back on track, and, of course, our primary goal is to start up a detachment to serve the population of Marines, FMF Corpsmen, and their families on Maui.

My ultimate goal is to work with the detachments to identify leaders who can establish a new department within the Southwest Division which will help close the gap between the mainland and the Islands of Hawaii. With a department in place, providing local leadership and guidance to the Hawaiian detachments, they will prosper, grow and better serve their members and communities. **Semper Fi!**

Division Website: mclswdivision.org



Marine Corps League 17+

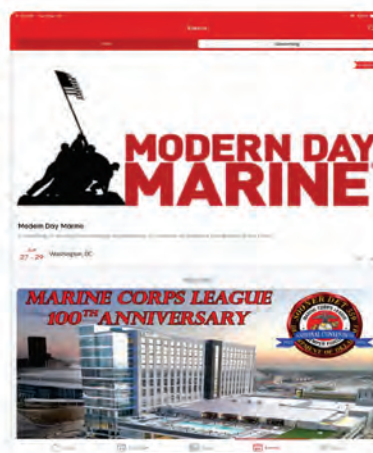
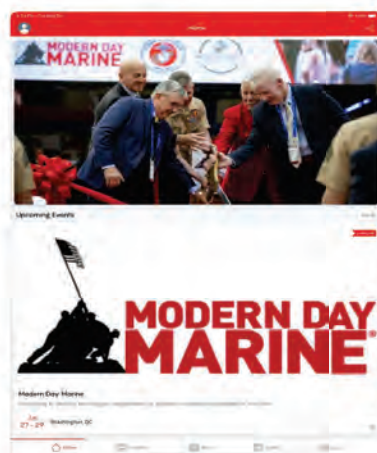
[Marine Corps. League](#)

Designed for iPad

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Screenshots iPad iPhone



MCL Mobile App

The Marine Corps League now has a mobile app in the Apple Store and Google Play Store. The app is free for users.

This exciting advancement is long-overdue, and we are so happy to finally launch. We have been working to continuously improve and enhance the app. We hope you find it interesting and helpful. The news feed is coming directly from the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Marine Corps. This avoids using news feeds and getting information directly from the sources we need.

Search: Marine Corps League in Apple and Google stores

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MCL Mobile app

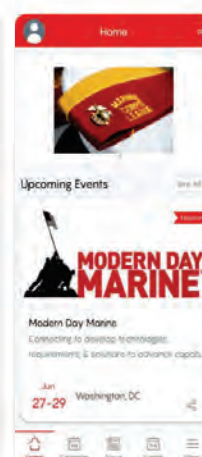


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Marines! Tonight, You Die!

USMC Sgt. Raymond Burkard's Memoirs of the Chosin Reservoir

Compiled by Tom Fitzgerald

Decades after the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir ended in 1950, during Marine Corps Boot Camp, I learned of how Marines and Soldiers fought Chinese forces despite being overwhelmingly outnumbered, in the in the harshest of weather conditions, on the most rugged and impassable terrain. Survival seemed impossible with much of American media leading to likely annihilation. Today, few of the men of the 1st Marine Division and the 8th Army Division who survived, the Frozen Chosin, remain witness to this horror.

Recently, I was blessed to meet Raymond Burkard who, as a Marine corporal, fought on Fox Hill. Burkard, now 95 years old, shares his recollection of his active-duty Korean deployment from

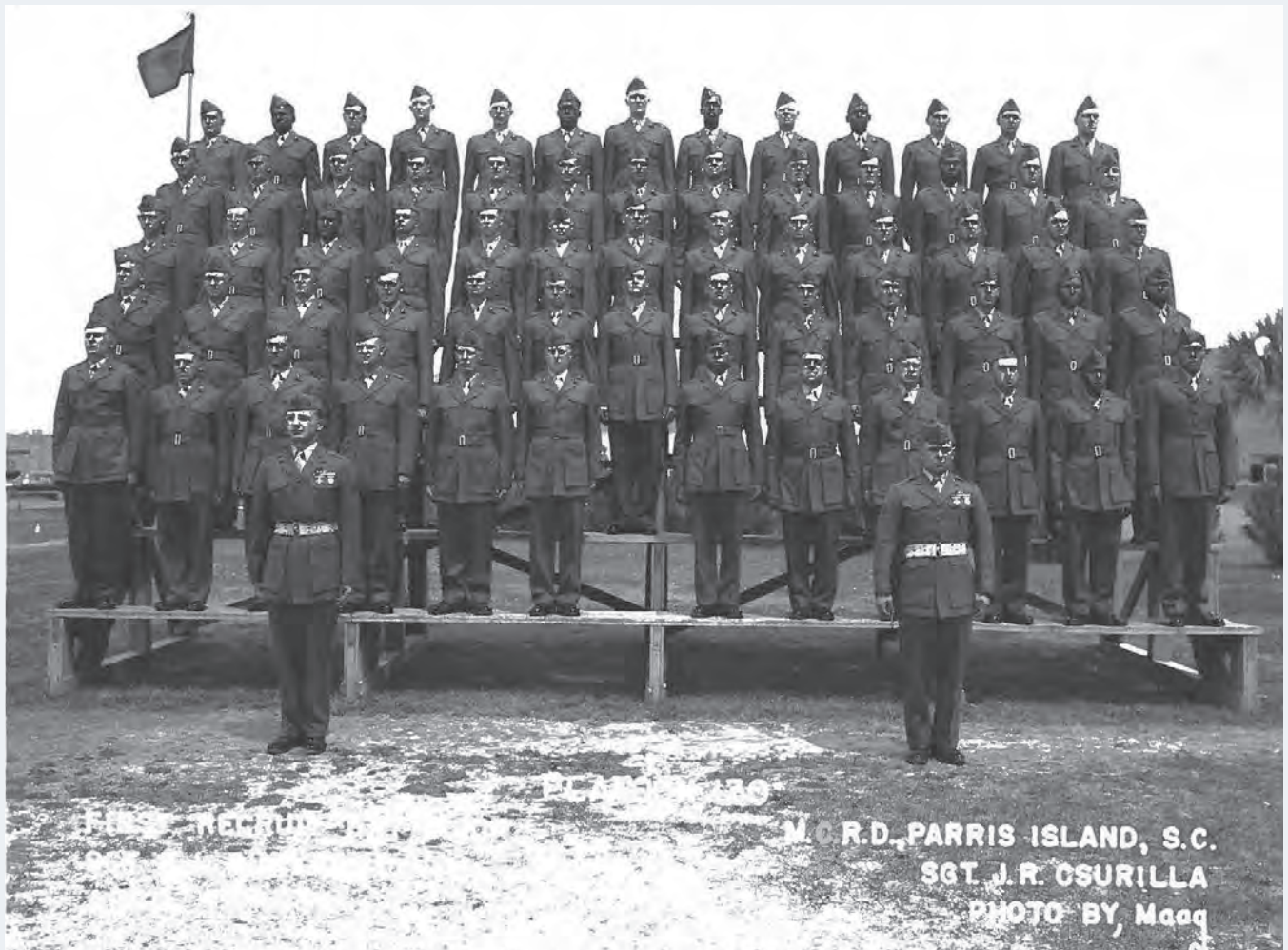
Inchon to Fox Hill. A humble man, he rejects the title hero, citing that he only did what he had to do under his commitment to the United States of America. Ray only speaks about the memories of which he is most certain. The following record documents his memories. His words will be in quotations from here on and mine will be without, as they include my own historical research.

ENTERING THE RESERVES

"After graduating high school in 1948, I had an interest in joining a military branch to service my country," says Burkard. "The sharpness of the Marine Corps uniforms, plus having a reserve unit in my hometown of Toledo, Ohio is what drew me to enlist in the Marine Corps. None of us in our reserve unit



1950, Cpl. Raymond L. Burkard,
Yokosuka, Japan



Sgt. Raymond L. Burkhard, Front left, Honor Platoon 130, April 4th, 1952.

could predict that our service would lead into Korea; as in my case, from Inchon, to Sudong, to the Chosin Reservoir's Toktung Pass."

"In 1948, I enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves as a member of Headquarters section of the 8th Infantry Battalion in Toledo, Ohio. We trained one evening each week for about two or more hours per drill session. Our drills included marching, weapon nomenclature, uniform, and Marine Corps regulations."

Burkard served in a shrinking force during the demobilization of the Armed Forces after WWII targeted \$5B in defense cutbacks. The results for the

Marine Corps were a reduction from 475,000 WWII Marines to 75,000 in mid-1950. The reliance on reservists was paramount in the response to the North Korean invasion of South Korea in July 1950.

RESERVE TRAINING

"My military occupation was 0335 - M9A1 2.36in Rocket Launcher Mortarman," says Burkard. "Weapon firing, maintenance and infantry tactics occurred at our two-week summer camp once each year. I attended Camp Lejeune, NC the first year and Little Creek, VA the second. Directly after Little Creek we were activated to Korea and

reassigned after reaching Camp Pendleton, CA. I was then assigned to the Headquarters' section of Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment (Fox 2/7). We received three days of combat training while at Camp Pendleton, then bused to San Diego, where we boarded the USS Bayfield, heading to Korea."

"On Sept 21, 1950," says Burkard, "we landed in Inchon on South Korea's west coast. On our second day in South Korea, we experienced our first firefight in a persimmon orchard on the outskirts of Seoul's perimeter. I remember it very well, as I had never seen a persimmon,

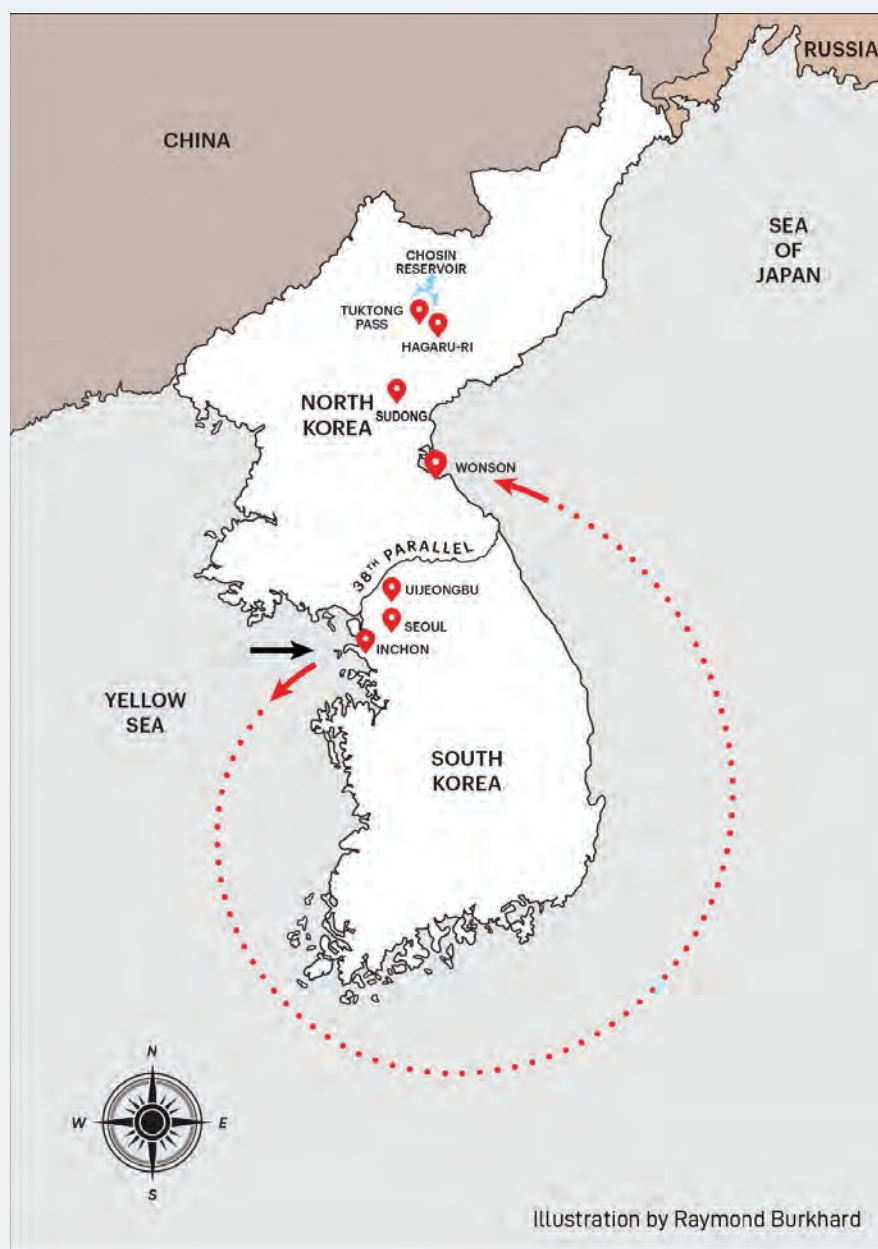
nor knew that it was fruit. I was ordered to be a runner to deliver messages to the platoons spread out throughout the orchard. I recall running and bullets zinging and throwing up sand all around me. We easily pushed the enemy from our position toward North Korea ending that fire fight quickly. We then pushed on to Uijongbu, which was the northern most part of South Korea close to the 38th parallel. Securing Uijongbu from any threat from the North Koreans had reestablished the boundaries of South Korea."

Within one month of the Inchon Landing, the Marines secured Seoul and reversed the North Korean Army advancement, pushing them back north of the 38th parallel.

"In October 1950," says Burkard. "Fox 2/7 was transported from the west coast by landing ship tanks (LSTs) around the southern peninsula of Korea to the east coast of Korea. We landed in Wonson, North Korea with no resistance. In the next village of Sudong is where things erupted."

"We received enemy fire from the south side of Sudong. The rugged terrain restricted our advancement, requiring us to dig in. The south side of the battlefield had very steep mountainous terrain. The northeastern portion was hilly with very steep grades. Bisecting both areas was a dry riverbed bordered by railroad tracks on the east edge. Fox 2/7 platoons were head-on to the north and west across the riverbed. I dug into a foxhole east of the riverbed. After many hours of fighting, Sgt. Peach, who was running a message to one of the platoons, jumped in my foxhole. His interaction with me happened in seconds with no time for dialog as to which direction or to which platoon he was running. He headed from my foxhole to the platoon directly across the dry riverbed, north of my position. I watched him get shot to death as he got halfway across the riverbed. This was my biggest regret of which I have burdened myself over the years."

"The soldiers in Sudong were taller,

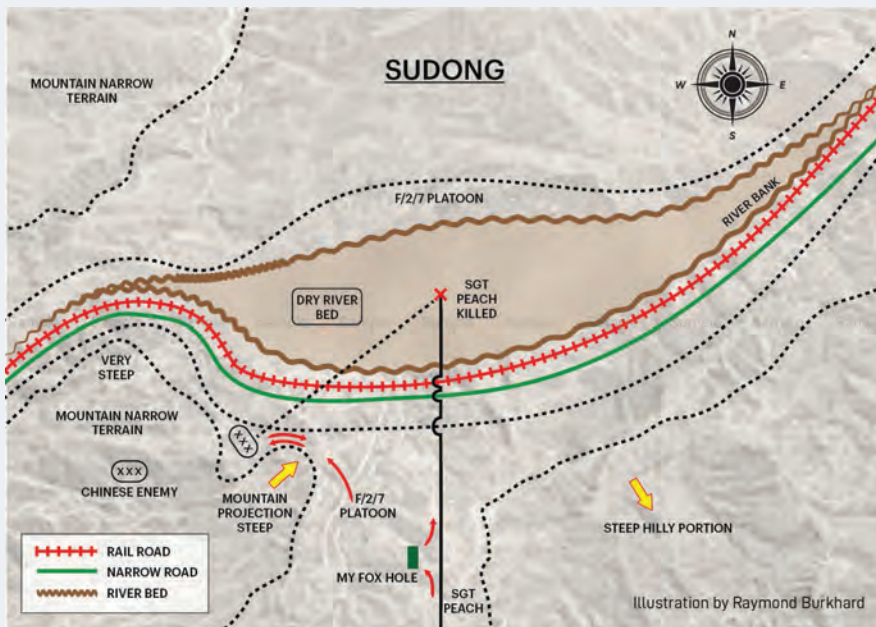


General Map of Korea – Inchon, Seoul, Uijongbu, Wonson, Sudong, Toktung pass (source Ray Burkard/transposed Tom Fitzgerald)

slimmer and better equipped fighters than we previously experienced," says Burkard.

"After Sudong," says Burkard "until reaching the largest around the Chosin Reservoir, Hagaru-ri. Here, engineering began setting up a base station and

an airstrip. The weather was frigid cold with temperatures during the day barely above 0 degrees Fahrenheit. The evenings were well below zero, ranging in the -20s and -30s. On Thanksgiving, we had the best meal while in Korea. On this day, we had a hot meal with turkey and



Map of Sudong Battle (source Ray Burkhard/transposed Tom Fitzgerald)

all the fixings. Although there was talk that we would be home for Christmas, I am not sure any of us believed it."

"The next day's plan was to have the 1st Marine Division spread out by company level with a seven-to-ten-mile separation from Hagaru-ri to Yudam-ni," says Burkard. "The narrow trail was less of a road but became the MSR. On November 26, Fox 2/7's commanding officer, Captain William Barber, scouted for our position 7 miles north of Haguru-ri. The strategic position he selected was a hill surrounded by mountainous steep terrain adjacent to the Toktung pass. The position became better known as Fox Hill."

COMMAND POST SETUP

"Fox 2/7 moved into position on November 27. The first night on Fox Hill began with bitter cold of -25 degrees Fahrenheit with a strong wind. There were three abandoned huts along the road at the base of the hill. Many Marines and I occupied those huts to get out of the wind."

UNEXPECTEDLY, THE BATTLE BEGINS

"I was called to a 2-hour watch which my relief took over around midnight,"

Burkard recalls. "I went into the larger hut to sleep. I had just taken my snow-pack boots off and my relief yelled that the enemy was approaching. I scurried to put my boots back on and hit the ground. Bullets came through mud walls like passing through paper and one Marine was shot. We took cover in the side of the mountain with flares and tracer rounds lighting the sky. Fox 2/7 was surrounded by Chinese forces with our command post which became completely occupied. We fought all night in the frigid cold in every direction. Daylight came with visibility for our air support and the fighting stopped. We worked all day helping the wounded, accounting for casualties, and waited for more supplies. The air support kept the enemy at bay by bombing the mountain ridge during daylight. We tended to our wounded and fortified our positions in preparation for a second night of fighting."

"On the second night, words were spoken that I will never forget," says Burkard. "A Chinese officer speaking broken English was badgering us to surrender. I was too far away to hear

Captain Barber's response. After some dialog, I heard the Chinese officer yell, 'Marines! Tonight, you die!' These words became the realization that we may not make it out alive. I thought, 'this might be it, but we will stand and fight to the finish.' Blowing trumpets, flares, and tracers were added to the second night of battle. The second night was more of the same fighting with the exception that this time they did not penetrate our command post."

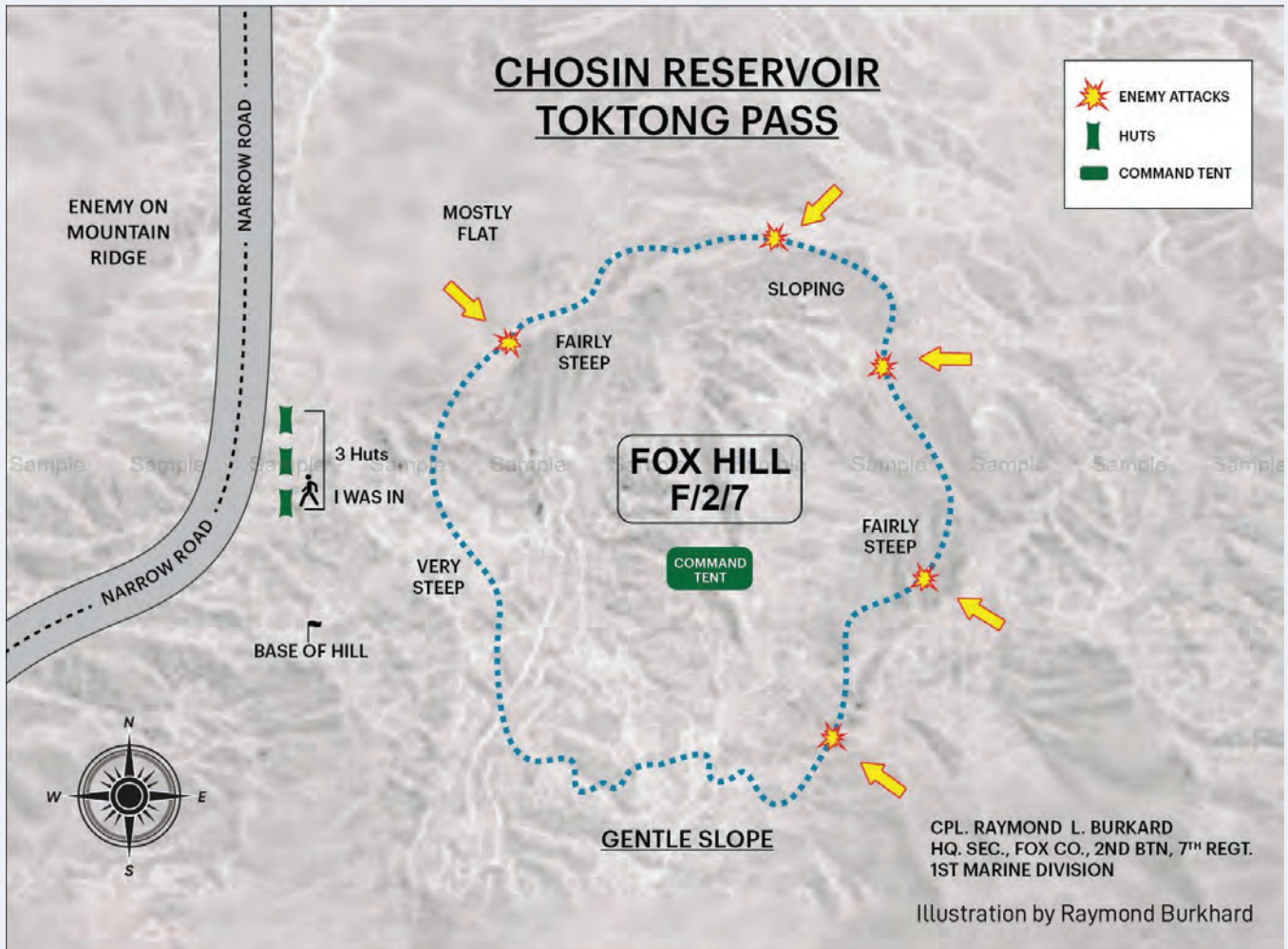
"Fox 2/7 was better prepared by the third and fourth night of fighting," says Burkard. "The Air Force's 'Flying boxcars' saw to that by parachuting ammunition, medicine, and food just outside Fox Hill. We took constant sniper fire during the day, especially when trying to retrieve the airdropped supplies. Fierce firefights took place for the better part of a week as thousands of Chinese surrounded us. We knew that holding our position was imperative or else the other companies would be cut off from the MSR."

ON THE FIFTH DAY

"Early morning of the fifth day," says Burkard, "Baker Company fought through the mountainous terrain all night to reinforce us and the MSR. Baker's initial position was 10 miles north up the MSR in the village of Yudam-ni. Fox's numbers diminished from 240 Marines to only 82."

"Orders were to fight our way back to Hagaru-ri. Two days passed of sniper fire during the day and night fighting before returning to Hagaru-ri. We had brought all our dead and wounded from Hagaru-ri and on to Kotori-ru. All Marines were exhausted with less than 1-2 hours of sleep per day. We convoyed out of Hagaru-ri to Kotori-ru which was about 10 miles further south. On December 6, 1950, while fighting back to Kotori-ru, I was shot in my right leg by a sniper. I continued on foot for some time until a driver of a six-by noticed me limping and told me to jump aboard. I received medical attention in Kotori-ru on December 7. I asked the doctor for the bullet, and I still have it today."

"We pushed on to the Hungnam port



Map of Fox Hill/Toktung Pass (source Ray Burkhard/transposed Tom Fitzgerald)

of North Korea.”

“On December 10, 1950, I was evacuated from Hungnam aboard a hospital ship to a naval hospital in Yokosuka, Japan for 48 days.”

“I was one of 500 Marines reassigned to drill instructor duty,” says Burkard. “In March 1951, I was sent back to the States aboard the USS Breckenridge. I spent the remainder of my enlistment at Parris Island, South Carolina as a drill instructor. Active-duty requirements for reservists were extended another 12 months. I extended a few months more to complete training on my fifth graduating platoon. I was proud to be to ser-

geant and proud to have had an honor platoon while holding the position of senior drill instructor.”

“I was discharged in June 1952 when my wife, Shirley, and I returned to Toledo, Ohio.”

“I retired in January 1994 after spending 37 years as an electronic technician and quality assurance specialist, 33 of those years were at the Kennedy Space Center. We have six children, nine grandchildren and a great grandchild. I have had an extremely rewarding life.”

FINAL REMARKS

“I suppressed thoughts of the Chosin

experience for most of my life,” says Burkard, “never sharing them with my family or coworkers. I only shared with other Marines at a rare Chosin reunion. I am proud of the outfit I served with and I’m thankful to be alive. I questioned why them and not me. The only answer I came up with is that I anticipated death but never thought as to when it would happen. I only focused on what had to be done.”

“From one of the Few. The proud. The aged. Semper fi!”

Sgt. Raymond L. Burkard, 1065933
Semper Fi!

General Gray's Long History with the YPF

A Tribute to a Marine's Marine

**By Warren Griffin, MCL National
Commandant and Lt. Gen. Jack Klimp,
U.S. Marines Youth Foundation President**

No memorial tribute to General Alfred M. Gray, Jr. can possibly capture the tremendous positive impact he had on Marines of every generation for the past three-quarters of a century and the profound sense of loss experienced by the entire Marine Corps League membership following his passing on in March 2024. Gen. Gray was a man who touched everyone in the room with his energy and passion for genuine personal connection, often in the

form of a quick punch on the arm, but always by engaging each individual with direct eye contact and motivating discourse. His leadership by example in "retirement" set a standard so high as to evoke the memory of Maj. Gen. John A. Lejeune, the founder of the Marine Corps League and our first Honorary National Commandant. Gen. Gray was our second and only other Honorary MCL National Commandant. As soon as he "retired" as the 29th commandant of the Marine Corps in 1991, he volunteered in key leadership positions with a large number of non-profit organizations benefitting Marine veterans and their families, and he served

them all selflessly for more than three decades.

Gen. Gray's relationship with the Marine Corps League's Youth Physical Fitness Program (YPF) started immediately after he became the 29th CMC in 1987. He regularly met with Maj. Gen. Walter A. Churchill, USMC (Ret) (Past National Commandant of the MCL 1960) to ensure that the Corps was effectively supporting the YPF Program. The YPF was started by Marine recruiters in the NY/NJ area in 1957 as a high school physical fitness program with regional competitions using recruiters to leverage the Marine Corps' respected reputation as fitness experts. This initiative succeeded in getting these recruiters into many schools which were difficult to access. Maj. Gen. Churchill incorporated YPF as an MCL sponsored program in 1960 and then aggressively promoted YPF at every MCL function he could attend, visiting annually with every CMC until he was incapacitated by illness in 1995. This must have inspired Gen. Gray's personal emphasis on YPF

at HQMC throughout his term as CMC.

Gen. Gray volunteered to serve on the board of directors of the United States Marines Youth Foundation as soon as he retired and served as the USMYF chairman for more than three decades. He personally chaired every board meeting through early 2023 and travelled to many YPF national fitness competitions to motivate the student competitors and Marine scorers and presented YPF trophies, plaques, and medals to the champions at the awards banquets. Gen. Gray made personal appeals to MCL leaders and members at more than 30 MCL National Mid-Winter Conferences and National Conventions and in three decades of *Semper Fi* magazines. He took to heart the YPF missions of improving American youth by inculcating a culture of lifetime fitness and deterring substance abuse by increasing self-confidence and focus on personal

health. He would speak passionately at USMYF board meetings about our responsibility to address the national obesity crisis and the dangerously low and decreasing portion of American youth who can qualify for military service. He was particularly concerned about the negative impacts of the 2020-2022 COVID pandemic which forced the cancellation of the only two YPF national fitness competitions which the MCL has consistently executed annually since 1960 and prevented most fitness training by American youth for several years.

Gen. Gray's selfless service, personal energy, and uniquely effective leadership will be sorely missed by our League, our Corps, and our nation. What better way to pay tribute to his incredible legacy than to help the Marine Corps League reenergize our Youth Physical Fitness Program? Our nation's youth deserve no

less! Restoring YPF is one of the Marine Corps League's two major goals for 2024. MCL members can **easily** help restore the breadth and positive impact of the MCL YPF program in several meaningful ways:

1. Solicit local grade school, middle, school, and high school coaches, PE teachers, administrators, and board members to start their own fitness clubs and send teams to our YPF competitions.
2. Appoint YPF chairmen in every division, department, and detachment to organize, lead, and synchronize all YPF efforts.
3. Establish and volunteer at state and regional YPF fitness competitions.
4. Increase, restart, or begin annual detachment, district, department, and division donations to the U.S. Marines Youth Foundation through the MCL Tree of Lights fundraiser to fund our YPF certificates, awards, and banquets. **Semper Fi!**



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ROLL CALL

AROUND THE LEAGUE



Star of the North rifle team, Memorial Day, All Veterans Memorial.



The Officers of Pound Salt 69 who meet at the Sgt. Angel Mendez Detachment in Staten Island, NY. Police Dog: Devil Dog Dominic Castronovo. Dog Trainer: Devil Dog Frank "Lion W/an E Lione. Sr. Vice PK DD Bob Geronimo. Dog Robber: PDD Sean A. Torres Sr. Pound Keeper: PDD Tom Wortmann. Liaison Dog: Pup Doug "Mustache of Wisdom" Duval. Barking Dog: DD Frank Montella.

ROLL CALL

AROUND THE LEAGUE



Marine for Life West Region Annual Training 2024. David Ossian (far right), Marine for Life Committee Chair with Jamal Brown (center) and his team. Jamal is the Western Region Network Coordinator.



2024 National Midwinter Conference. Commandant Griffin speaking with Maj. Gen. Lukeman



Color Guard from Marine Corps Base Quantico



Senior Vice Commandant Jose Escarsega and Chaplain Rhoane Palmero of Camp Pendleton Detachment 21 stand next to the Statue of Reckless, the Korean War Hero horse. Staff Sgt. Palmero, an active duty Marine, received the President's Volunteer Service Medal, for his leadership and support of the Camp Pendleton Young Marines. (Photo: Jose Escarsega)



Former Detachment Commandant and current Detachment SR. Vice Michael Quinn (right) of the Pappy Boyington Detachment 966 was recently presented with The Chapel of Four Chaplains' Legion of Honor Humanitarian Award by National Senior Vice Commandant T.J. Morgan (left) at the detachment's regular meeting in April 2024. This award is rarely given out and it is an example for us all to follow Mike's leadership and the example of his selflessness. The Chapel of Four Chaplains' Legion of Honor Humanitarian award is given to people who have made a lifetime commitment to selfless service and societal advancement. The award recognizes deeds and actions on behalf of others, regardless of race, ethnicity, or faith. The award also recognizes people whose leadership has brought their actions to national or international attention, and whose life epitomizes the spirit of the sacrifice of the Four Chaplains.



Plaque Presentation by Lieutenant General Lewis B. Puller Detachment 890 Winchester, VA to the Navy Federal Credit Union National Call center for their support of the local Toys for Tots Campaign. "Commandant Phillip Parsons presenting plaque to Ms. Dottie Day, Vice President, of the Winchester and Contact Center Operations for Navy Federal Credit Union, in appreciation for their assistance and financial contribution in the local area Toys for Tots campaign in addition to the physical help provided by their many volunteers"

Join Roll Call!

ALL MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MEMBERS MAY SUBMIT ROLL CALL ENTRIES

SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

You may submit photos with short captions in email to semperfi@chipotlepublishing.com. Photos must not be more than 20MB in size.

Captions—Photo captions should briefly describe the event and list persons present in the photo(s) along with detachment number and location. Captions should be no longer than 60 words. Please do not include information about persons not present in the photo(s).

Photos—We cannot use photos that are inserted into an email, PDF or MS Word document. Please make sure each photo is a separate file in the highest resolution possible (specific criteria are in the instructions on the upload site).

Permission – For photos of youth under age 18, please visit the MCL Library for the "Photo Permission Form" under Scouting for the Photo Release Form.

Sorry—There are no guarantees of publication. The most common reasons for Roll Call rejection are: 1) the photo was blurry or too small in size, and 2) the uniforms in the photo did not meet regulations.

If you have any questions about uniform regulations, please contact Craig Reeling of the Uniform Committee at the National website: www.mclnational.org.

NOTICE TO MARINE CORPS LEAGUE DETACHMENTS!

Please consider taking a group photo of your detachment's membership. Department and division conferences are another way to

capture some memories. We would love to include your photos in the **Semper Fi** magazine.

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOKS FOR, ABOUT & BY MARINES – BY BOB BORKA

A Table in the Presence

Reviewed by Tom Mueller, USMC (Ret)

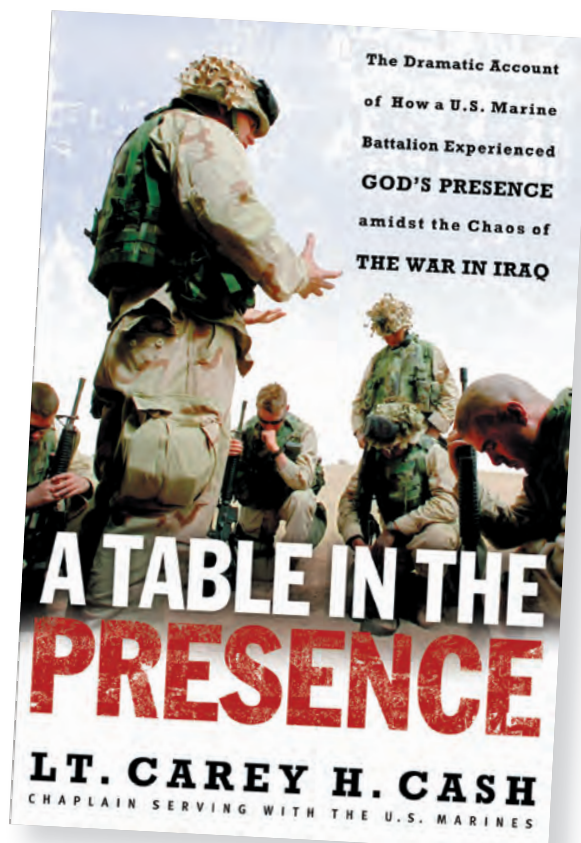
Author, then Navy Lt. Carey H. Cash, now Rear Admiral and **Chaplain of the Marine Corps**, retells in humble detail how he and the Marines of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment experienced the divine providence and protection of God as they stormed into downtown Baghdad to seize Saddam Hussein's presidential palace. The title of the book is drawn from the Book of Psalms where ancient Israel's King David found himself in peril by an enemy committed to his destruction. As King David believed, Cash says God was moving and revealing himself in the chaos of war through the circumstances on the battlefield. Sometimes, these revelations would be instantly recognizable and graciously shared among each other. Other times, it was during moments of quiet reflection, after the storm, when the Marines and their chaplain felt the many times God's hand shielded them from harm. *A Table in the Presence* is a dramatic chronicle of how faith emerges, even when we least expect God to "show up."

A Table in the Presence Author: Lt. Carey H. Cash

Pages: 242

Publisher: W Publishing Group, a Division of Thomas Nelson Publishers

ISBN: 0-8499-1823-5



Fire in the Hole

The Untold Story of My Traumatic Life and Explosive Success

Marine Veteran Bob Parsons provides the reader with a remarkable insight to his past. From his childhood in Baltimore to successful billionaire, this Marine tells it like it is. While talking about his experiences through Vietnam, Parsons said "Every experience in life can be a gift. You may not understand the reason behind the pain and struggle in the moment, but there's always something to be learned from those experiences." The book was an easy read with logical flowing chapters. It provides a very relatable story. I really enjoyed learning about his path and the variety of turns life has taken. We all have roads diverging; the one less traveled can sure make life a great experience. Check out this book, you will be glad you did.

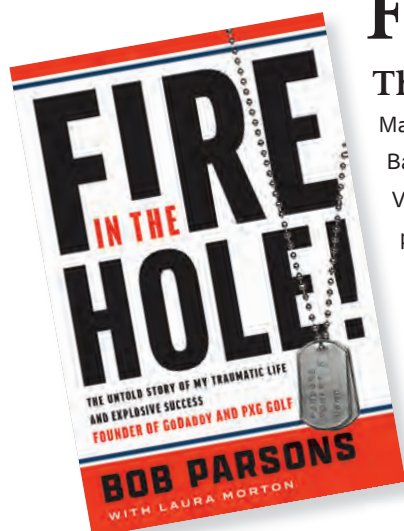
Fire in the Hole: The Untold Story of My Traumatic Life and Explosive Success

Author: Bob Parsons with Laura Morton

Pages: 315

Publisher: Forefront Books

ISBN: 978-1-63763-298-7



REUNIONS

Alpha Company 1st Battalion 5th Marine Regiment reunion to be held in Haslet, Texas 3-5 July 2024. Contact: Vince Rios, (817) 847-9954, vrmarine@msn.com.

Tri-State Marine Detachment #494 is hosting its **44th Annual Marine reunion** on 17 August 2024 at A La Carte Catering, 429 Lisbon St. Canfield, OH 44406. The event is open to all Marines, their families and all service members who served with Marine units. Ticket includes dinner buffet and an open bar. Tickets \$35/person and must be purchased in advance before 2 August (no on-site ticket sales.) Contact: Chester Kaschak (330) 533-6084 or Mark Carver (330) 398-9938.

Marine Air Base Squadrons 49 reunion to be held in Earlville, MD on 7 Sep 2024. Contact: Col. Chuck McGarigle (ret.) 609-291-9617 or 609-284-2935, col_of_mar_ret@comcast.net.

Marine Squadron, VMFA – 115 Reunion to be held 25 – 29 September 2024 in St. Louis MO. Contact: Patti Kaas, 717-422-6796, vmfa115reunion@gmail.com. More info: 115marinereunion.com

Marine Barracks Hawaii Association reunion to be held 10-13 October 2024 in Nashville, TN. Contact: Mike Mazzone, 808-864-7428 Mike@sgcchawaii.com or Wayne Getz, Wagetz@hotmail.com. More info: www.facebook.com/groups/144789992216455/events

Vietnam 1966-1969: Whiskey (Mortar) Battery, 2nd Bn, 12th Marines 3rd Marine Division reunion to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada 11-17 November. Contact: (949) 874-3636 ortizwood@yahoo.com.

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\$6.50 Small-XL



G43- Flag USA 3'x5'

Poly/Cotton 3x5-foot American Flag w/Grommets (Made in USA)



G42- Flag USMC 3'x5'

Poly/Cotton 3x-foot USMC Flag w/Grommets (Made in USA)

\$15.00



Roses- Fundraising Roses

144-count Red Fundraising Roses w/MCL Label

\$35.00



WA121- Red Polo

Red 100% Polyester Polo w/MCL Logo on Breast

\$36.50 Small-XL, \$40.00 2XL-4XL



U14C- Collar Ornaments Screw Back

Sunburst Screw Back Collar Ornament for Mess Jacket

\$15.00



GFT1- Fidget Spinner *LIMITED QUANTITY*

Red Fidget Spinner w/MCL Logo
(Special Marine Birthday Ball Reduced Price)

\$3.00



GFT4-Marine Hymn Ornament *LIMITED QUANTITY*

Gold Ornament w/ Marine Hymn Engraved
(Special Marine Birthday Ball Reduced Price)

\$5.00



CUP1- Travel Mug *LIMITED QUANTITY*

Red and Black Travel Mug w/ MCL Logo
(Special Marine Birthday Ball Reduced Price)

\$2 each / \$45 for case of 32

THE SEMPER FI STORE

ORDER FORM

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
3619 Jefferson Davis Highway, Ste 115 • Stafford, VA 22554 • (703) 207-9588

Billing Address

Shipping Address

Name

Street

City State Zip Code

Phone Number

Name

Street

City State Zip Code

Email

Code#	Quantity	Item Description	Size	Price Each	Total Cost

HANDLING & POSTAGE

AMOUNT OF ORDER.....CHARGE

UNDER \$10.....\$7.99

\$10.01-\$25.00.....\$8.99

\$25.01-\$35.00.....\$10.99

\$35.01-\$50.00.....\$11.99

\$50.01-\$65.00.....\$12.99

\$65.01-\$85.00.....\$13.99

\$85.01-\$100.00.....\$14.99

\$100.01-\$200.00.....\$16.99

\$200.01 AND UP.....\$18.99

STANDARD SHIPPING:

Shipping and handling charges for orders with Standard Shipping are calculated using the SUBTOTAL of the order. Some very heavy or oversized items may have a shipping surcharge which will be reflected in the item description.

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ENCLOSED ☐

WE GLADLY ACCEPT

☐ VISA

☐ MASTERCARD

☐ DISCOVER

☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS

NAME _____
AS IT APPEARS ON CREDIT CARD

CREDIT CARD # _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____ CVV NUMBER _____

SIGNATURE _____

SUBTOTAL

6.0% VA SALES TAX
VIRGINIA RESIDENTS ONLY

HANDLING & POSTAGE

TOTAL

Internal MCL
Use Only

DATE _____

INITIAL _____

2025 BATTLEFIELD TOURS RAFFLE

**THE MCL GEARS UP FOR THIS
YEAR'S DRAWING!**

In 2025, the Marine Corps League and Military Historical Tours (miltours.com) will offer the battlefield tour for a Marine Corps League Member as the winner of the League's Tour raffle. The winner will receive a trip for two.

Tickets: Marine Corps League 2025 Battlefield Tour Raffle.

One Grand Prize: Trip for Two Free Tour.

These trips span the globe and military history. See the list below for a complete lineup.

Everyone who enters lends their support to League programs including Marines Helping Marines, Legislative Programs, Toys for Tots and more.

Raffle tickets cost \$5 per single entry or five tickets for just \$20! That's right, the more you buy, the more you save and the more you help the League. The drawing will be held at our annual Mid-Winter Conference Banquet in 2025.

You do not need to be present to win. Winners will be notified within 3 days of drawing if they are not present, and arrangements will be made with Military Historical Tours for selection of their tour prize.

Mail completed tickets and a check for the full amount to Marine Corps League, P.O. Box 1990, Stafford, VA 22555-1990. You may buy as many tickets as you like. Please feel free to make additional copies of these raffle tickets if you wish to purchase additional chances!

6-19 Aug

Vietnam Delta to the DMZ

6-18 Aug

55th Anniversary of I-Corps Vietnam Battlefields

6-19 Aug

"Body & Soul" – U.S. Navy Medical & Clergy in the Vietnam War

12-20 Aug

80th Anniversary of Operation Dragoon – South of France

23 Aug-5 Sep

"D-Day to the Bulge" – Normandy Invasion & Battle of the Bulge

6-19 Sept

Rise & Fall of the Third Reich: Munich-Berlin-Nuremberg-Dresden-Prague

7-16 Sept

"Battles That Changed History from Napoleon to Patton"

29 Sep-6 Oct

Battlefields of France WWI, WWII, Napoleonic & Franco-Prussian War

Continues Next Page

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE 2025 BATTLEFIELD TOUR RAFFLE

One Grand Prize: Trip for Two Free Tour to anywhere MCL's tour partner (Military Historical Tours) travels.

**\$5 per entry or
5 entries for \$20**

You need not be present to win. Drawing will occur at the 2025 Mid-Winter Conference Banquet. Mail completed tickets and a check for the full amount to: Marine Corps League, P.O. Box 1990, Stafford, VA 22555-1990.

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your check made payable to:

Marine Corps League, Inc.
P.O. Box 1990
Stafford, VA 22555-1990

You need not be present to win. Winner
will be notified within three days of
drawing if not present, and arrangements
will be made for coordination with Military
Historical Tours for selection of tour prize.

Name	
Address	
City	
State	Zip Code
Phone	
Email	

Continued From Previous Page

5-11 Oct

MHT's Civil War – North to Gettysburg

12-25 Oct

U.S. Military & Civilian Women in Vietnam

20-27 Oct

Birth of American Democracy – Boston – Yorktown

26 Oct-5 Nov

Italy Tuscan & Umbrian Countryside Two-Day Pre-
tour Rome: Florence-Siena –Assisi-Spoleto-Pienza

2-13 Dec

Vietnam Delta to DMZ Post Tour: 6-11 Dec Laos &
Cambodia

1-8 Dec

Pearl Harbor & WWII Sites

2025

March

Victory in the Pacific & IJAA's 80th Anniversary of
Iwo Jima

4-13 Apr

Philippines – WWII in the PI

15-28 Apr

"Saigon to the DMZ" Vietnam War

21 Apr-4 May

Marine Corps League Tour of Vietnam "Saigon to
the DMZ"

19-27 Apr

Turkey WWI Gallipoli Campaign

31 May-13 Jun

81st Anniversary of D-Day, Battle of the Bulge &
Paris

1-11 Aug

Guadalcanal 83rd Op Watchtower

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City	
State	Zip Code
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Historical Tours for selection of tour prize.

Name	
Address	
City	
State	Zip Code
Phone	
Email	

Mid-Winter National Conference Registration

February 27th-March 1st, 2025

Sheraton Pentagon City

900 South Orme St, Arlington, VA 22204

Phone: 703-521-1900

Rate: \$131.00 per night plus tax Parking fee: \$10.00

Pre-Registration: \$10.00 Registration at the Conference: \$12.00

Program Ad Book Submission and Banquet prices are listed below.

Deadline for Pre-registration and Program book Submissions is February 4, 2025

Online registration is available at mcleaguelibrary.org/conference

Please print the following information as you would like it to appear on your badge.

Name: _____ Name: _____

Title: _____ Title: _____

Dept & Det: _____ Dept & Det: _____

MODD Title: _____ MODD Title: _____

Pedigree & Tag #: _____ Pedigree & Tag #: _____

Pack & Pound: _____ Pack & Pound: _____

MCLA Title: _____ MCLA Title: _____

Dept & Unit _____ Dept & Unit: _____

Phone: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Email: _____

The Conference will have a program book created for all paid attendees.

All Detachments/Departments/Pounds/Packs/ Units are encouraged to support the program book to help offset the cost of the Conference.

Program Book

Full Page @ \$100 # _____ \$ _____

Half Page @ \$60 # _____ \$ _____

Quarter Page @ \$30 # _____ \$ _____

Business Card @ \$25 # _____ \$ _____

Patron Listing @ \$2 # _____ \$ _____

Total # _____ \$ _____

Banquet

Beef @ \$65 # _____ \$ _____

Chicken @ \$65 # _____ \$ _____

Total # _____ \$ _____

Total Registrations # _____ \$ _____

Total Banquet # _____ \$ _____

Total Program Book Ads # _____ \$ _____

Grand Total Due \$ _____ **Check/MO #** _____

Please make all checks payable to **Marine Corps League**

Forging a Path Forward: Women Marines Association

By Ann Crittenden, President
Women Marines Association

The Women Marines Association (WMA) was established in Denver, Colorado in 1960 to ensure that our legacy and history as female Marines would continue to be shared and our accomplishments would influence the next generation of Marines. WMA is committed to remembering and appreciating all women who have worn the uniform and earned the title of Marine. WMA's members are united by our camaraderie and desire to provide for others. Our chapters and members across the nation work in their communities on programs that support our military personnel, our women Marine veterans, their families, and the communities in which they live. We see no boundaries and are a very diverse and strong organization that reaches across all areas where there is a need.

The WMA is proud to be the only charitable organization for and about women Marines. WMA is a non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization, a member of the National Marine Corps Council and maintains close ties with Headquarters Marine Corps. Serving as a woman in the Marines is an esteemed honor and a remarkable accomplishment that underscores the valor and fortitude of both veteran and active-duty women Marines.

The WMA's mission is primarily focused on:

Preserving History: It's crucial for the WMA to preserve the rich history and legacy of women Marines who have served. By honoring and commemorating the achievements and sacrifices of past generations, the association can instill a sense of pride, identity, and continuity among current and future members.

Respecting Tradition: Upholding the core values and traditions of the Marine Corps is essential for maintaining the ethos and charac-



ter of the organization. By embracing the values of honor, courage, and commitment, the WMA inspires its members to uphold the highest standards of conduct and professionalism.

Providing for Today's Marines: While honoring the legacy of past Marines, it is equally important for the association to remain relevant to the needs and interests of today's women Marines. This may involve adapting programs, services, and initiatives to address contemporary challenges faced by women in the military and providing support that is responsive to their evolving needs. Since the disestablishment of 4th Battalion at MCRD Parris Island, the WMA has taken on another role as more than the preservation of history, our legacy and future – we have become the lifeline for all women who are training at the depots, ensuring they have a “safe haven” while working to cement their identity as Marines, forever.

Building a Strong Community: By fostering a sense of camaraderie, support, and mentorship among its members, the Women Marines Association creates a strong and resilient community that empowers women Marines to thrive in their careers and personal lives. This sense of solidarity and sisterhood is a key aspect of the Marine Corps culture and can be a source

of strength and resilience for women Marines.

Honoring Our Legacy Marines: Recognizing and commemorating the contributions of legacy Marines who paved the way for women in the Marine Corps is essential for preserving the heritage and legacy of the organization. By paying tribute to the pioneers who broke barriers and shattered stereotypes, the WMA honors their legacy and inspires future generations of women Marines to continue their legacy of service and excellence.

Rebranding and Evolving: In 2020, WMA recognized the imperative need for change, adaptation, and resilience to maintain relevance, thereby emphasizing the importance of bridging gaps. WMA underwent a rebranding process, revitalizing its original 1960 vision into a more contemporary and dynamic entity. We transformed by addressing and rectifying the unintentional emergence of generational and gender divides. Through forging alliances and partnerships, we strive to bridge these gaps, leveraging generational disparities to ensure continued relevance. The WMA and Marine Corps League present abundant opportunities for our Marines. Let us embark on this journey together! **Semper Fi!**

Tree of Lights

Sponsored by the
**United States Marines
Youth Foundation, Inc.**



Proceeds Benefitting the
**Youth Physical Fitness Program
of the
Marine Corps League**

The Tree of Lights Program has been supporting the Youth Physical Fitness Program for over twenty years. Each year, Marine Corps League Detachments and Auxiliary Units as well as members of the greater Marine Corps family have the opportunity to sponsor lights in honor or memory of a friend or loved one or as a Year-end gift on the tree lit during the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Sponsors' names are recorded on the **Scroll of Honor** displayed at the ceremony and on the U.S. Marines Youth Foundation website:

www.usmarinesyouthfoundation.org

For more information, please call (540) 426-8629.

This year's Tree Lighting Ceremony is being held at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Memory and Honor of the late

General Alfred M. Gray, Jr.
29th Commandant of the Marine Corps

***Please help us make this the
best year ever!***

Date and Time to be announced in the Fall
issue of *Semper Fi Magazine*.

Sponsorship form on back →



Tree of Lights Registration Form

Person or Organization sponsoring Light:

Address: (Where receipt and Thank you Letter should be sent)

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

TYPE OF GIFT:

☐ IN HONOR OF: _____
(LIST NAME AS YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO APPEAR ON SCROLL OF HONOR*)

☐ IN MEMORY OF: _____
(LIST NAME AS WOULD LIKE IT TO APPEAR ON THE SCROLL OF HONOR*)

☐ YEAR-END GIFT to the UNITED STATES MARINES YOUTH FOUNDATION

*** Please, one name per light.**

TYPE OF LIGHT:

_____ \$500 Red Light
_____ \$250 Gold Light
_____ \$100 Blue Light
_____ \$ 50 Green Light
_____ \$ 25 White Light
_____ \$ 10 Clear Light

If you would like an Acknowledgement Letter sent to the family of the person you are honoring, please let us know where and to whom you would like it sent.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Please make checks payable to:

**U.S. Marines Youth Foundation
P.O. Box 284
Quantico, VA 22134**

Questions? Please call (540) 426-8629

*Forms should be received by December 1st to ensure inclusion on the Scroll of Honor displayed at the Tree Lighting Ceremony. Donations will continue to be accepted through December 31st. The final Scroll will be posted on the U.S. Marines Youth Foundation website:
www.usmarinesyouthfoundation.org*



is a member in good standing of

This card is good for a period of sixty days from



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Full Name _____ Member Number _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
Email Address _____
Date of Birth ____/____/____ Join Date ____/____/____
Membership Type - Regular () Associate () Dual ()

Please indicate the amount enclosed: -----

Member's Signature

Upon completion, turn into your Detachment Paymaster with required payment.

*For Members At Large (MAL), remit this form with check or money order in the amount of \$30 to: Marine Corps League, National Headquarters
P.O. Box 1990, Stafford, VA 22555-1990.*

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All other use is prohibited.



is a member in good standing of

This card is good for a period of sixty days from



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP - MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Full Name _____
Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email Address _____
Date of Birth ____/____/____ Date of Enlistment/Commissioning ____/____/____ Date of Discharge/Retirement/Separation ____/____/____
Type of Application - New () Membership Type - Regular () Associate () Dual ()

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? () YES () NO If YES is checked, I agree to waive my rights under the Privacy Act and disclose the nature of the felony conviction for consideration of membership in the Marine Corps League.

() I hereby apply for membership in the _____ Detachment, Marine Corps League and enclose \$ _____ for one year's membership.*

-OR-

() I hereby apply for membership in the Marine Corps League as a Member-at-Large (MAL), and enclose \$30 for one year's membership.*

*Includes free subscription to *Semper Fi, The Magazine of the Marine Corps League*

I hereby certify that I am currently serving or have served honorably in the United States Marine Corps, "ON ACTIVE DUTY," for not less than ninety (90) days and earned the Eagle, Globe and Anchor; or have served or am currently serving in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and have earned no less than ninety (90) Reserve Retirement Credit Points; or that I have served or am currently serving as a U.S. Navy FMF Sailor who has trained with Marine FMF Units in excess of ninety (90) days and earned the Marine Corps Device (clasp) or the Warfare Device worn on the Service Ribbon. If discharged, I am in receipt of a DD Form 214 or a Certificate of Discharge indicating "Honorable Service." ("Honorable Service" will be defined by the last DD Form 214 or Certificate of Discharge that the applicant received.) General Discharge under Honorable Conditions is acceptable. By signature on this application, I hereby agree to provide proof of honorable service/discharge upon request. I hereby authorize the National Executive Director, Marine Corps League to obtain an un-redacted copy of my latest DD Form 214 from the Marine Corps custodian of Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF), and/or verification of honorable service if deemed necessary to verify my eligibility for regular membership in the Marine Corps League. I understand the DD Form 214 may contain information such as military awards, training, and character of service.

(Sponsor where applicable)

Applicant's Signature (see reverse side)

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For Official Marine Corps League use only.
All other use is prohibited.

*Upon completion, turn into your Detachment sponsor with required payment.
Applicants for MAL Membership, remit this form with check or money order in the amount of \$30 to: Marine Corps League, National Headquarters
P.O. Box 1990, Stafford, VA 22555-1990.*



OATH OF MEMBERSHIP

"I, _____, In the Presence of Almighty God, do solemnly swear, that I will uphold and defend the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America and the Bylaws and Administrative Procedures of the Marine Corps League. That I take this obligation willingly and in good faith and that I will follow the directions and guidance of elected and appointed Officers of the League. That I will participate and support the missions and activities of the Marine Corps League, and that I promise to govern my conduct in such a manner that I will never bring discredit upon myself, Members of the League, or the Marine Corps League, so help me God."

Signature _____

Incorporated by an act of Congress in 1937, the Marine Corps League perpetuates the traditions and spirit of ALL Marines who proudly wear or who have worn the Eagle, Globe and Anchor of the Corps.



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Signature _____

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL AND DUES PAYMENT REMINDER

It's time to renew your membership. August 31st is just around the corner. All annual memberships expire in August. If you are an annual member, your dues are due now.

Don't wait and don't forget.

Fill out the form below and provide it to your detachment paymaster along with your annual dues payment. While you're at it, please remind your fellow members it's time to renew. It is a good idea to renew early so that, when life happens, you're already paid up.

Remember, you are paying ahead, not paying behind. Membership makes your detachment strong and doing your part, like paying dues on time, helps keep it that way. Please do not procrastinate. Square it away today.

Please fill out the form and provide to your detachment paymaster along with your annual dues.

RENEWAL FORM



Please fill out this form and give to your Detachment Paymaster along with your annual dues.

Member Number: _____ Detachment Number: _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Join Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ ☐ Home ☐ Cell ☐ Work

Email: _____ Dues Total: _____

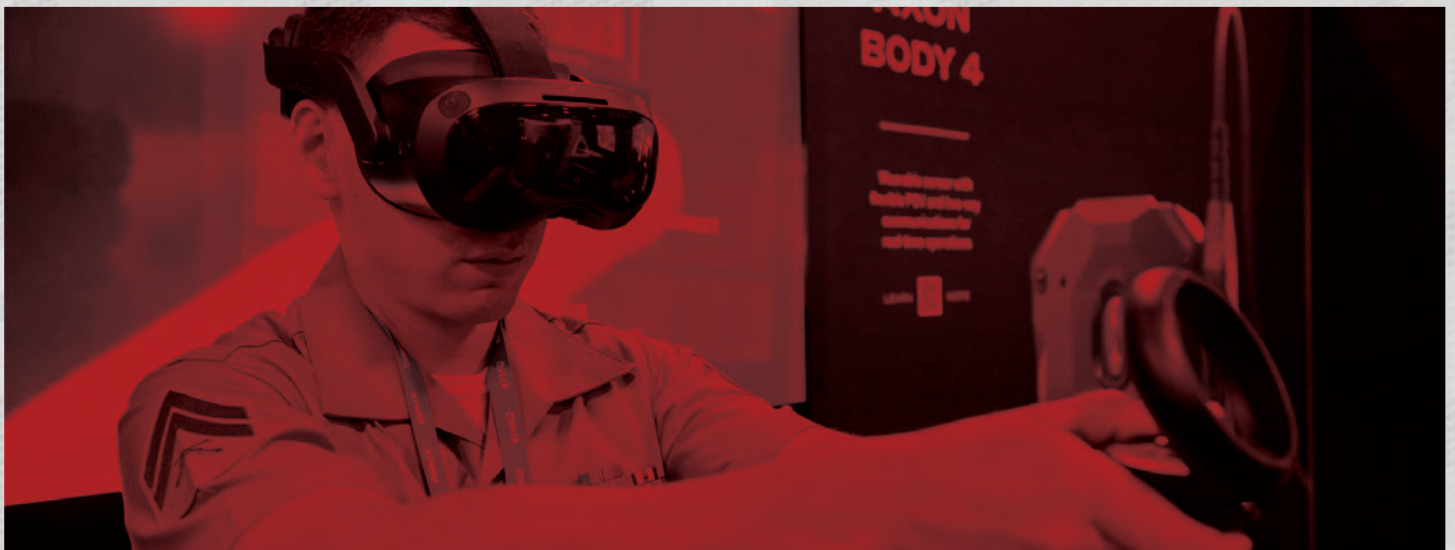
Please mail this form, along with your annual dues, to your detachment paymaster or give it to them at the next meeting. Detachment contact information can be found in our locator.

SAVE THE DATE



APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2025

**WALTER E. WASHINGTON CONVENTION
CENTER, WASHINGTON D.C.**



moderndaymarine.com

Modern Day Marine is not open to the public. All registrants must provide proof of identity with a Government issued photographic ID and must demonstrate that they have an "identifiable relationship" with the Marine Corps.

The Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy, or U.S. Marine Corps does not endorse any company, sponsor or their products or services.

