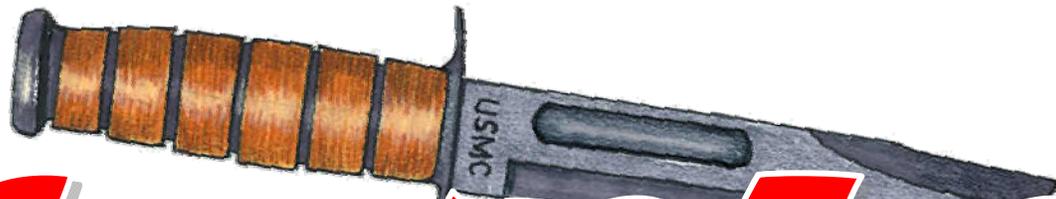


the

November 2009



CUTTING EDGE

news for and about the members of Anne Arundel County Detachment 1049 of the Marine Corps League
Pete Pervi, Commandant / Mac McNeir, Editor

Commandant's Birthday Message



ALMAR Active Number: 033/09
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ALMAR 033/09
MSGID/GENADMIN/CMC WASHINGTON DC DMCS//
SUBJ/UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY MESSAGE –
10 NOVEMBER 2009//
GENTEXT/REMARKS/

1. United States Marines represent the best young men and women our nation has to offer. To be a Marine is to be a member of America's warrior class – to be one of the few who steps forward with the courage and conviction to face whatever dangers await. Our nation expects her Marines to be ready when the nation calls; to leave family and the comforts of home behind; to march into battle and thrive under austerity; and to come home under a victory pennant.
2. From Al Anbar in the west of Iraq, to Helmand Province in the south of Afghanistan, our Corps of Marines can always expect to be found where the fight is toughest. Such is our history. Today, as we write the final chapter on our victory in Iraq, we will increasingly take the fight to the enemy in Afghanistan and add new pages to our legacy in places called Delaram, now Zad, and Garmsir. One day, we will return to our naval heritage and patrol the high seas with our Navy brothers. Such is our future.
3. As we celebrate our Corps' 234th Birthday, we first pause to reflect and pay tribute to those Marines who have given the last full measure in defense of freedom. We extend our deepest gratitude to our Marine Corps families – the unsung heroes who endure hardship and sacrifice so that we are able to go forward and accomplish any mission. We extend our appreciation to our countrymen who have answered our every need. And we celebrate the magnificent men and women who willingly and selflessly continue to go into harm's way to protect this great nation.
4. To all who have gone before, to those who wear the uniform today, and to the families that give us the strength to forge ahead – I wish you all a heartfelt happy 234th Birthday!
5. Semper Fidelis! James T. Conway, General, U.S. Marine Corps, Commandant of the Marine Corps//



CONTENTS...

<i>Caught in the Lens</i>	8
<i>Chaplain's Corner</i>	3
<i>Coming Events</i>	6
<i>Commandant's Message</i>	3
<i>Corps History</i>	7
<i>Corps Humor - The Substitute</i>	12
<i>Corps Quotation</i>	12
<i>Devil Dogs</i>	6
<i>Do Not Call Registry (Cell Phones)</i>	4
<i>From the Editor</i>	2
<i>Have You Heard?</i>	7
<i>Junior Vice Commandant</i>	4
<i>Legislative Report</i>	5
<i>List of Officers</i>	2
<i>One Marine's Perspective</i>	13
<i>Photos</i>	10 & 11
<i>Public Information</i>	5
<i>Senior Vice Commandant</i>	4
<i>Show Your Pride</i>	4
<i>Toys for Tots (Golf Ad)</i>	12
<i>VA Volunteerism</i>	5
<i>The Pacific (Mini-Series Review)</i>	14

From the Editor

by Mac McNeir

THE CUTTING EDGE

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Commandant – *Pete Pervi*

Senior Vice-Commandant – *James T. Brady*

Junior Vice-Commandant – *Woody Bowman*

Judge Advocate – *Manny Airey*

Adjutant – *Mac McNeir*

Auxiliary President – *Desiree Curtin*

By-Laws Committee Chairman – *Danny Fischio*

Chaplain – *Ken Rollins*

Color Guard Commander – *Woody Bowman*

Historian – *Victor Halme*

House Chairman – *Ken Rollins*

Legislative Officer – *Jim Le Gette*

Newsletter Editor – *Mac McNeir*

Paymaster – *Mac McNeir*

Public Information Officer – *Ed Dahling*

Quartermaster – *Fred Kaminski*

Rifle & Pistol Team Captain – *Michael R. Hadley*

Sergeant-at-Arms – *Chris Kalwa*

Toys for Tots Coordinator – *Pete Pervi*

VAWS Officer – *Ed Dahling*

Web Sergeant – *Michael R. Hadley*

Young Marines Commander – *George Martin*

Embroidered detachment patches remain available for purchase from the Adjutant and Judge Advocate for the bargain price of \$3 each.

Thanks to all of the golfers, who during October and November have been part of the Thursday golf effort that is serving as a fund-raiser for our detachment sponsored **Toys for Tots** drive.

You may have noticed that there are a few changes incorporated into this month's newsletter; not the least among them is the new name – ***the Cutting Edge***, which is displayed in the new masthead on the front page of this issue. I would also like to thank **Jack Severn** for his valuable contributions to the design of the new masthead! Other changes are being incorporated that are intended to not only make our newsletter more appealing but to bring it more in line with the evaluation guidelines of Marine Corps League National Headquarters. However, be assured that my primary objective will always be to meet the needs of this detachment.

There is also a new column in this month's newsletter, titled ***Have You Heard?*** The column briefly highlights – in words and sometimes pictures – our detachment members, their activities, notable achievements, and the occasional faux pas. Keep in mind that information provided by members of the detachment, will make this column far more meaningful than a column based solely upon my unorthodox perspectives. Would one of you like to be the focus of next month's ***Caught in the Lens*** column? Contact me if you think you might.

By the time that you read this, our detachment will have appropriately celebrated **Veteran's Day** and the **Marine Corps' 234th Birthday**. I hope that most of you were able to take part in these events, and displayed the esprit de corps that sets the Corps apart from other military entities. Should you be interested, a video birthday message featuring both the **Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps** is available on the Internet at...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7Bicfc9dp0>

As always, I look forward to seeing my fellow detachment members at our next monthly meeting!

Because of Toys for Tots activities...

the **Submission Deadline for all December Newsletter Articles** is **MIDNIGHT, Wednesday, December 16, 2009!**



New Location

Desiree' & Paul Curtin
Phone: 410-544-5270 • Fax: 410-544-5271
8201 Ritchie Hwy • Pasadena, MD 21122
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Commandant's Message



Pete Pervi

234th Birthday Message

As we celebrate our Corps' 234th Birthday, we should reflect on our own lives as Marines, on those of our buddies, some of whom are gone and others with whom we have stayed in contact through the years. While we are lovers of peace, we are also a brotherhood of warriors, who by choice have always put Country and Corps above our own lives. We should also remember that our wives, children, parents, and sweethearts have had to live with our choice and suffer all the trials and tribulations of war. Many unique challenges have been endured and overcome by every generation of Marines and Marine families; since, the first recruit signed up at Tun Tavern. Every generation of Marines has had to step-up and give their fullest measure in defense of freedom and our way of life.

Today, just as with previous generations, Marines and their families are making the sacrifice. As members of the Marine Corps League, we also serve by providing help and support to our successors and their families. We of all people know and understand the level of their sacrifice. So with the highest degree of respect, let us extend our deepest gratitude to the men and women of the Corps as well as their families and friends.

Be proud of these men and women, who with great pride and selflessness go into harm's way as United States Marines. They understand the heritage that has been passed on to them and they are building upon the legacy of those Marines who preceded them.

To all of the men and women, past and present, who have earned and upheld the traditions of the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor – Happy 234th Birthday and Semper Fi!

Pete Pervi

Commandant
Anne Arundel County Detachment 1049,
Marine Corps League



Chaplain's Corner

from Ken Rollins, Detachment Chaplain

Kacuko Bynum, wife of **Denny Bynum**, has recently resumed chemotherapy for cancer, which had been in remission for quite a while. Please include Kacuko and her family in your prayers.

Gerald Grimes, life member of our detachment is currently an in-patient at the **VA Medical Facility in Perry Point, MD – Bldg. 14H**. If you happen to be in the area, please consider stopping in and visiting Gerald for a while.

Paul Baxter, a Marine Corporal during the Vietnam era and cousin of **Ken Webster** was interred in **Arlington National Cemetery** on 17 November 2009.

Brandon Kalwa, 19 year-old son of our own **Chris and Erica Kalwa**, has been admitted to the **Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)** at **Johns Hopkins Hospital**, where he has undergone treatment for muscular dystrophy and more recently pneumonia and H1N1 (swine flu). His respiratory problems will likely result in a tracheotomy in the very near future. Brandon's spirits are flagging, so your visits (please call Chris at 443-310-9517 first) and prayers are welcome?

Please notify me if you are aware of any Marines or Marine family members, who are either sick or in distress; as well as, any Marine or family member, who may have passed-away.



From the desk of the

Senior Vice Commandant



James T. Brady

From the desk of the

Junior Vice Commandant



Woody Bowman

No Article This Month

Our **Senior Vice Commandant** has been deeply involved in many important activities during the weeks just passed – serving as one of the organizers for the **VFW's 75th Annual Tomb Trek** as well as being the Treasurer for that event. He also had the demanding responsibility of organizing, coordinating, and hosting the **Marine Corps' Birthday Ball** for our detachment during the same period.

It is for these reasons that his article will not appear in this month's newsletter.

As one who took part in both events, I would like to express our Senior Vice Commandant's hope that all who participated in either or both of these events had a rewarding experience. On behalf of our membership, I would also like to thank our Senior Vice Commandant (and those who assisted him) for having provided us with two superlative events!

The Editor

Fellow Members,

I would like to start this month's article, by welcoming new Life Member **Harold Van Buskirk Jr.** to our detachment.

Secondly, I would like to point out the new Life Membership fees, which will take effect on January 1, 2010.

- 35 years of age and under \$500
- 36 to 50 \$400
- 51 to 60 \$300
- 61 and over \$150

November Color Guard activities include(d) the following events.

Veterans Day Presentation (Talk)

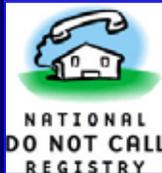
- November 3rd..... Quarterfield Elementary School
- November 4th..... Severn Elementary School
- November 5th Ridgeway Elementary School

Posting of Colors

- November 8th..... Severna Park Elk's Club
- November 10th... Pasadena Senior Center

Last, but not least...**Happy 234th Birthday!** to my fellow Marines.

Woody



Do Not Call Registry

Reminder...all cell phone numbers are being released to telemarketing companies and you will soon start to receive sales calls. You will be charged for these calls even if the message is saved on your phone...you will be charged for the minutes required to listen to the recorded message.

To prevent this, call the national **DO NOT CALL** list at the number below...it will only take a minute of your time.

888-382-1222

You must call from the cell phone number you wish to have blocked! The number will remain blocked for five (5) years. **Remember! You cannot call from a different phone number.**



SHOW YOUR PRIDE
Wear Your Medals on Veterans' Day!





VA Volunteerism

from Ed Dahling, VAVS Officer

The following information was reprinted from the **Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs** web page. I recommend that those of you who have internet access, visit this site at <http://www.mdva.state.md.us/> as it is an informative source of information for Maryland veterans.

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs is an Executive Department within the Maryland State Government with a service mission to:

- Provide representation to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The agency also provides referrals to other federal, Maryland State, and local government agencies for benefits which may be available to eligible individuals.
- Manage and operate authorized Maryland State Veterans Cemeteries and a Civil War Cemetery.
- Maintain and care for memorials for Maryland veterans of Vietnam, Korea, and World War II.
- Manage Charlotte Hall Veterans' Home.
- Provide staff support and assistance to State Veterans' Commissions.



Legislative Report

from Jim Le Gette, Legislative Officer

There will be no "cost-of-living-allowance" (COLA) increase for retired military members this year. This decision is based on the "steep" drops in gasoline and crude oil prices over the last year. Also, there is a question about whether the retiree will be qualified to receive the \$250 (economic recovery payment) proposed by the administration.

U.S. House of Representative Bill HR 3908 proposes that there would be a tax credit for businesses that hire a spouse or caregiver of a disabled veteran. This proposal is tied to the existing \$4,800 tax write off for companies that hire disabled veterans.

In the works, by the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, is a consideration to allow parents of children who served in the military and are buried in a military cemetery, to be buried (the parents) along side their son or daughter. There are many questions about the feasibility of this proposal. Both the Veterans Affairs Administration and Vietnam Veterans of America oppose the idea.



Public Information

from Ed Dahling, Public Information Officer

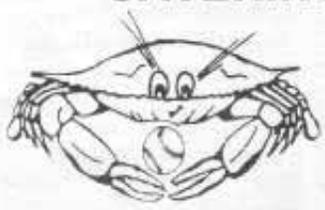
Birthplace of Corps – On November 10, 1775, Robert Mullan, the proprietor of the tavern and son of Peggy Mullan, was commissioned by an act of Congress to raise the first two battalions of Marines, under the leadership of Captain Samuel Nicholas, the first appointed Commandant of the Continental Marines. Nicholas' grandfather was also a member of the Tun Tavern Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons and it is this relationship between Mullan, Nicholas and the Tavern which has resulted in Tun Tavern being acknowledged as the birthplace of the United States Marine Corps.

There are an estimated three million active and retired U.S. Marines worldwide, who have been exposed in their military training to the historical significance of Tun Tavern. Each year, on November 10th, Marines around the world toast their birthplace on the most significant date in the history of their Corps.



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Devil Dogs



The Fun & Honor Society of the Marine Corps League

Woof-Woof,

There is not a whole lot happening in Dogdom this month. The Dog Robber sits around all day licking his paws waiting for the lackluster Dogs to send in their dues. He would rather be a little busier than he is, by getting those dues in to the Kennel. You can help him out by sending 15 big bones – in the form of a check made out to “**MODD, Pound 204**” – to **7944 Oakwood Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21061**.

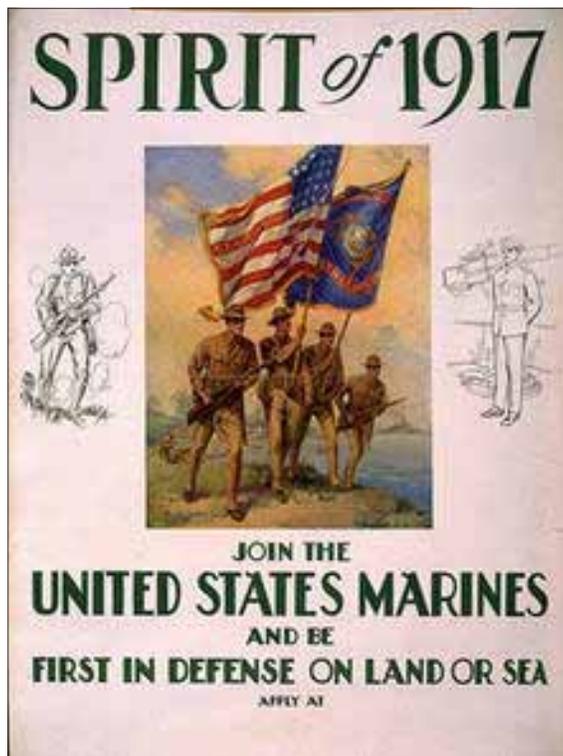
The next Pound Growl will be held on 20 December at the Dog House.

As always, keep the fleas at a safe distance.

Remember: It is an honor to be a Devil Dog!

Paul Taylor

PDD & Dog Robber



Coming Events

The following events are scheduled to occur through December 2009. Unless otherwise noted, these events will take place at VFW Post 160, located at 2597 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21060 (410-766-9802).

MCL Detachment 1049 Monthly Meeting

Monday, November 23, 2009 @ 1900
Peter Pervi (410-987-3811)

Thanksgiving Holiday Dinner

Thursday, November 26, 2009
Linda Howard

Toys for Tots – Individual Family Toy Pickup

Saturday, December 5, 2009 from 1000 to 2000
Peter Pervi (410-987-3811)

VFW Post 160 Monthly Breakfast

Sunday, December 6, 2009 from 0900 to 1100
Charles Albo (443-926-1665)

Toys for Tots – Individual Family Toy Pickup

Thursday, December 17, 2009 from 1000 to 2000
Peter Pervi (410-987-3811)

VFW Post 160 Kids Christmas Party

Saturday, December 19, 2009 from 1300 to 1500
Jennifer Sacks

MODD Pound 204 Growl

Sunday, December 20, 2009 @ 1000
Paul Taylor (410-768-6288)

MCL Detachment 1049 Monthly Meeting & Christmas Party – Includes Ladies Auxiliary

Monday, December 21, 2009 @ 1900
Peter Pervi (410-987-3811)

VFW Post 160 Christmas Party

Thursday, December 24, 2009
Margaret Ehrlich

Christmas Holiday (Post Closed)

Friday, December 25, 2009

VFW Post 160 New Years Eve Party

Thursday, December 31, 2009 @ Time TBD
Contact – TBD

New Year’s Holiday (Post Closed)

Friday, December 25, 2009



**Rich Morton Lincoln
Mercury Mazda**



**51 Mountain Rd.
Pasadena, MD 21122**

Phone: 800-577-1658

Have You Heard?



by Mac McNeir

Recently, members of our detachment paid their respects to the friends and family of **Army Sergeant First Class Bradley Scott Bohle** at Singleton's funeral home in Glen Burnie. While there, a number of our members became aware of the viewing for another deceased veteran, **William Stecker**, an Army Air Corps Colonel, who as a 1st Lieutenant during World War II, had piloted B-17 bombers on 35 missions over Germany. Besides paying their respects, **Ray Gonzales, Paul Downey, Fred Downey, and Charlie Quick** also conducted a small memorial ceremony as a tribute to the Colonel. Their compassionate act resulted in the receipt of a 'Thank-You' note from Colonel Stecker's family a few days later.

At our October meeting, Past Department of Maryland Commandant **Jack Severn**, presented detachment member **Kenny Webster** with a quilt emblazoned with a picture of their graduation at **MCRD Parris Island** in 1962 as members of Platoon 358.



Ironically, our ever-vigilant Jack (pictured on the left in the above photo) admitted that until Kenny approached him many years later, at a Marine Corps League detachment meeting, he had not realized that they had been members of the same platoon. October 23rd marked the 47th anniversary of their graduation.

Commandant **Pete Pervi** and a bevy of volunteers from the detachment and auxiliary, the VFW, Fort Meade, the Naval Academy, etc. met at the post to plan and prepare for this year's **Toys for Tots** drive. Although times and dates for many events are still to be solidified, the team is committed to making this year's drive the best ever.

(see *Have You Heard?* on page 9)



Corps History

by Vic Halme

1775

10 November

Continental Congress authorizes the creation of two battalions of Marines.

28 November

Samuel Nicholas commissioned as Captain of Marines, becoming the first Marine officer.

1804

29 November

Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon and seven Marines land in Alexandria, Egypt.

1856

20 November

Marines are part of landing party that captures the barrier forts guarding the approach to Canton, China.

1903

5 November

Major John Lejeune lands battalion to ensure Panama's independence from Columbia.

1908

12 November

President Theodore Roosevelt removes Marines from U.S. warships; President Taft returns them to the warships six months later.

1915

17 November

Leatherneck Magazine established.

18 November

Major Smedley D. Butler leads Marine attack on Fort Riviere, Haiti and is awarded 2nd Medal of Honor.

1921

10 November

The first formal commemoration of the birthday of the Marine Corps on 10 November.

1931

2 November

VS-14M on the USS Saratoga and VS-15M on the USS Lexington – first Marine squadrons to be carrier-based.

1933

21 November

Major C. L. Forndey and a Navy Commander set new balloon altitude record of 61,237 feet.

1942

8 November

British and American troops land in North Africa. Marines took over enemy ships in an Algerian harbor.

1947

20 November (approximate date)

Toys For Tots program founded by Major Bill Hendricks and Marine reservists .

(see *Corps History* on page 8)

Corps History (from page 7)

1948

4 November

Colonel Katherine Towle became the first Director of Women Marines as regulars and not reservists.

10 November

First eight enlisted women are sworn in as regular Marines. First black women Marines enlist the following summer.

1949

18 November

Corps orders that all male Marines, regardless of race, be assigned to vacancies in any unit.

1950

2 November

Marines engage Chinese in North Korea near the Chosin Reservoir.

23 November

7th Marines take Yudam-ni. Thanksgiving was celebrated in Korea with temperatures hovering about 20 degrees below zero.

27 November

Eight Chinese Communist divisions launch a massive attack in Korea, with the expressed purpose of destroying the 1st Marine Division. This action leads to the successful Marine Corps attack out of the Chosin Reservoir and relocation to the coastal port of Hungnam.

1954

10 November

Marine Corps War Memorial site dedicated.

1958

25 November

The Marine Corps grade structure was revised to incorporate two additional pay grades (E8/E9).

1976

4 November

First Marine Corps Marathon held in Washington, DC.

1979

4 November

Mob overruns U.S. Embassy in Teheran, Iran; 13 Marines among 65 American hostages; 52 of whom were held captive for 444 days.

21 November

Seven Marines defend U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan against mob attack spawned by erroneous radio report that the U.S. had bombed Mecca – an Islamic holy site.

1982

13 November

Vietnam Veterans Memorial, containing the names of more than 13,000 Marines who lost their lives in Vietnam, is dedicated.

2003

3 November

Presidential Unit Citation awarded to 1st Marine Expeditionary Force for its service in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It becomes the first unit to earn the award since the end of the Vietnam War.



Visit the Department of Maryland web site at
<http://deptofindmcl.org>



Caught in the Lens

Our subject was born in Philadelphia, Pa. on November 18, 1950. After graduating from high school in Warminster, Pa. in 1968, he joined the Marine Corps. Completing recruit training at Parris Island, S.C. as a member of Platoon 255 on June 7, 1969; he was subsequently transferred to the 1st Infantry Training Regiment at Camp Geiger N.C.

From September 1969 through September 1970, he served in Vietnam with Golf Company, 2/5, 1st Marine Division at An Hoa. During this tour of duty, he attained the rank of Sergeant (E-5). His personal awards include the Purple Heart, Navy Commendation with Combat V, Combat Action Ribbon, Meritorious Unit Commendation, and Presidential Unit Citation.

Upon his return from Vietnam, our then young man was assigned to Marine Barracks, Fort Meade Maryland as a Marine Guard at the National Security Agency until April 1973; when, he was honorably discharged.

Staying in Maryland, he met and married his wife Sandi, to whom he's been married for 36 years. They have two children and 3 grand children.



Recently retired from the Postal Service, this Marine is a

charter member of Anne Arundel County Detachment 1049 and a life member of the Marine Corps League. He has served as our Sergeant-at-Arms, editor of this newsletter, and currently holds two appointed positions.

This Marine is also a member of the VFW, the Cooties, and the American Legion; as well as being a life member of The Order of the Purple Heart, the Disabled American Veterans, and the Military Order of Devil Dogs.

Who is this detachment member?

Answer at bottom of page 12.



*New members are our life's blood!
Try to recruit a new member.*

Have You Heard? (from page 7)



On November 8th, over 400 **Cooties** (an honor organization within the VFW – similar to our own **Devil Dogs**) from all over the U.S. gathered at **Arlington National Cemetery** to take part in their **75th Annual Tomb Trek**. Participants (many of whom are also members of our Marine Corps League Detachment), who represented Cootie Pup Tents from every state as well as the Cootie National Staff, laid 372 wreaths at the tomb of the unknowns. See page 11 for additional pictures of this event.

On the evening of November 10th, many members of our detachment gathered at VFW Post 160 to commemorate our **Corps' 234th Birthday** and to swap a few salty sea-stories.



Pete Pervi, our Commandant, graciously hosted this event.

A large number of detachment members travelled to **Crownsville Veterans Cemetery** to be part of the annual observance of **Veterans Day** on November 11th.



More than 60 people gathered at VFW Post 160 on Saturday evening, November 14th, to celebrate the **234th Birthday of the Marine Corps**. Among the attendees were members of our detachment, their significant others, active duty Marines, and **Midshipmen from the Naval Academy**. Some highlights of this thoroughly enjoyable evening included the interaction of Marines and others, whose experiences and sea-stories spanned many generations; the recognition of **Rich Gonzales** for his many contributions to the detachment; and, the placement of the **Missing/Fallen/ POW/MIA Table** in the center of the celebration where the significance of the sacrifices made by those who will be forever young could not be overlooked. Also worth mentioning is the fantastic dinner provided by the VFW's **Ladies Auxiliary**.



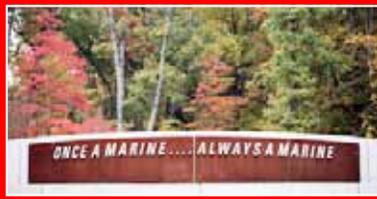
See page 10 for additional pictures of this event.

Four members of our detachment (**Pete Pervi**, **Manny Airey**, **Woody Bowman**, and **Mac McNeir**) travelled to **Arlington National Cemetery** on November 17th to pay their respects to **Kenny Webster's cousin Paul Baxter**, a Vietnam Veteran and holder of the Purple Heart, who recently succumbed to cancer.



A Marine Memory





Marine Corps 234th Birthday Photos



Hope that was a 'whoopie' cushion! [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Jim Brady explaining to guest Speaker Christine Fay that for only \$50 more, the frame on her gift could be made out of real wood. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Icing the cake with a Staff NCO sword can be a challenge! [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Jim Brady trying to stay awake while acknowledging the many contributions made to our detachment by Associate Member Rich Gonzales. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Sue Pervi demonstrating that the parlor game 'Charades' isn't dead. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Occasionally, someone needs to have the punch line explained. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Tomb Trek Photos



Members of the Cooties staging commemorative wreaths prior to the start of wreath-laying ceremony. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Cooties, who are also members of our MCL Detachment, wait for the ceremonies to begin. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Guards at the Tomb of the Unknowns being inspected by the Sergeant-of-the-Guard. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



Wreaths presented to ceremonial guard detachment for placement adjacent to the Tomb of the Unknowns. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



One 'squad' of Cooties returns after presenting their wreaths while the next marches to present the next group of wreaths. [Photo by Mac McNeir]



The Tomb of the Unknowns surrounded by wreaths, which were presented by the Cooties as part of their 75th Annual Tomb Trek. [Photo by Mac McNeir]

Corps Humor – The Substitute

A college professor, an avowed atheist, was teaching his class.

He shocked several of his students when he flatly stated that he was going to prove there was no God.

Addressing the ceiling, he shouted: *“God, if you are real, then I want you to knock me off this platform. I’ll give you 15 minutes!”*

The lecture room fell silent. You could have heard a pin drop.

Ten minutes went by. Again he taunted God, saying, *“Here I am, God and I’m still waiting.”*

The allotted time of 15 minutes had almost expired when a Marine, who was recently released from active duty and newly registered in the class, walked up to the professor, hit him full force in the face, and sent him tumbling from his lofty platform.

The professor was out cold! At first, the students were shocked and babbled in confusion. The stoic young Marine took a seat in the front row and sat silently.

The classroom fell silent...and the students waited.

Eventually, the professor regained consciousness. Shaken, he looked at the young Marine now seated in the front row. After a tense silence, the professor stammered, *“What the hell’s the matter with you? Why did you do that?”*

The Marine replied, *“God was busy so he sent me!”*



Corps Quotation

“Remember, whatever you write, this was no retreat! All that happened was that we found more Chinese behind us than in front of us, so we about-faced and attacked.”

Chesty Puller, USMC,
speaking to reporters after the successful battle out of the Chosin Reservoir, during the Korean War.

One Marine's Perspective

Separating the Marines and the Department of the Navy

by Dan Flynn
Sergeant Major, USMC Retired

For years, well-meaning, Marine veterans have cheered every time some element of Marine Corps was removed from the jurisdiction/support of the Navy. We now have Navy and Marine Corps Achievement and Commendation Medals.

We have people lobbying Congress to change the name of our head civilian boss, to *Secretary of the Navy and Marine Corps*. Now there are members of Congress reviewing the status of the Corps, and openly asking questions about the validity of having two Armies – one large one, and one small one. This review is our own fault.

Without trying to insult Marine veterans who served loyally, bravely and faithfully, and who, in their Marine Corps zeal, applaud the movement of the Corps away from the Navy, I must state that this distancing of our mission and continuity with the Navy, will jeopardize the continuation of the Corps as an integral part of our nation's defense.

Marines are, and always have been, members of the naval service. The first Marines had to be expert marksmen, and able seamen. In the illustrious history of our beloved Corps, the storied expeditions and forays against foreign shores, until the close of WWII, always unfolded in the context of naval campaigns. Our illustrious history of combat in World War II, was one of amphibious operations. During the *Banana Wars*, our role was an expeditionary one, which was well within the context of naval operations.

Believe me, the United States Marine Corps does not have to promote its reputation and recognition by tacking its name on the office of the Secretary of the Navy. Who, in this entire world, does not know who American Marines are, and what they do? Our *reputation* and *soldierly repute*, were not the result of official titles.

This great nation has a large, well equipped and superbly trained United States Army. They are the ones organized, equipped and tasked with fighting the country's sustained land campaigns. To think that the Corps could even scratch the surface of the operational commitments assigned to the U.S. Army is silly.

The Corps must retain its naval identity, if it is to survive in the future. We are unique in many ways. When I enlisted, after my physical, the first thing I saw in my medical record was a rubber stamp that stated: "*Fit for duty at sea, on land and any other duties that the President, at his discretion, may direct.*" That sums up the mission of the Corps.

Marines are dedicated, professional warriors, superbly trained, and fiercely loyal to Corps and Country. Marines will follow wherever their colors are unfurled, and suffer indescribable hardship without complaint – and all they need are orders from the Corps. There are no other warriors in the U.S. Armed Forces, who are so committed to their mission, that life itself is of secondary concern.

Marines have a specific and well-defined mission, one that has been largely cast aside by our Defense Department since the Korean War. The conduct of a protracted land campaign role, has caused us to redefine our needs as far as equipment and training goes. This can produce a terrible by-product – the dulling of the highly sharpened tip of the *American Spear*, our Marines.

We need to be part of ship's company on the capital ships of the fleet. We need Marine Detachments at naval installations.

We need a closer alignment with naval operations. The old mission is still a valid one today, and fielding a large land force of Marines, for very specialized, specific combat functions on extended basis, should always be measured against our mission and force structure.

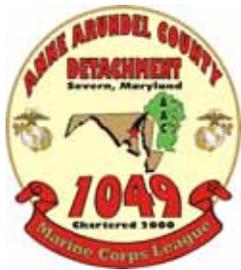
If the Spartans last stand were re-enacted today, I am certain that Leonidas would want Marines as his "*300 Spartans.*" However, in the face of vast, sweeping campaigns, such as those Alexander the Great used to capture the known world, he would prefer to have heavily equipped Army forces, trained in extended land combat operations, as his primary force.

We are Marines. We come from the sea. We kill the enemy. That's what we do, and there are none that can do it better.

A lethal Marine Corps, expertly trained in its deadly art, in support of the correct mission, is a thing of beauty.

In closing, all I can say, is "*Marines, stay Navy – America does not need two Armies!*"





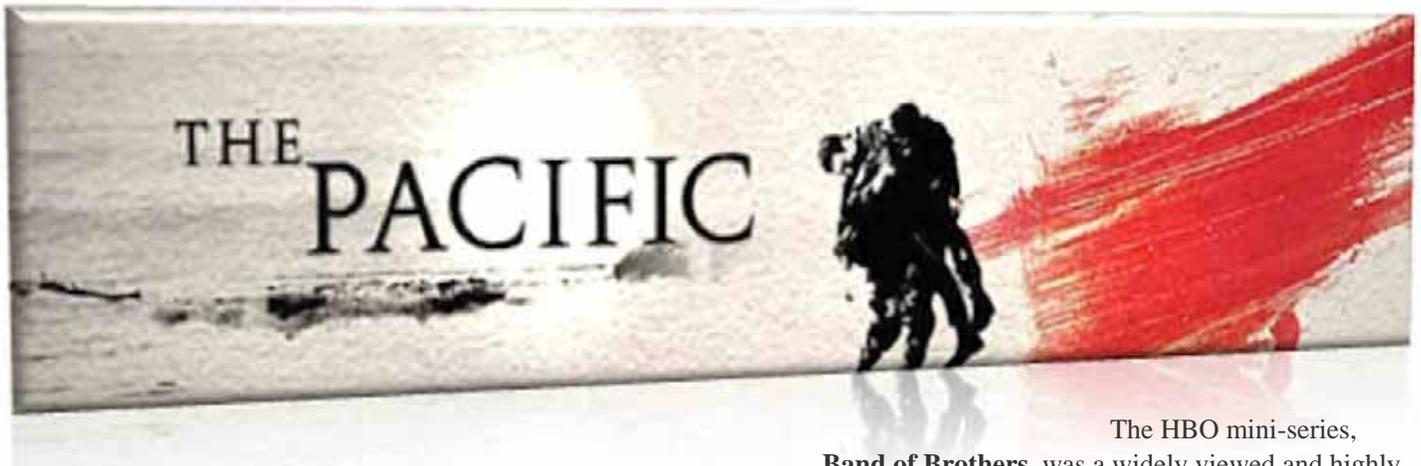
Marine Corps League

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(Address Correction Requested)



The HBO mini-series, **Band of Brothers**, was a widely viewed and highly acclaimed retrospective of the European conflict during World War II. A new mini-series, **The Pacific**, promises to provide viewers with an authentic depiction of the combat operations waged against Japan during that same period. Scheduled for broadcast in March 2010, this ten-episode HBO television production is yet another collaboration of the successful **Tom Hanks – Steven Spielberg** team.

This new mini-series chronicles the day-to-day fight for survival by members of **Kilo Company, 3/5** (1st Marine Division) – from the jungles of Guadalcanal, to the rain-forests of Cape Gloucester, the coral of Peleliu, the volcanic ash of Iwo Jima, and ultimately, the carnage that was Okinawa – an operation twice as large as D-Day. Three Marines serve as focal points for this series – **John Leckie** (machine gunner, intelligence scout, and author of *Helmet for My Pillow*), **Eugene Sledge** (mortar-man and author of *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa*), and **John Basilone** (the only enlisted Marine in World War II to receive both the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross). Be sure to watch for this series in the coming year.

NOTE – This review was based upon information and graphics gleaned from the HBO Internet site at <http://www.hbo.com/events/pacific/video.html>.