



The Gipper

Marine Corps League
President Ronald Reagan Detachment 597
Semper Fidelis

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APRIL 2019



COMMANDANT
R. A. "Dick" Jennings

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From the Desk of the Commandant

Once a Marine, Always a Marine

Being a Marine is a fantastic feeling, because making the world a better place is engrained in our DNA and the Marine ethos. Duty, Honor and Country the three things we continue to live by even in retirement, the Marine Corps League a mechanism that helps to channel our visceral brotherhood and commitment in helping each other. And as Commandant of your Detachment, I smile ear to ear knowing that we are one of the best Detachments in the nation because of our efforts to help our fellow Veterans, regardless of branch. We continue to reach out to our community to raise awareness of who, what and why we exist; work with developers and local and state government officials to build a Veterans Center to assist those Veterans in need of help; and provide Color Guard and Honor Guard details for civic events and to honor those who served. Our success is seen by the increase in invitations to events for our Color Guard Details and civic attendance as an organization.

I believe we can do more to help make our community a better place, this can be done more effectively with a larger organization, which means growing our membership and volunteerism. Example to this point, Matt Valenzuela, Past Commandant and Dept. of CA Sr. Vice Commandant, was awarded the recruiter of the year with a Distinguished Service Citation for his commitment to growing membership and acquiring guest speakers for our general meetings. Follow his example, if you see someone wearing a Marine hat or a car plastered with Marine decals, there's a good chance he/she is bursting with Marine pride – so invite them to our general meetings to be with their brethren.



Our most demanded outreach services are our Color Guard and Honor Guard Details. Our Color Guard volunteers work hard year around dedicating their time responding to requests, which in turn raises the awareness of the MCL. They rely on each other's commitment to provide an honorable representation of what the MCL is all about. We need volunteers to step up to help in this effort, please contact Ruy Peña, Color Guard Commander for more information.

During the April general meeting, I had the great pleasure and honor to award each member of our Color Guard Detail in

recognition of their hard work and volunteerism above and beyond the call of duty. Those awarded with Certificates of Appreciation were: Ruy Peña, Dick Jennings, Hank Noorda, Matthew Gonzalez, John Miller, Harry Hodges, John Calderon, Larry Fischer, Ben Pfister, John Coley, Robert Martinez, Jack Parfitt, "Doc" Honaker, David Opfer, and Fausto Galvan. Additionally, as noted above, I had the distinct pleasure of presenting Matt Valenzuela with a Distinguished Service Award for being the recruiter of the year. Again, Matt has gone above and beyond in bringing in new members to almost every meeting, and guest speakers to boot. Thank you all for everything you have done and continue to do for the league.



VETERAN'S CENTER

Let me bring you up to date on the proposed Simi Valley Town Center - Veteran's Center.

First to recap, On February 25th, Jeff Di Julius, General Manager of the Simi Town Center and an Associate of our Detachment, contacted me regarding our interest in building a Veteran Center in Simi Valley. In this conversation, Jeff said there may be some land in the Town Center that would become available. We then met on the 1st of March where he told me that the land from the old Macy's Men's Store, west to the Museum of Military History is available. On Tuesday, March 5 at the Town Center Office, 4 executives from



our builders, Jeff Di Julius, Paymaster Andy Dobrzynski, and myself met for our initial meeting regarding this project. Jeff laid out what is transpiring on his end with new owners and Homes4Families laid out what their idea for this project.

To receive outside funding from the state and government, Homes4Families must build low income housing for Veterans. This means in order to have a Veteran Center that we are in dire need of, they must build houses, condos and/or apartments in the same area that the Veteran Center would be located.

After some discussion, our builders said that they would build in excess of 100 condos in the location of the old Macy's store, with a Veteran Center. There would be small stores and shops around the building and a few of the restaurants that are there already would remain and more would be brought in.

Now for what recently transpired - On April 9, 2019, Senior Vice Commandant Harry Hodges and I met with Congresswoman Hill's District Director Angela Giacchetti in Ms. Hill's office on West Los Angeles Avenue. Ms. Giacchetti had reached out to us a few weeks prior inquiring about a meeting with the Congresswoman. However, the Congresswoman was called back to Washington for issues needing her immediate attention, hence the meeting with Ms. Giacchetti.

In preparation for our meeting, I had forwarded the "Business Plan" of the Veteran Center and an article I wrote on Facebook regarding the "Massacre" at the Borderline Restaurant. To my surprise, Ms. Giacchetti was well up to speed on our progress in obtaining land for this project. She knew of "Homes4Families" and told me the Congresswoman was planning on going to Santa Clarita in a few weeks to look at the Homes4Families's project they just completed.

Ms. Giacchetti also asked about what we envisioned for the Veteran Center. I spoke about the purpose of this center would be a place where Veterans could go for job and health care related issues, and not an overnight facility. For job information and training, it would be more of a learning center where Vets would be able to talk to established business personnel, learn how to write resumes, what to anticipate in an interview and mock interviews, and how to dress for interviews. It would also be a place for Veterans to come and talk with people who had been in their shoes before.

With regards to health care, we would try to get civilian doctors to come in daily to help assist the Veterans who don't have the means to get to either the VA at West LA or Sepulveda. I shared the feedback I had had from some physicians and PA's about the center and most, if not all, have stated a desire to help, as well as a few dentists.

Ms. Giacchetti seemed quite excited about the health care aspect, given that she had a meeting that morning with the Acting Director of the VA in Los Angeles. She didn't go into any details, but she did infer that there were going to be changes coming down from the VA in DC.

We also discussed PTSD and what it means when dealing with the civilian population. I sent her the article I wrote saying that the media puts a negative interpretation to PTSD and Veterans. She agreed that more education to the civilian population would help them understand what it means to have PTSD as a Veteran.

As the meeting ended, we spoke about what could be done with claims from Veterans that either go unaided or just turned down. She said the VA recently hired a person in Antelope Valley whose sole purpose



was to help Veterans with their claims. She also said in the Washington office, they have a person designated to help Veterans residing in Congresswoman Hill's district.

The meeting lasted over an hour and being acquainted with dealing with politicians and their staff, Harry and I felt this was a meeting that we didn't just get "lip service," but we were speaking with someone who really did care. She seemed quite acceptable to all our plans, reiterating that the Congresswoman is here to assist in any way possible. She said she would stay in touch and when the Congresswoman comes back into town, she would arrange a meeting with us.

Semper Fi,
Dick Jennings
Commandant



SR. VICE COMMANDANT

Harry Hodges

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Marines and Associate members,

Commandant Jennings has probably already informed you about our positive meeting with Congresswoman's Hill's District Director Angela Giacchetti earlier this month, so I won't double down on what happen, but only to say the meeting was good and receptive. Let's hope their support is backed with action to help get the Veterans Center built.

And as members of Marine Corps League our job is to carry on the tradition of the Marine Corps to help our brother Marines and their families, whether they're active duty, Veteran or reserve. A single arrow will snap in two when bent, but a hand full of arrows can withstand the strength of the mightiest hands. As a group of many we can achieve greater things. Let's get to the "many" and increase our membership of regular and associate members so we can do more to help Veterans within our community.

Many younger Marines who are being discharged and transitioning from military to civilian life will need our help. We have been in their shoes and can relate to their needs, find them and get them to join our League so we can help them.

Ships Store is fully stocked and will be open from 17:30 to 18:30 before our Detachment's general meetings. One more item, any Polo shirt other than red must be paid for in advance. These shirts come in red, blue, white, and black.

Semper Fi,
Harry Hodges
Senior Vice & Ships Store Rep



EVENTS DIRECTOR Ken 'Doc' Honaker

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Marines, Corpsmen and Associates,

The next scheduled community event for the Detachment 597 will be the Simi Valley Street Fair on 4 May 2019. This annual activity is once again slated to be held at the Simi Valley Town Center. Setup can begin on Town Center Drive at 0630 which is WAAAY too early for our needs. Arriving at 0730 will give us ample time to setup Big Red, display our wares, and leave enough time to find something to eat and/or drink. Street Fair hours are from 0900 through 1700, so tear down cannot begin until 1700 under penalty by the Chamber. All 597 members are invited to set aside some time to staff the booth, as well as allow time to visit the many other booths promoting a variety of goods and services available within the local area. Commandant Jennings and I encourage a professional appearance for meeting the public and seeking new members. In that vein, no corpsman joke intended, please wear Marine or Marine Corps League shirts and covers along with either tan or black shorts or trousers. Comfortable shoes are a must even with the cushioned floor that has become part of Big Red setup. Parking instructions for booth setup instruct us to enter Town Center Drive from First Street and seek Area Green - 4. We are booth 2057. See simivalleystreetfair.com

The Simi Valley Veterans Memorial Park will be host to the Antelope Valley half size exact replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall from 24-27 May. There will be an opening ceremony on 24 May, at 1600, and will remain open 24 hours daily through to the closing ceremony scheduled at 1600 on 27 May. The Wall will close at 0800 on 28 May. Spread the word of the arrival of this memorial. We must not forget what was given by our Veterans, or we will forget the value of freedom and democracy.

This event will require volunteers to setup and take down the wall, greet visitors, help locate names in the directory and guide visitors to locations on the Wall, listen to stories and lend a hand when needed. These volunteer assistance opportunities will be needed throughout the time the wall opens to closing. It is tradition to read the names of the fallen throughout all hours of the stay of the Wall. Readers can sign up for times. More info as the Wall arrival draws near.

It is difficult for me to express enough gratitude for the accolades given to me at the last general meeting. It is and has been my honor to serve with and know members of the greatest fighting force on this planet. The US Navy memento of appreciation given me is now among the items I will cherish the rest of my life. John Miller's Marine and LAPD experience was evident as he interrogated me for the background bio for the evening. John, I want to personally thank you for all you have done, and to all - Semper Fidelis.

Semper Fi
Doc Honaker
Events Director



JR. VICE COMMANDANT

Jim Wagner

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Marines, Corpsmen and Associates,

As I mentioned at our last general meeting, I recently learned that I know of a chiropractor who has been approved by the VA. His name is Randall Stitt and his office are in North Hollywood although he is a Simi Valley resident.

Anyone uses the VA medical program can contact Dr. Stitt to learn how to receive free chiropractic care. The website link to Dr. Stitt is as follows:

<http://www.stitt-chiropractic.com/>

Semper Fidelis

Jim 'Wags' Wagner

Junior Vice Commandant



JR. PAST COMMANDANT

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April Fool's Day

April Fools' Day or **April Fool's Day** or **All Fools' Day** is an annual celebration commemorated on the first day of April by spreading hoaxes and playing practical jokes on unsuspecting friends.

The jokes and their victims are called April fools. People playing April Fool jokes often expose their prank by shouting "April fool(s)" at the unfortunate victim(s).

Some newspapers, magazines and other published media report fake stories, which are usually explained the next day or below the news section in smaller letters.

Aside from April Fools' Day, the custom of setting aside a day for the playing of harmless pranks upon one's friends and neighbor has historically been common around the world.

The value of the practice of playing April Fool pranks and hoaxes is controversial. The mixed opinions of critics are epitomized in the reception to the 1957 BBC "Spaghetti-tree hoax", in reference to a newly developed tree that grew spaghetti. Newspapers were split over whether it was "a great joke or a terrible hoax on the public".

The positive view that April Fools' can be good for one's health because it encourages "jokes, hoaxes...pranks, [and] belly laughs", and brings all the benefits of laughter including stress relief and reducing strain on the heart. There are many "best of" April Fools' Day lists that are compiled in order to showcase the best examples of how the day is celebrated. Various April Fools' campaigns have been praised for their innovation, creativity, writing, and general effort. The **New York Times** recently reported that the just released **Mueller Report** was the "best ever April Fool's joke".

The negative view describes April Fools' hoaxes as "creepy and manipulative", "rude" and "a little bit nasty", as well as based on deceit and prejudices.

Although April Fools' Day has been celebrated for several centuries by different cultures, the day is not a public holiday in most countries and its exact origins remain a mystery.

There is speculation that April Fools' Day was tied to the vernal equinox, or first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, when Mother Nature fooled people with changing, unpredictable weather, turning them into April Fools.

Some historians believe April Fools' Day dates back to 1582, when France switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, as called for by the Council of Trent in 1563.

Under the Gregorian calendar, the start of the new year was moved from the first day of Spring (the Vernal Equinox) to the first day of January. People who were slow to get the news or failed to



recognize that the start of the new year had moved to January 1 and continued to celebrate it during the last week of March through April 1 became the butt of jokes and hoaxes.

When genuine news or a genuine important order or warning is issued on April Fools' Day, there is risk that it will be misinterpreted as a joke and ignored.

Oh, April Fools!

Jerry McGerman

Jr. Past Commandant



JUDGE ADVOCATE

John Miller

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Corpsman Up!

**The Brave may not live forever, but the
Cautious never really live at all.**



There are only a few words that strike fear into just about every Marine, "Corpsman Up." It usually means that a Marine or fellow Corpsman is in trouble. But it can also mean, we need someone to set up a Birthday Ball or that an elderly Veteran Marine is having chest pains and needs someone to watch over him until he can get home or to a hospital. It can also mean that a person named Ken forever loses his real name and just becomes "Doc." I have never known a Marine who has anything but praise for the Navy Corpsman. That person who gave him APC for a mild headache or a muscle spasm while stateside and later wrapped a field dressing around his chest when he was wounded in combat. Marines may have problems with Officers or Staff Sergeants, but we all respect our Corpsman. That goes double for our own Ken "Doc" Honaker. He is the real deal. Here is why.

Ken was born in Montana, but his roots are in the Tidewater area of Virginia. There is a small community there with a population of only 1,449 and is only .06 square miles in area. A small home town with strong American values and traditions. His family settled in the area around 1760's and with their strong Swiss-German ethic, they worked hard and quickly became pillars of the community. So much so that the village was later named after the family, Honaker, Virginia. It is in the southwest corner of Virginia near the West Virginia and Kentucky boundary. His family fought in the American Revolution and later in the Civil War. During the great movement westward, the family moved to Montana where Ken was born and raised. As a matter of fact, Ken graduated from the very same High School that his mother had years before.

Ken's uncle joined the Navy in 1929 and his ship was in Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked. His father, who had joined the Army Air Corps before the war, was half way from San Francisco to Hawaii when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and drew the United States into World War II. The ship turned around and returned to the west coast. Ken's father shortly was sent to Australia in the Pacific Theater as an aircraft mechanic. The Honaker family sent 8 of its members to fight in World War II. One in the Navy, one in the



Marines, three in the Air Corps and three in the Army. All returned home safely. When it was Ken's turn to serve his country, his Navy uncle told him to join the Navy. The reason his uncle recommended the Navy. Simple; because the Navy always had 3 square meals and clean sheets even during the war. So, Ken joined the Navy and went for boot camp training at Recruit Station, San Diego, California. Ken decided that he wanted to be a Corpsman so that he could use his talents and compassion to heal and assist his fellow Sailors and Marines.

After his initial training, he graduated from Corpsman school and Field Medical Service School at Camp Pendleton and was assigned to the Oakland, California Naval Hospital. There Ken honed his skills and prepared himself for the duties that he knew would be his life's work. In late 1967, Ken received orders to report to FMF Pacific, Viet Nam. He was assigned to a grunt outfit, Mike Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines. Ken knew that being a Corpsman meant that he would always be in the thick of battle. It wasn't long before Ken was on patrol and attending to the needs of the Marines under his care. On the morning of May 1, 1968 his unit was hit with small arms and machine gun fire. A Marine went down, and Ken quickly went to his side and was attending to his wounds. Without any warning, Ken felt a tremendous jolt to his entire body. A bullet had entered his back and had traversed his body and exited in the front of his stomach. Now the guardian was down. His fellow Marines and Corpsmen came to his assistance and protected him and the other wounded Marines, until a Med Evac chopper arrived. Ken was loaded into the helicopter and it took off towards the Battalion Aid Station. Immediately the Med Evac helicopter was fired upon. The unit crashed in flames as it struck the ground. Ken was burned in escaping the fire. Another helicopter arrived and Ken was transported to the proper medical facility. He was treated for his gunshot wound and the burns to his body. For his actions that May day, Ken was awarded two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star with Combat V.

This Sailor whose roots are from the same state as General George Washington and General Lewis "Chesty" Puller was hospitalized stateside and recuperating from his wounds. He was now stationed at MCAS El Toro in Orange County California. While stationed at El Toro, Ken met the woman that would become the love of his life and later his wife, Susan. While convalescing Ken learned that 5 of his classmates from Corpsman school had been killed in action in Viet Nam. One of the men killed was from Ventura County. Ken's sister in law graduated from high school with this sailor, Class of 1966. Ken knew that his MOS (8404) meant sacrifice and he was proud of the fact he had helped a great many Marines recover from their wounds and return home. He lived up to the motto that the best part of the Corps is its Corpsman. Ken left the Navy with the rank of Hospitalman 2 Class or PO 2 (E-5).

Ken is the proud father of two adult children and lives in Simi Valley California. As a Registered Nurse he administered to the sick and injured for 40 years and he is still committed to the well-being of his fellow man. Ken is a treasure to this detachment and to all of us who are honored to call him friend. So "Doc" please accept our accolades and let us properly thank you not only for the Marine/FMF Corpsman you were, but also for the humble and caring human being that every man strives to become.

Ken asks that we also mention that in a family with service to our country, five of his cousins also served in the US military; three in the US Navy, one in the US Air Force and one in the US Army with service in combat in Vietnam.

Semper Fidelis,
John E Miller, Judge Advocate



Viet Nam March 8, 1968
21st Birthday





Doc at El Toro after Viet Nam

Doc and Sue in Simi Valley, CA





ADJUTANT
John Coley
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From the Desk of the Adjutant

Marines, Corpsman and Associate Members,

We had the honor of having Simi Valley's Chief of Police David Livingstone as our guest speaker at the April General Meeting - invited by your Adjutant. Chief Livingstone is a native of Simi Valley and understands the problems of a bedroom community. To better serve the community and reduce the crime rate within Simi Valley, the Chief has put into action a three-point strategic plan for the department. His strategy focuses on: Customer Service to community; Control Crime – Mission oriented policing – Officers are given targets at each day's briefing as to what to concentrate doing; and Staffing - delivering superior service more efficiently with fewer budget dollars available. Chief Livingstone decided to join the Detachment as an associate member and was sworn in.

During our April's general meeting we inducted two new members – Marine Ronnie Helge, regular member, and Chief David Livingstone, associate member. Ronnie served from 1967-1970 with the Third Battalion first Marines in Viet Nam as a radio operator. Please join me in welcoming to both to our Detachment!

If you need Chiropractic Care and you are registered with the VA Medical program you can get 6 free sessions by filling out the doctor's forms. See the Jr Vice Commandant for the Doctors name and information.

Matt Valenzuela was awarded with a certificate, medal and ribbon recognizing him as "The Recruiter of the Year" for the Detachment. Additional awards went to twenty-three members of our Color Guard in appreciation for their serve to the Detachment, each was awarded with a certificate and color guard ribbon - Nineteen from Detachment 597 and four from Detachment 1277. And a special thank you and congratulations to Ruy Peña, Color Guard Commander, for keeping all the events coordinated and well organized.

The Veterans Center is looking more promising with each passing month. For more detail read Commandant Jennings message in this newsletter.

We have planned a bus trip for 45 members of the detachment to attend a Dodgers Game on 1 June is locked on. If you signed up to go, please pay for your tickets no later than 02 May's general meeting.

Don't forget our annual picnic is quickly approaching, mark your calendars for 13 July 2019 at Lemon Park in Simi Valley. There is no cost to those who attend. We are inviting all our fellow Service Organizations to join us for a little competition and a lot of fun. More detail to follow.



Please continue to secure new members preferably between the ages of 45 to 55 years old. We need these people to carry on the name and efforts that have been put into this detachment. Next month we will honor all Past Commandants.

Semper Fidelis,
John Coley
Adjutant



THE DOG ROBBER HOWLS

Pound 325, Ventura County Devil Dogs
California Pack 2012 Pound of the Year

DD Ben Pfister
Pound Keeper

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Woof Woof Devil Dogs, Marines and Associate members,

I'd like to welcome Don Joy back to the pound; Don's health had kept him away for a while, but he is better now and able to be with again as well the detachment.

We had another monthly visit to the Brookdale Senior Living facility in Chatsworth to remember and honor those senior Veterans who served our country. At this get together we showed the movie "Dirty Dozen" and celebrated a senior Veteran's 93rd birthday - he is a friend of our editor Rich Farra who brought the cakes.

I encourage all Detachment regular members who have been in good standing to consider joining the MODD. The benefits of helping your brethren are immeasurable. Contact me for more information on membership requirements, AND I hope to see many of you at the state and or national conventions in June and August.

Woof Woof
PDD Ben Pfister
Pound Keeper





CHAPLAIN
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The Chaplain's Corner

Fellow Marines, veterans and friends:

A short and simple prayer to those in need: "Supreme Commandant (Father God), I pray for healing for all on this list. Thank you Jesus, Amen". Newly added will be highlighted in sky blue, but only the first time when I send an update. *If you have recovered nicely please let me know if you wish to be removed, or need an update on your condition. Also if I missed anyone please let me know.*

Below are those brave men and women who need our prayers:

Ken Mask—Has a stomach bug needs strength and relief

Hank Noorda—Is at home, and recovering

Maria Avila—Has cancer needs strength and healing

Hal Reniger—Needs prayer of comfort for the loss of his wife.

Suzanne Barger—needs prayer of strength and comfort.

Robert Nelson—Is scheduled for back surgery

Ericka Silva—Still under treatment

Thomas Hernandez—Strength

Blanca Hernandez—Healing

Jim Lieberknecht—Stay strong.

Mike Maxwell—Still under treatments, and healing

Bill Trammell—Still under treatments, and healing

Buggs Ansell—Strength and healing

Sue Honaker—Under treatments, strength, and healing

Brad Cantley—Relief of pain and healing

RED (Remember Everyone Deployed)—Let us keep those Marines and other service members in our prayers as they might be in harm's way, or just away for training. "We ask our Supreme Commandant to watch over them and keep them safe. Bring them back home as soon as You are able too. Amen"

May our Lord and Savior keep watch over us, and to continue to watch over us. May He protect us, keep us healthy, and to keep us safe.

God bless!

Semper Fi

Chaplain Brad



COLOR GUARD COMMANDER

Ruy Peña

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COLOR GUARD DETAIL UPDATE

Greetings my fellow Marine Corps League Members,

We had 12 Color Guard events during the month of March, 5 events so far for April, and May requests and confirmations for Memorial Day are picking up steam.

I am very proud of our Color Guard Detail for their professionalism while presenting Colors. This is clearly why we continue to be re-invited to many annual events some of which include: The President Ronald Reagan Library, The Reserve Retirement Center, Memorial Day at Veterans Park in Simi Valley (Lemon Park), Memorial Day at Eternal Valley in Newhall, St. Martin in the Field Elementary School in Winnetka, and Memorial Day at Post 2323 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Granada Hills, CA.

In addition, we have been asked to provide a Color Guard Detail for the Mobile Vietnam Wall in Simi Valley, CA.

We are very busy during Memorial Day and I appreciate our color guard members who remain flexible as I try and fill every request.

On a sad note, Ramon Arevalo has decided to step down from the color guard detail and resign from the Detachment because he was unable to meet the commitments he volunteered for. We hope he changes his mind and rejoins the 597.

It is an honor and privilege to be able to honor our veterans and their families.

Semper Fidelis,

Ruy G. Peña, Jr.
Color Guard Commander





HISTORIAN

John Miller

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Operation Iron Claw

The Iranian Rescue Attempt

April 24-25, 1980 was one of the very first Delta Force operations. It was code named Iron Claw and its purpose was to free the 52 American hostages held by the Iranian Republican Guard. For those of us who remember the sad news of the failed attempt and the loss of 8 American servicemen, including 3 Marines. We were saddened. The rescue attempt was authorized by President Jimmy Carter and carried out by a joint Armed Forces Combined Assault Unit. All of us should never forget what happened there and the men who died to save their fellow Americans from captivity and humiliation. So, on April 24th stop and remember these 8 Americans.

Major Richard Bakke	(34 years old)	California	USAF
Major Harold Lewis	(35 years old)	Connecticut	USAF
Major Lynn McIntosh	(33 years old)	Georgia	USAF
Captain Charles McMillian	(28 years old)	Tennessee	USAF
Tech/ Sgt. Joel Mayo	(34 years old)	Florida	USAF
Sgt. John Henry	(21 years old)	Virginia	USMC
Cpl. George Holmes	(22 years old)	Arkansas	USMC
S/Sgt. Dewey Johnson	(32 years old)	N. Carolina	USMC



Arlington Cemetery



APRIL HISTORICAL DAYS

- April 1, 1945** US Marines and US Army troops land on Okinawa on Easter Sunday and April Fool's Day
- April 1, 1968** End of Tet Offensive in Viet Nam
- April 4, 1949** 12 Nations form NATO after WW II
- April 4, 1968** Martin Luther King killed in Memphis, TN.
- April 4, 1847** US Marines and Sailors land in Shanghai to protect American Consulate
- April 5, 1947** First US Marines killed by Chinese troops in Hsin Ho City, China.
- April 6, 1917** US Declares war on German Empire .
- April 6, 1776** Continental Marines aboard USS Alfred engage in first naval battle with British.
- April 9, 1865** Lee Surrenders to Grant ending the Civil War
- April 9, 1942** Bataan, Philippines falls to Japan and US Marines from the 4th Marines are forced to surrender.
- April 12, 1945** President Roosevelt dies in Georgia.
- April 12, 1743** President Jefferson born
- April 15, 1912** The Titanic sinks with 1500 deaths.
- April 17, 1961** Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba begins
- April 18, 1942** Doolittle raid on Tokyo
- April 19, 1995** Bombing of Federal Building in Oklahoma City killing 168. US Army veteran convicted and executed.
- April 19, 1993** US Law Enforcement destroy compound in Waco Texas that contained Branch Davidian cult members resulting in the death of 87 members.
- April 20, 1999** Columbine High School shooting resulting in the death of 12 people and the wounding of 20 others.
- April 21, 1836** Sam Houston and a Texas Army defeat Mexican Dictator Santa Ana at the battle of San Jacinto gaining Texas independence.
- April 24, 1862** US Marines help capture New Orleans during the Civil War
- April 27, 1805** Lt. Presley O'Bannon and US Marines raise American Flag over Derne, Tripoli
- April 27, 1822** US President Grant born
- April 28, 1758** US President Monroe born
- April 29, 1992** Riots break out in Los Angeles after a Simi Valley jury acquits LA Police officers in Rodney King incident
- April 30, 1969** US Military in Viet Nam reached 543,300

Celebrate our history and traditions.

Semper Fidelis

John Miller
Judge Advocate



**DEPT. of CA SR. VICE COMMANDANT
MODD CA PACK-SR. VICE PACK LEADER**

Matt E. Valenzuela

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For Vietnam Warriors that survived the War but later died as a result of their service...

There is the Vietnam Wall "In Memory" Program and if you know of someone who may need this information, please pass it on. One is scheduled for 14 June 2019 or you can make reservations for 2020.

More than 58,000 names meet the Department of Defense's criteria to be etched into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, but those who survived the War and later died as a result of their service are not.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund acknowledges their service and sacrifice through an online "In Memory" Honor Roll. Causes of death that fit the criteria for inclusion in the program include exposure to Agent Orange, PTSD-related illnesses/events, cancer, diabetes, heart attacks, etc. There are about eighteen different maladies caused by Agent Orange and other herbicides of a different color that were used in the defoliation of the jungle forests and crops used to feed the Viet Cong.

The "In Memory" Program is free and the application process is simple. To honor a loved one, what is needed is to submit the Veteran's DD214 to show their proof of service in the Vietnam War, a copy of their death certificate and a photograph.

Please note that there is an application deadline for inclusion in the annual ceremony.

For more information or to submit an application go to:

www.vvmf.org/InMemoryProgram

Save the Date: 2019 In Memory Day Weekend

Semper Fi

Matt Valenzuela



Fausto Galvan
Executive Officer
Santa Clarita Valley Young Marines

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30 March, SCVYM Graduated 10 new recruits into our unit, consisting of 9 males and 1 female. Our unit is now with 32 Young Marines. The once recruits now Young Marines worked towards this title over a 4-weekend boot camp. Boot camp was held at the Marine Logistics Base in Barstow and in Castaic. We had 2 recruits graduate Meritoriously to PFC - PFC Lenhert and PFC Dunham, CR.

6 April, SCVYM Participated in the Family Freedom Festival at the VFW Post 2323 - pictured below. Our YMs wrote thank you letters to active Military overseas.

Upcoming April events:

April 13 ~ Cowboy Festival

April 13 ~ Castaic 5K

April 20 ~ Easter Egg Hunt / Heritage Park

April 27 ~ Castaic T-Ball opening day and Drill

Ms. Jennifer Hernandez

Santa Clarita Valley Young Marines





BRT 2019 GRADUATION



BRT 2019-GRAD CHALLENGE/GRADUATION



PAYMASTER'S CORNER

ANDY DOBRZYNSKI

andydobrzynski@gmail.com

805-428-5902

Greetings to all,

We are beginning a new year. The past year was very challenging for me and the Detachment. Our Detachment is growing, however, there are still approximately 58 members who haven't renewed their membership that expired in September 2018. So, I encourage those who haven't renewed yet, to do so as-
soon-as-possible. We are a voice in our community, therefore please renew your membership so that we can continue to have a voice and support in our community.

The Veterans and other Marines need our help. Let's show our brotherhood. Please help in making this detachment one of the largest detachments in the nation.

To show our support in the community, we are having our annual picnic on July 13th, 2019.

This year we are inviting VFW, American Legion and the Elks Lodge of Simi Valley to help us in celebrating the community brotherhood. We will also have few dignitaries. Come out and let's celebrate at no cost to you.

There will be several games and a great barbecue. We need you, only YOU can make a difference. Let's be visible and show our charity and support for our brothers.

Semper Fi!

Your Paymaster,
Andy



William Trammell
Vice President Los Angeles Chapter #8
Montford Point Marines Association

wmtrammell@twc.com

Marines:

This article has been written for the President Ronald Reagan Detachment 597 of the Marine Corps League newsletter "The Gipper" by the National Montford Point Marine Association (NMPMA), Inc. Los Angeles Chapter 8.

The Montford Point Marine Association Chapter 8 received an invitation to attend a function on 21 March 2019, hosted by the National Medal of Honor Foundation and co-hosted by the Pacific Palisade American Legion, Post 283. The celebration was held at the historic Ace Theater in downtown Los Angeles. The subject of the evening was the Medal of Honor awarded to Private or Sergeant Edward Carter for his heroic action during WWII which was presented to his family by President Obama. The evening included acknowledgment of the Carter family that was tenacious in getting the proper notice through Congress.

On the 23 March, Chapter 8 of the National Montford Point Marine Association was honored at a dinner as part of the "American Heroes" program hosted by the Palisade Post 283. The event honored those Veterans who were the first African-Americans to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps. These heroes saw action in the Pacific Theater during WWII.

Our monthly meeting was held on 27 March 2019. The American Legion Post 46 has been very gracious by extending their hospitality to Chapter 8.

Last month, we were invited to attend a celebration of the Tuskegee Airman Day in Los Angeles, held at the Proud Bird Restaurant on Aviation Avenue. Several Montford Point Marines Association members were in attendance with notable attendance were two of our "Originals," Mr. Henry Johnson and Mr. Vaughn Wentworth. Other NMPMA Chapter 8 members in attendance were Mr. Mike Johnson, National Western Regional VP, and Mr. William Trammell, Chapter 8 Vice President.

The National Montford Point Marine Association's Spring Council took place from 4-7 April 2019 in Charlotte, NC. The Spring Council meeting is a preparatory meeting for our National convention which will take place on 28 August 2019 at the same location.



As you may recall that the Chapter 8 monthly meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of each month, our April meeting will be on 27 April 2019. We meet at the American Legion Post 46 at 5309 Sepulveda Blvd, Culver City, CA 90230. Please join us as my guest.

Semper Fi,

William Trammell
USMC (Ret)
VP LA CH 8 MPMA
(805)512-2215
wmtrammell@twc.com



Deborah “Debbie” Sands
DAR Vice Regent, Rancho Simi Chapter
Detachment 597 Associate Member

”How A 3,000 Mile Motorcycle Ride Is Healing Vietnam Veterans”

Find out why these hundreds of Vietnam Vets found this experience healing in nature. DAR’s speaker for the month of May went on this ride to find out for herself, her name is Kristine Wood, she is an author and Veterans supporter. Kris has also written a book on her experiences of this ride.

There aren’t very many people who would hop on their Harley’s and travel 3,000 miles cross-country to experience and listen to the stories of Veterans who want to heal themselves of the memories of war. This is a once in a lifetime visit to Simi where she will be sharing her experience with pictures and storytelling to take you into why the Vets do this for healing.

Mark your calendars for 4 May, 11:15am – 12:00 at the Military Museum at the Simi Valley Town Center.

If you wish to attend, please do so! Our DAR meeting takes place first, then it is open to the general public for the speaker presentation. I know this is the Street Fair day, but we are just a hop, skip and a jump from that, so please join us!!

Deborah “Debbie” Sands
DAR Vice Regent
Rancho Simi Chapter



Bradley Cantley

bradleycantley@gmail.com

Cell: 805-813-3571



Honduras Part 3

I was with the Op-4 group, we were known as the “Bad Guys” of the 2/5. Our first “mission” was near the airport itself where there was a huge field of overgrown monstrous tumbleweeds where we did a little scouting in that field. I, the radioman, and our squad leader went out to find the best avenues of attack on the guard positions of the Company. Trudging through the weeds, we certainly scared plenty of wildlife which truly didn’t help with my nerves. More so because before we set out, my squad wanted the longest antenna put onto the PRC which would make me stand out. But being the good Marine that I am, I followed orders. While we were in the overgrown brush, we distinctly heard a gunshot. It was very loud and close to our position. To me it sounded more like a shotgun going off than a rifle or pistol. We got down in a kneeling position and tried to call it in, but the radio was going nuts as other Marine squads were calling it in as well.

One more shot went off as we were loading our red taped magazines into our M-16’s. The area around erupted with different squads trying to locate the shooter. We ended up joining the search and it turns out the Honduran Army located the individual and “detained” him along with his weapon. This situation certainly got my adrenaline up and it took some time to fall asleep that night. Needless to say, it did stop “training” for the day. Below are some pics from my Honduran days.







Ken Mask, Sgt. USMC Ret.
Silver and Bronze Star
3 Purple Hearts
Recipient



Poetry by Ken Mask

The Award

I'm the greatest of actors,
Nominated for a sixth Oscar
I live the perfect life
Money, mansions everywhere
Everything a man could want
My wife is a beautiful starlet
My children are successful
Leaders in all they do
We are the perfect family
At the Academy Awards show
The nominees are being announced
I'm the fifth to be named
"And the winner is –"
I get up, ready to accept –
Oh good, you're up, time to go to work!

The Walk

I'm walking, to where I don't know
I don't know where I have been
I won't know where I'll be
I don't know if I will arrive

I try but can't seem to stop
Tired, I just want to lay down
I need a few moments to rest
A few moments to relax

I feel like I've been walking forever
I can't remember when I started
I don't know when it will end
I just know that I cannot stop

This must be a dream, a nightmare
I have to wake up for it to end
I try but can't wake up
I can't because I am not sleeping

Someone is telling me it is real
Someone is telling me I'm awake
Someone is telling me to continue
Someone tells me stopping is death

How long, how long must I walk
I ask how long will this go on
Someone tells forever is the answer
Forever and day!



MANAGING EDITOR

RICHARD FARRA

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818-470-3258 Mobile

Let's Get Ready to Rumble!

The 597 is going to great things this year, I can feel it in my bones. The big item is the Veterans Center in the Simi Valley Town Center which our Commandant has been working on for years, now the stars are coming into alignment. Since the beginning of this year, he's been having meetings with property owners and managers, developers and builders, and local and state government officials. This center is envisioned to provide Veterans with a place to transition from military life to civilian life, get job assistance and preparation, receive help with VA benefits processing, and get selective health care services. As time moves forward more balls be juggled and none must fall, our Commandant knows this and has been very proactive in keeping the balls in motion.

Vets-helping-Vets continues to be the focal point of our Detachment. Regardless of branch of service, every Vet is welcome and is a brother/sister to help and to work with reach other Vets in need. Our outreach to brother and sister organizations is another avenue of supporting each other for a common cause. Size does matter and we must continue to grow in order to have our voice heard within our community and government.

Our Color/Honor Guard Detail, led by Ruy Peña – Color Guard Commander, has increased community awareness and exposure by a factor of two over the last 2 years. The professionalism displayed by the Color Guard is admired by civic leaders and spectators alike. For those Veterans who have passed, the Honor Guard has provided proper and honorable send offs with full flag and rifle details. The team he leads must maintain a high level of performance, commitment and sense of duty, otherwise they should step down. To those who see them, they are Det 597 ambassadors who represent the whole organization.

Recruitment is a must for organizational growth and for new leadership. Matt Valenzuela, past 597 Commandant and Dept of CA Sr. Vice Commandant, is fearless when it comes to recruiting new members and guest speakers. His charisma and positive attitude have driven him to success in this effort to help us grow.

Speaking of Commandants, I have been a member under six commandants and had the honor of working with all of them in making the Detachment better. And each successive commandant has been better than the prior year. The more passionate the Commandant is regarding making a difference, the better the we have become.

Be active within our Detachment, get out and help with the street fairs, go to the Dodger game with the other members, go listen to DAR's guest speaker on her experience with hundreds of Vets healing Vietnam wounds, volunteer to help the Color Guard Detail, etc. You won't regret that you did participate, but you will regret it when you could have. I'm super excited about this Detachment, and I hope you are too.

Rich Farra
Managing Editor



What do you envision for the future of our Detachment? Our Commandant wants to hear your thoughts, he listens so we can get better. Please email him a “DEAR COMMANDANT” letter with your constructive thoughts.

We need your ideas to make our detachment better. If you have ideas and/or gripes about our general meetings, events or whatsoever. Your Commandant wants to hear about them.

Like a shark, we must keep moving forward or we will die. We need your input to move forward and grow. For example, Dick Jennings suggested and executed on his idea for a Speakers’ Bureau to share a Veteran’s view of war to high school students. His idea is a positive community outreach idea and has had great reviews and demand for more presentations.

We want our members to share their thoughts, concerns and compliments to the Commandant. If there is something not done to one’s expectations, please submit your ideas on how to resolve these issues and concerns. All correspondence will be kept confidential unless specified otherwise. Email me your ideas and thoughts to me, Richard Farra, Managing Editor, at richfarra@gmail.com and I will forward them to the Commandant anonymously for his feedback and include them in the Gipper.



GUEST SPEAKER
David Livingstone
Chief of Police
Simi Valley, CA

Chief David Livingstone has been with the Simi Valley Police Dept. for over 30 years and most recently, 2 years as Chief of Police. John Coley, Adjutant, acquired the Chief as a speaker, who ended up joining the League after he gave his speaker's comments.

The Chief spoke on his efforts to match the dept. more efficient, given the budget constraints the dept. faces. He shared how he focused on a three-part strategy to reduce crime while increasing public service to the community. The Chief also shared how he reopened a murder investigation to which the accused was sentenced to life in prison and ended up being proved innocent thanks to the Chief.





MILITARY APPRECIATION NIGHT

Show your support for those who fight for our freedom!

This special event ticket package includes a ticket to the game and an exclusive Dodgers' Military Appreciation Night cap

SD vs LA

Tues, May 14 | 7:10 PM

Purchase a group of 30 or more tickets to have one member from your group honored on the field during our pregame ceremonies*.

For more information
dodgers.com/armedforces



To purchase 15 or more tickets, please contact:

Dodgers Group Sales Department
866-Dodgers, prompt 5
grouptix@ladodgers.com

*Groups must be purchased at least two weeks prior to the game to guarantee your spot in the pregame recognition.

This special event ticket package must be purchased from this link OR through a Group Sales representative to obtain item. Third party purchases will not include the item and this is not a stadium-wide promotion.

LA Bleeds Blue



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Department of California

2019 State Convention

June 6-8, 2019

Handlery Hotel – 950 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA 92108 – 855-347-2132

Room Rate: \$109 plus tax per
night- parking included

Group Code – Marine Corps
League of CA - 2019 Convention

619-298-0511 – Reservations

Reservation Deadline – May 7, 2019

Devil Dog Grand Growl:
Friday – 1800

For Program Advertising –
Rates and placement - Call
John Vorhies at 619-889-3218

Banquet:
Saturday – 1900

Convention Infor. – Todd Reh fuss
todd_rehfuss@hotmail.com

DRAFT
MORE DETAILS SOON



DRAFT
MORE DETAILS SOON



2018-2019 BOARD MEMBERS AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

Rank or Title

Name

Phone

E-mail

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Jr. Vice Commandant	Jim Wagner	760-898-4548	analogcowboy61@gmail.com
Jr. Past Commandant	Jerry German	818-324-2338	jrgerman@sbcglobal.net
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Department of California Staff			
VAVS MODD Dept. of CA Pack - Watch Dog	Fausto Galvan	818-259-2119	fausto_galvan471@yahoo.com



ATTENTION ON DECK

EMAIL ADDRESSES: If you did NOT receive this newsletter via email, it means your email isn't on the detachment roster. Please email Dick Jennings with your new email address to: mcl597commandant@gmail.com.

DD214 REPLACEMENT AND MILITARY MEDALS & AWARDS: Are you in need of a replacement DD214? Are you missing awards or medals and would like to get your records updated? Would you like to get the military records of a deceased next of kin? Please visit www.archives.gov/veterans/ to fill out the eVetRecs online system or download the SF180 form.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND NEW MEMBERS: Members more than 6 months past due will no longer receive the newsletter and will be removed from the roster prior to publication. MCL National HQ requires a new application if a member is more than 12 months past due. To bring your dues up to date, contact the Paymaster. Renewal dues are \$40 per year, and due in September. New member dues are \$45. All new applicants for regular membership must be prepared to show proof of Honorable military service with a DD214.

MCL Det. #597 GENERAL MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month

Simi Valley Elks Lodge #2492

1561 Kuehner Drive

Simi Valley, CA 93065

Meet and Greet 1800

Dinner 1800-1859

Meeting 1900

BOARD MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month – start time 1600

US Bank Building

1445 East Los Angeles Avenue, Room 302

Simi Valley, CA 93065