



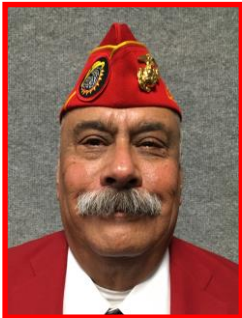
The Gipper

Marine Corps League
President Ronald Reagan Detachment 597
Semper Fidelis

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SEPTEMBER 2019



COMMANDANT

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Message From Your Commandant



Marines, Corpsmen and Associate members,

We had a very special September general meeting where we presented our oldest Marine, Jean Irving, with the Marine Corps League Headquarters' highest honor. For two years Dick Jennings, Dept. of CA Commandant, had been working with the National MCL to research Jean's MCL membership which dates back over 50 years. And because of floods and/or fires Jean's early years as a member were not recoverable. But with the fortitude of a Marine, Dick continued to march forward and presented a solid case for Jean's MCL legacy, and her being the oldest living woman United States Marine.

On 6 August at the MCL National Convention she was given the highest award given to a member, the Meritorious Citizens Award. Dick received the award for Jean. Once back in Simi, Dick and I went to the trophy shop and had her certificate and metal mounded in a beautiful frame. We presented it to her during the meeting and I pinned her award ribbon on her. In addition to the MCL National Award, we presented Jean with a patch which reads "United States Woman Marine." It was a very memorable night and honor to have been a part of such a historic event for our Detachment.

BINGO NIGHT is back! Thanks to the Elks Club and Andy, our treasurer, we will be having another Bingo night at the Simi Valley Elks Lodge on October 23 at 7:00 pm. My wife and I had a lot of fun at the last Elks bingo night, even though it was our first time playing. If you've never played bingo before, you should come and try it – it's a blast.

Thank you Bob Martinez on a job well done on recruiting another great guest speaker. Our September meeting's guest speaker was Tom Lange, who is a lifelong friend of our very own John Miller. They are both



Marines and served together in Viet Nam, later they both police officers for the LAPD. Tom told us some humorous stories of his recruitment adventures and service in the Marines and LAPD. He was very honored to speak of his friend, John Miller, during his time as a police officer and detective. Keep up the good work Bob.

Semper Fi,
Harry Hodges
Commandant





Left to right: John Miller, Harry Hodges and Tom Lange



SR. VICE COMMANDANT

Martin Spann

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Fellow Marines, Corpsmen and Associate Members,

Labor Day marks the end of summer as we ease into fall and very soon, a new year. It also signals the end of the tax year and a scramble to find a charitable deduction. The Marine Corps League Foundation (www.mclfoundation.org) is one that you might want to think about. The Marine Corps League Foundation (MCLF) is the charitable subsidiary of the Marine Corps League, formed in 1989 as a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational and charitable entity for the League. The MCLF utilizes the charitable donations for scholarships, youth programs and disaster relief, as well as humanitarian aid. For any information concerning the foundation and making a deduction you can contact:

Gregory Hunt

Marine Corps League Foundation President

Phone: (828) 342-2024

or Email:

president@mclfoundation.org

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the National Museum of the United States Marine Corps situated on a 135-acre site adjacent to Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. I specifically went to see the exhibit honoring the Marines that fought at the battle of Iwo Jima. If you have never had the opportunity to visit the museum I would suggest planning a trip. It's rich in Marine Corps history and heritage.

The island of Iwo Jima is located 750 miles off the coast of Japan, and in 1945 had three airfields that could serve as staging facilities for the potential invasion of mainland Japan. The battle of Iwo Jima occurred over a five week period from 19 February to 26 March 1945. Combined Japanese strength at the beginning of the battle was estimated at 21,060 troops - they lost 18,375 dead or missing, 216 were taken prisoner, and an additional 3,000 hiding. The combined American strength of the U.S. Marines, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy Corpsmen, Seabees, and USAAF personnel totaled 110,000. There were more than 26,000 American casualties including 6,800 dead. Iwo Jima was the only U.S. Marine battle where the Americans had more dead or wounded than the Japanese. It is known as one of the bloodiest battles in United States Marine Corps history.

The exhibit to the battle is small, but the center pieces of the exhibit are the famous Joe Rosenthal photograph of the raising of the 2nd U.S. flag on top of the 169 m (554 ft) Mount Suribachi by six U.S. Marines which became an iconic image of the battle and the American war effort in the Pacific. Later, it became the only photograph to win the Pulitzer Prize for Photography. There is also the second flag itself. It's tattered, weathered and encased in a protective display case for its safety.



Joe Rosenthal's Photo of the second flag raising on Mount Suribachi



The second flag that was raised over Mount Suribachi and was photographed by Joe Rosenthal.





The museum docents are extremely helpful at the museum and will answer any questions you may have. They will even provide pieces of trivia that you never knew about our beloved corps. The docent that assisted me provided this little bit of Iwo Jima flag trivia.

In 1949 John Wayne starred in the movie "The Sands of Iwo Jima" in which he was nominated for a best actor Academy Award portraying the tough as nails Marine Sgt. John Stryker. Towards the end of the movie John Wayne is given a flag to be put on top of Mount Suribachi. There are three men that surround him (see picture below) that he hands the flag to and orders them to hoist the flag on top of Suribachi. The three men were survivors of the battle and at that time, were credited with raising the second flag on Mount Suribachi during the actual battle. The flag that John Wayne hands to them is the actual second flag that is on display in the museum.



Ira Hayes, John Bradley, John Wayne and Rene Gagnon (Left to Right) (until 2016, Bradley was incorrectly identified as being a flag-raiser) the three survivors of the five Marines and one Navy corpsman who were credited with raising the second flag on Mount Suribachi during the actual battle, appear briefly in the film just prior to the re-enactment.

I hope you enjoyed this piece of Marine Corps history and trivia.

Continue to March &
Semper Fidelis

Marty Spann
Senior Vice Commandant



EVENTS DIRECTOR Ken 'Doc' Honaker

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Marines, Corpsmen and Associates,

August 24th was Veterans Expo and Job Fair at Oxnard College where the MCL 597 Color Guard, Jay Jakar, Harry Hodges, Matthew Gonzalez, Ben Pfister, and Doc Honaker, opened the event. The 597's booth stood out loud and clear with its MCL red tablecloth and MCL banner, and staffed by Marines Ben, Harry and Doc. It was a great event for Vets, regardless of service, to get information from a variety of veteran services and employers seeking applicants to fill various positions. Not every Vet there was a retiree like some of us and actually looking for, dare I say, WORK. Several food trucks were on campus to stave off the hunger and thirst as we spoke with a variety of attendees over the four hour period. About a dozen Vets signed our clip board to at least receive our Gipper newsletter and decide if they would/could attend a future MCL meeting.

The Thousand Oaks Street Fair is coming 20 October. This has long been a "to be seen" activity for the MCL and many other vendors. Plan on stopping by the fair and our booth where Big Red will again be present after being repaired from suffering a broken leg at the FTT Golf Tournament. Seems we also have an Elks Bingo night on 23 October. A fun time, so be there.

Mark your calendar and join us to celebrate USMC Birthday 244 at the Junkyard on Cochran in Simi on 10 November. The menu selection at the Junkyard is always great and of course there will be a cake ceremony to top off your meal selection. Meal and drinks are on you, and cake is on the detachment. Let me know through email, text or by phone if you will be attending, so we can warn the wait staff how many rowdy Marines they will be serving with ample amounts of chow and seating. Sending regrets is not necessary as I'll have enough to do keeping track of who is coming.

Semper Fi,

Doc Honaker

Director of Events





JR. PAST COMMANDANT & COMMANDANT

Dept. of California

R. A. "Dick" Jennings

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From the Desk of the Junior Past Commandant

Marines, Corpsmen and Associate Members,

At our September Detachment meeting an ordeal that I started 2 years ago, finally came to a Happy Ending. Two years ago, this November, I had the honor to give the Oath of Membership to a "young" lady who had joined the MCL back in 1946. Jean Irving was 95 years young on that evening and as spy and feisty as they come. When giving the Oath, I told her that she could sit through this long ordeal, but she said, "For this honor, I will stand." As I said she is a feisty and marvelous lady and a credit to the Woman Marines.

I told her that I would tell the whole story about what has transpired from a day in December to this past Thursday night. Doug Morrison, Jean's number one supporter and a true gentleman who takes Jean to all our meetings, Toys for Tots for the day and any other location Jean wanted to be at representing our Detachment. Doug had told me that Jean had joined the MCL back in 1946, but because of age and other things, she couldn't really remember all the details. I got on the phone to National Headquarters and called the then Senior Vice Commandant, Dennis Tobin regarding this matter. I explained to Dennis that Jean had joined the MCL in 1946 but she didn't have any recollection or memory of the details. He said that he would look into it and get back to me. Time had passed without hearing from him, so I called him back. He told me in the 70's there was a water pipe burst in the storeroom where all the records were located and most of the membership information was destroyed. He said he had two clerks working on this in their spare time. Again, months went by and I called Dennis. This time I couldn't reach him and left a message.

Seeing that I had spoken to him a number of times, I didn't see the need to go through proper protocol, but I guess he didn't agree with that. He notified the National Vice Commandant of the Southwest Division that I should go through the proper "Chain of Command." Bill Ebright then notified the then Department of California Commandant, Ray Valenzuela, who notified me that I had stepped on some people's toes. After the initial shock, I asked Ray for permission to continue my quest in getting Jean her "just recognition." Months past and I became a pain in the neck to a lot of people in Virginia. While at the National Convention in Buffalo last year, I got to meet our COO, Bob Borka where I explained my predicament and asked for his help. Again a few months past, then out of the blue, Bob called to tell me he came up with a solution that everyone could live with.

First, he explained that they couldn't give Jean her time served in the MCL because if they did it for her then they'd have to do it for everyone who may have the same problem. I really didn't understand or accept this but before I could object, he told me what he would do.

He said he would authorize that the Marine Corps League give Ms. Jean Irving the highest award that the Marine Corps League can give to a member - The "Distinguished Citizen Award" - and that Wendell Webb,



the National Commandant would present it at the National Convention in Billings, Montana. Jean couldn't make the trip to Billings, so I had the honor of receiving this award in her name.

Upon returning from Billings, Harry Hodges and I went to American Trophy and spoke with the owners regarding something special to give Jean at our meeting on September 5, 2019.

For the members and associates who attended this meeting, it was indeed something special. "Miss Jean" was surprised as Doug pushed her wheelchair to the front of the room and our Commandant pinned the "Distinguished Citizen Award" ribbon on the collar of her shirt. On the tripod that was there was a large frame with the "Distinguished Citizen Award" medal on top, the Certificate that the Marine Corps League presented her and a small brass plate at the bottom saying;

Presented to
Jean Irving
Marine Corps League Headquarters
August 6, 2019

The date on the plaque is the date in Billings that this was presented.

I have done a lot in my career with the Marine Corps and the Marine Corps League and most had been very happy pleasant moments. But last night was the one that I will remember for the rest of my life.

Jean spent most of last night thanking everyone for this "honor."

I say to Jean, "It is us who should be thanking you for the honor of knowing you. You are a credit to all the Woman Marines who have come after you because of your Devotion to your Country, Devotion to the Marine Corps and especially the Love and Devotion you give to the members of the President Ronald Reagan Detachment 597 of the Marine Corps League."

John Coley and Harry Hodges have pictures of Jean and her award with their articles.

Semper Fi,

Jr. Past Commandant
President Ronald Reagan Det. 597
Commandant
Department of California
Marine Corps League



**JR. PAST COMMANDANT &
COMMANDANT**
Dept. of California
R. A. "Dick" Jennings
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From the Desk of the Commandant – Dept of CA

I am sorry I didn't get to write my column for last month having just returned from the National Convention with a few personal activities that I had to do - time was not my friend.

As everyone has stated in last month's Gipper, Billings was a great place full of friendly people. Lots and lots of restaurants (people must not cook at home in Billings) and boy was it hot. I always thought that Montana would be cool, but while we were there it averaged around 95 during the day with humidity. Thank goodness the hotel's air conditioning worked.

Our Commandant went through his classes to elevate to PDD in the MODD. Ben, Fausto and I went to all the meetings that they had in the main ballroom listening to presentations on proposed by-laws, new and changes, and of course the ever-popular Budget meeting.

One meeting that I attended by myself was the Department Commandants meeting. It was with the current Board of Trustees and I was told this was going to be a different type of meeting. This year, they let us propose some things to a senior member of the National Committee and if approved it would be brought to all the Department Commandants. We were broken up in Divisions putting us in the Southwest Division along with Departments from Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii.

I brought up the first request of a by-law that would have first time elected officers, submit his/her DD214 to the Detachment JAG for approval. This is being done by both the National and Department for first time officers, so it makes sense that it would be done at the Detachment level.

Reason: There was an incident in July where a "member" was appointed to a Staff position prior to the California State Convention and it was discovered that he never submitted his DD214 to his existing Detachment after transferring from Member at Large status. Upon being told he would have to submit his DD214 to the State Commandant, he quit the Marine Corps League. I was told that this has happened before. This procedure was approved by the Board of Trustees and it is strongly suggested that Detachments put this clause in their by-laws.

Another by-law that passed and where a committee was formed is to review the length of the Oath of Membership – it's much too long. It has been suggested to shortened it by at least a third, if not cutting it in half. The new shorter oath should be finished by the February 2020 mid-winter meetings in Virginia. These are the two most important changes that have been accepted and one other about the many forms we have to fill out to be cut down.

As many of you know, I worked for American Airlines for over 20 years and spent 6 years in Irving, TX running the Sheraton Grand Hotel. Well, it seems that the new Convention Committee was chosen on



Sunday before the start of the convention. PNC Dick Gore is now its Chairman and being a good man from Massachusetts I got to talk to him during the week. I shared my background with him, and he told me that I'd be a perfect fit for his committee. Shazam, I am now on the National Convention Committee with three others located throughout the country.

Marine West will be on February 6-7, 2020 and will be sponsored by the Southwest Division, and they can always use some help on the days of the event. This is where all the new "toys" for the Marine Corps are on display in Camp Pendleton. I will have more information as time gets closer.

The MCL 2020 National Convention will be from 9-14 August 2020 at the Hilton Hotel in Dayton Beach, Florida. This hotel is right on the beach and we will have the whole hotel to ourselves. If you haven't been to a National Convention they are quite interesting and informative. And if you haven't received your PDD rating yet from the MODD, you have to do it at a Supreme Growl. Ask Ben Pfister or Fausto Galvan about signing up and plan on going to Daytona Beach to become a PDD.

Finally, the 2021 MCL National Convention was up for grabs and four cities throughout the Midwest vied for the right to hold our convention in their cities - St. Louis, MO, Topeka, KS, Springfield, IL and Kansas City, KS. After four really good presentations, the members selected The Sheraton in Springfield, IL to be the host hotel for our 98th Annual Marine Corps League 2021 National Convention. As usual, when we get closer to next year and the following, I will get more information to share with you.

Overall, this Convention in Billings was a great success. Not only for the Department of California but for all our Detachments. It showed that if all votes were cast, California would be the most powerful group at the convention.

Jr. Past Commandant
President Ronald Reagan Det. 597
Commandant
Department of California
Marine Corps League



JUDGE ADVOCATE

John Miller

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FRIENDSHIP



Marines, FMF Corpsmen and Associates,

Friendship can mean many things to many people. According to the dictionary friendship is defined as a close personal relationship with another person that results in a close bond between the two. I think that is a very simple definition of the word. But it means a lot more to those of us who consider friendship much more than that. The first friend we had of course were our parents especially our mothers, then we had siblings and other members of our family, aunts, uncles and cousins. As we attended school, we met and enjoyed the company of many friends. These friends were special and as we grew older, they became very important in our lives. Peer pressure was the urge to be like your friends and those around you. Then for most of us we graduated from High School and college and joined the Marine Corps. Friendship took on a whole new meaning, friendship became brotherhood, because in the Corps our friends became our life savers and later, they became our memories and sometimes our sorrow. As we look back over the years, some of us are blessed to have friends we have known for over 30, 40 or even 50 or more years. These are the friends who served with you and faced danger and sometimes death with you. They hold special places in our hearts, and we cherish them as we cherish our memories and the good times we spent with them. In turn, these friends supported us as we advanced through life and helped us when we needed it the most. The Marine Corps and in turn the Marine Corps League is sometimes called a band of brothers, brothers who have suffered together, worked together and respected each other. How great a feeling it is to look back and remember our friends and to honor them as we recall that sometimes only they know the real person inside of us.

Friendship:

Make new friends, but keep the old
Those are silver, these are gold
New-made friendships, like new wine
Age will mellow and refine.
Friendships that have stood the test
Time and Change--- Are surely best.
For with old friends—tried and true
Once more we reach, and youth renew
Cherish friendship in your breast
New is good but old the best.



If you have an old friend you haven't talked to in some time or haven't visited in a while, contact them and remind yourself how important they are to you. If you have a new friend keep in touch and allow them to become your old friend one day.

Often Tested
Always Faithful
Brothers forever
John Miller
Judge Advocate

Friends 56 Years



Friends 5 Years





Friends 51 Years



Friends 6 Years



Semper Fidelis,
John Miller
Judge Advocate



Tom Lange
U.S. Marine and Former LAPD

Guest Speaker



John Miller - A Man of Commitment and Honor

As a young U.S. Marine in 1965/66 John Miller distinguished himself in combat in Vietnam and later as a police officer in Los Angeles culminating his (40) year law enforcement career as a seasoned homicide detective. John Miller also never left the Marine Corps or his commitment to a life of service.

As a longtime member of the Marine Corps League President Ronald Reagan Detachment #597, Miller never slowed down. He continues to recognize and honor former law enforcement and military Veterans, involving him in all activities his health will allow, sometimes at a personal cost. At a recent memorial organized by John he actually lost consciousness during the ceremony. To say his commitment is unwavering is an understatement.

John may be best known for his loyalty in keeping alive the memory of former Marine and L.A. police officer Oscar Joel Bryant. In 1968, after serving in Vietnam, Bryant was gunned down, murdered in the streets of Los Angeles during a shootout with armed robbers. He had barely one year on the job as a cop. Bryant had no local family. Miller himself was new on the job and had responded to the shooting. The entire incident had an indelible effect on Miller who stepped in as a family surrogate for Bryant. As a consequence John has organized a memorial ceremony honoring Bryant and his memory each year on the anniversary of the shooting. In 2018, Miller orchestrated the fiftieth memorial ceremony directing a large law enforcement and U.S. Marine response, as well as bringing in Bryant's family members he had located out of state. The ceremony also included John's brothers from the MCL 597 detachment, who participated.

In today's world everyone celebrates the individual hero who accomplishes great things for themselves whether it's in sports, business, acting or politics – but there are others like John Miller, who think of others and not themselves first. These are the real people – not the self-indulged. They are looked up to by the vast "silent majority," I call them our silent heroes.

John Miller exemplifies what most people would like to be remembered for – a strong belief in God, country and family. He also exemplifies the U.S. Marine Corps motto, as much as any Marine I have ever known, SEMPER FIDELIS.

Tom Lange
U.S. Marine and former LAPD.



ADJUTANT

John Coley

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From the Desk of the Adjutant

Marines, Corpsman and Associate Members,

August was somewhat of a slow month as expected, but we hopefully all still had a good time regardless of the warm weather. The Color/Honor Guard was quite active during this period doing eight events and covering a territory spanning from Torrance, San Fernando and Ventura. The Color Guard commander asked me to pass his message that we can use more Color Guard volunteers, seeing that many existing members plan trips for this time of year.

We had a very productive September General Meeting, starting off with the Oath of Membership to Marine Michael Klein as our newest member. That was followed by the presentation of the Gung Ho Award to the Elks Lodge 2492 for their cooperation using the meeting room each month at no cost. The Gung Ho Certificate and plaque was accepted by the Elk's Leading Knight, Tim Egan, for Lodge 2492. An award was accepted by Rich Farra for our newsletter the "Gipper" for once again placing third in the nationwide newsletter competition at the National Convention in Billings this past August.

The Charter was draped in memory of Henry Melvin "Mel" Otte.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the "Distinguished Citizen Award", the highest award of the Marine Corps League, to Jean Irving. The smile on the face of Miss Jean as she accepted the award burned an indelible picture in my mind that will be there forever. Miss Jean enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1943 and joined the Marine Corps League in 1946 in Cincinnati Ohio. She could possibly be the oldest female marine in the MCL nationally. Her closing statement after the presentation was "I thank you, all my brother marines". We love you Miss Jean.

Tom Lang was the guest speaker and he recounted his recollections from 1963 to the present about our Judge Advocate John Miller. They were in boot camp at MCRD San Diego, ITR, 3/1 San Mateo at Pendleton, BLT to Okinawa, 1/9 in Vietnam and rotated out on the same aircraft to Okinawa without ever meeting from June 1963 to May 1966. They first met after joining the LAPD in early 1968. The stories that followed were quite humorous.

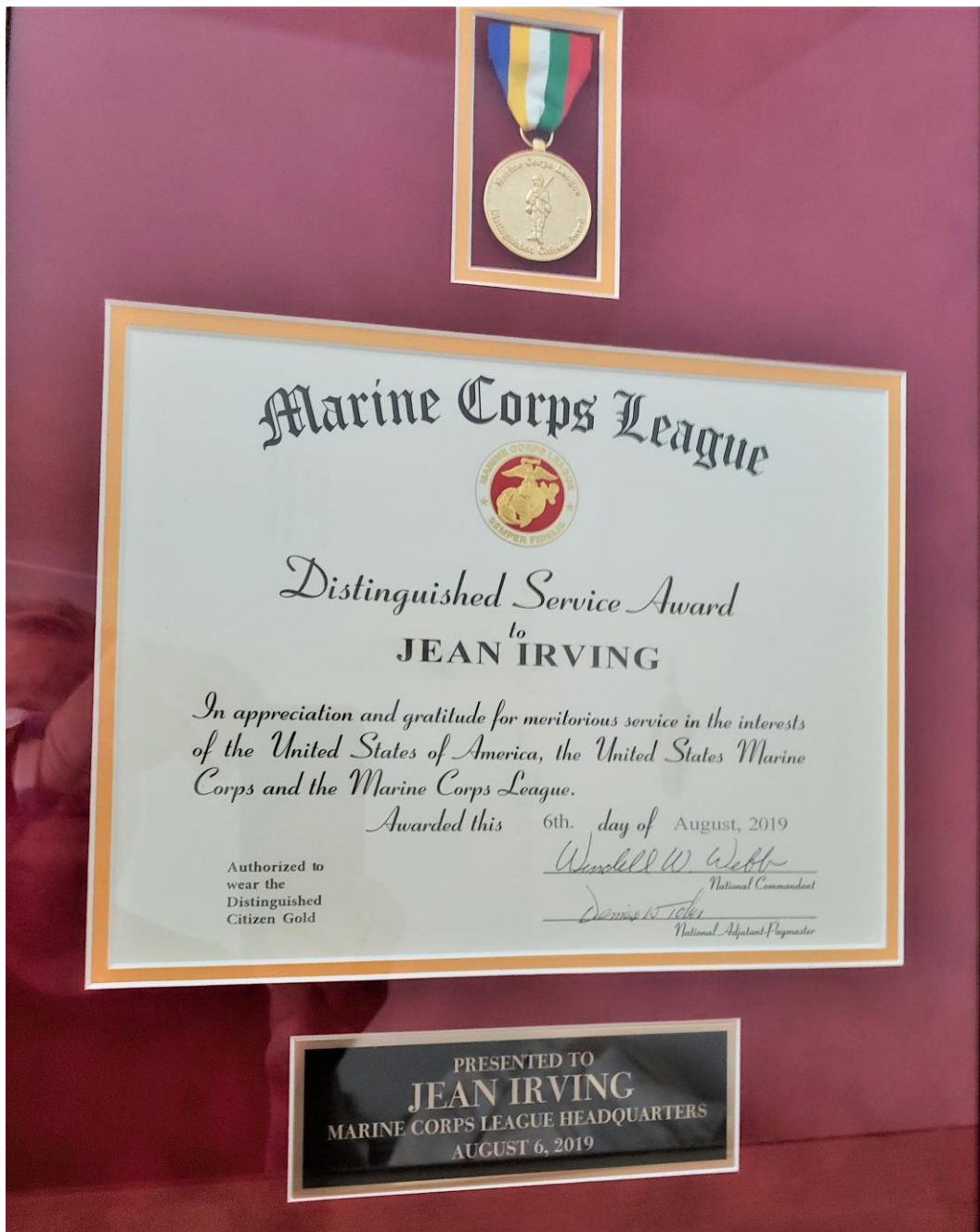
Lastly, please get your recommendations in for our Detachment awards ASAP! These awards will be presented during the Birthday Celebration at the Junkyard on the 10th of November. The Awards Committee needs your submissions as quickly as possible to determine who the recipients are for Marine of the Year, Associate of the Year, Lifetime Achievement Award and the Commandant's Recognition Awards. This form will also be used for awards that will be given during the year as the occasion merits. Forms were emailed



the last week of August to all Members and Associates and will be available again by email before the October meeting. **The time frame for award recognition is from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.** Please copy the form and put in the names and reasons that you think a person or people deserve recognition and email to w4simi@yahoo.com or return to the Adjutant at the next General Meeting.



Close ups of Jean Irving challenge coin





WEDNESDAY – OCTOBER 23, 2019

6:30 PM to 10:00 PM

\$26.00 BUY-IN

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MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

DETACHMENT 597



Prizes range \$100-\$400 each game

Semper Fidelis,

John Coley
Adjutant

Semper Fidelis,

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Adjutant



THE DOG ROBBER HOWLS

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

DD Ben Pfister
Pound Keeper

benpdet597@gmail.com

818-208-1095



Woof Woof Devil Dogs, Marines and Associate members,

On Sept 10th, the MODD held its annual elections and PDD Rudy Cordero was elected to the position of Pound Keeper. Congratulations, Sir Pound Keeper.

Anyone wishing to become a member of the MODD must be an active member of the MCL with at least one year as a member and let the Commandant know that you're interested in joining the MODD. Unfortunately associate members aren't allowed to join. It has been my pleasure to serve Pound 325 for the past two years and I'll continue to serve both the MCL and MODD where I can.

Woof Woof,
PDD Ben Pfister
Pound Keeper



CHAPLAIN Bradley Cantley

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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:

Anthony Hernandez's mother—pray for continued healing and strength

Drew Haydon's daughter—Kayleigh needs healing and strength.

Dick Jennings's wife Edna—Needs strength and healing.

John Miller's daughter—Recently had a setback so please continue to pray for strength and healing.

Gary Sinise—needs prayer for his sister-in-law who has cancer.

Ken Mask—needs some strong prayer in all aspects of his health and strength.

Don Joy—please pray for healing as he is recovering from surgery.

Bill Trammell—Pray for continued healing.

Conrad Wright—needs prayer for healing and recovery

Conrad Wright's wife—also needs prayer for an injury

Julie Stranges—needs prayer and healing

Maria Avila—Has cancer needs strength and healing

Robert Nelson—Pray for healing

Ericka Silva—Still under treatment

Jim Lieberknecht – Stay strong.

Mike Maxwell – Still under treatments, and healing

Sue Honaker –need prayer for 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



HISTORIAN

John Miller

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A Marine Hero – John Keller Hurricane Katrina



John Keller was a US Marine Lance Corporal during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He served with the 1st Recon Battalion attached to the Allied Command that fought into Bagdad and other Iraqi battlefronts. He was honorably discharged, after a four year enlistment. John Keller was a big man at 6' 8" and weighed 250 pounds. After the Marine Corps, he returned to his native New Orleans, LA and started a construction company. He was from a middleclass family and knew how important it was to give back to those less fortunate than himself. He felt the need to do more and would take homeless children on field trips outside the city so that they could see the other side of life. He worked in a soup kitchen that served food to the many homeless Veterans in his neighborhood. He felt he was doing what every other American should do to help those unable to rise from poverty.

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans on 29 August 2005, he was living in an apartment complex that soon fell victim, not only to the high winds of the hurricane, but to the rising water flooding the area caused by the broken levees. His complex was a five story building that contained over 200 people, many of whom were elderly and many more that were handicapped or in the need of prescription medicine. John took a fire extinguisher and emptied the white powder to spell out a rescue message on the roof top to attract assistance from helicopters that circled the area. No one responded. On the following morning, John was



confronted by three looters who attempted to enter his apartment. John opened the door and threw one of the looters into the putrid waters and the other two fled. When help did not arrive, John swam to a nearby grocery store and took nine water coolers full of food back to the residents. He filled the coolers with food and medicine and tied them together, then he swam, towing the coolers behind him.

The building was under 11 feet of water and rising, and many tenants were in a panic. First, John had all the guns in the building brought to him. He set up a safety patrol to prevent looting and to protect the elderly people in the complex. At another time he collected all the empty prescription bottles and got into his kayak and paddled 7 hours to a hospital in hopes of filling the prescriptions. The hospital's pharmacy was flooded, and all the medicine was contaminated. The hospital staff told John to go to a nearby military compound and see if they had medicine. He paddled another 2 hours to a National Guard relief center and asked for a helicopter to bring the elderly and handicapped out of the building. He was told that a helicopter could not land on the roof of his building without permission from higher authority.

John took all the elderly tenants from their apartments to the roof. At times he had to carry them 5 stories using only a narrow staircase. At other times he had to carry them still on their wheelchairs up the 5 stories without any assistance from anyone. A helicopter came by but was unable to land on the roof. John swam to a nearby house and hotwired a speedboat that was in the driveway. He spent 12 hours ferrying the entire group of people to safety. During one trip, he was confronted by a man with an AK 47 rifle, John pulled his .45 caliber pistol and pointed it at the looter. The looter turned and fled the scene.

Thanks to his fearless efforts he was able to save 244 people. Many of them were older and several were disabled. His actions over 4 days saved the lives of many of these people. He did it because it was his duty and an obligation to help those in need. John was recognized many times for his acts of courage and bravery. He always remained modest. He still lives in the apartment complex in New Orleans. You don't have to be in uniform to perform acts of courage and compassion, but the training you receive as a member of the Marine Corps will help you make the tough decisions that are the difference between life and death. John Keller was an example of a true hero, one who stood his ground when danger and death was all around him. Everyone should remember men like John Keller who never really put his military esprit de corps away. This Veteran, this Marine stood his ground and saved many lives. He was a true Marine who we all should be proud of and be thankful for.



Semper Fidelis



Marine History

- 9-1-1939 Hitler invades Poland and WW II begins.
- 9-2-1945 Formal surrender of Japan ends WW II.
- 9-6-1965 L/Cpl Michael Badsing KIA in Viet Nam
- 9-8-1950 General James Mattis born in Washington State
- 9-30-1931 Colonel Wesley Fox, Medal of Honor recipient from Viet Nam War, born in Virginia.

History

- 9-17-1862 Battle of Antietam during US Civil War begins. 23,000 killed, wounded or missing in action. The greatest loss, in a single battle, of American lives in history
- 9-11-2001 Terrorists from El Qaeda attack US targets in New York City, The Pentagon and an aircraft over Pennsylvania. Nearly 3,000 people killed
- 9-28-1542 California discovered by Juan Cabrillo in San Diego.
- 9-30-1955 Actor James Dean, age 24, dies in traffic accident.
- 9-2-1666 Great fire of London starts.
- 9-2-1945 Ho Chi Minh declares Viet Nam independence.
- 9-3-1783 Treaty of Paris officially ends American Revolution.
- 9-4-1781 City of Los Angeles founded.
- 9-4-1886 Chief Geronimo captured and the official end of the Indian wars in the United States.
- 9-12-1953 John Kennedy marries Jackie Bouvier in Newport, Rhode Island.
- 9-13-1971 Attica Prison riot in New York results in the death of 11 guards and 31 prisoners.
- 9-14-1901 President McKinley dies from gunshot wounds eight days after being shot. Theodore Roosevelt becomes President.
- 9-15-1776 British troops capture New York City during American Revolution.
- 9-15-1857 President William Taft born.
- 9-218-1947 United States Air Force established as separate branch of US Military.
- 9-22-1776 American Patriot Nathan Hale hanged as a spy.
- 9-24-1980 Iran-Iraq war begins and over 1,000,000 killed.
- 9-25-1789 Bill of Rights established by US Congress.
- 9-26-1918 The battle of the Argonne is the last major battle of World War I.
- 9-4-2019 Marine Corps League, President Ronald Reagan Detachment 597 meets in Simi Valley

It's Your History, Honor It.

Semper Fi,

John Miller
Historian



PAYMASTER'S CORNER

ANDY DOBRZYNSKI

andydobrzynski@gmail.com

805-428-5902

My fellow Marines, Corpsmen and Associates,

Greetings to all my fellow members. It's time again to renew your commitment and membership in our Marine Corps League. To save time and money, please send your payments to:

MCL Detachment 597

P.O. Box 65

Simi Valley, CA 93062.

I will be sending out invoices, however, to save money on postage please send you checks as soon as possible. The dues are \$40.00. The membership dues should be paid by September 1, 2019 for the year 2019 to 2020. Thanking you in advance.

Your paymaster,
Andy Dobrzynski



Fausto Galvan

Executive Officer

Santa Clarita Valley Young Marines

Fausto_galvan0471@yahoo.com

818-259-2119



William Trammell

**Vice President Los Angeles Chapter #8
Montford Point Marines Association**

wmtrammell@twc.com

Marines:

The National Montford Point Marine Association, Inc. held its 54th National Convention in Charlotte, NC from 28 August through 30 August 2019. See our newsletter for more information following my article.

Members of The Montford Point Marine Association Los Angeles Chapter 8 will conduct its next meeting on 28 September at the American Legion Post 46 at 5309 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, CA 90230. The meeting starts promptly at 11:00.

Members of the National Montford Marine Association, Inc. are mourning the passing of two Original Montford Point Marines, Mr. Joe Jackson and Mr. George A McCormick. Mr. McCormick's funeral service was held on 10 September 2019 in Fair Oaks, CA. I had the honor of presenting the family with the Resolution of Mourning from Ms. Carman Cole, The President of the National Montford Point Marine Association, Inc.

Events & Special Projects For 2019

September 14, 2019 MCRD Museum Salute @5 PM SD CA.

September 21, 2019 NMPMA SD Chapter Business Meeting @10 AM

September 21, 2019 NMPMA NEC Teleconference Call @11:00 AM

September 28, 2019 NMPMA LA Chapter Board/Business meeting at 11:00 A. M.

As the Event & Special Projects for 2019 depicts that we are very busy, and this is an exciting time to be involved within the Western Region.

The next meeting of Chapter 8 will be on 24 August 2019. Our meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of each month. We meet at the American Legion Post 46 at 11:00-14:00 at 5309 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, CA 90230. You can contact me at (805) 512-2215.

Semper Fidelis

William M. Trammell
NMPMA Los Angeles
Chapter 8, Vice President



Est: 1942 - 1949

Vol. No.1

HOME OF THE ORIGINAL MONTFORD POINT MARINES

www.montfordpointmarines.org

The 54th National Convention of the Montford Point Marine Association Inc. concluded in Charlotte, North Carolina

The 2019 National Convention of the Montford Point Marine Association Inc. concluded Saturday, August 31st in Charlotte, North Carolina with the election of Chief Warrant Officer Carmen Cole as the 19th National President. This is the very first time that a Woman has led our Association in its 54 year history!

There were over 20 Original Montford Point Marines in attendance who participated in various forums and discussion groups with the approximately 15 active Duty US Marines present.

Lieutenant General Walt Gaskin, who has been a very active life member, actively participated in the entire convention.



Also, Convention Director Ronald C. Johnson was elected National Vice President. Dr. Alfreda Carmichael was elected National Treasurer and we have two newly elected Regional Vice Presidents. Chapter Lejeune Chapter #10 President SgtMaj retired Johnny B. Young was elected as the Senior Regional Vice President succeeding CWO-5 Fred Codes and National Sergeant at Arms MGySgt retired Rob Alridge has succeeded Sharon Stokes in this position as our Central Region Vice President. Both Mike Johnson and Joe Geeter were reelected as the Western and Northern Region Vice Presidents respectfully. Additionally, Retired Sergeant Major Preston Malone has agreed to stay in the position as our National Special Projects Officer for an additional year. If anyone is interested in this position, please contact the National Public Relations Officer (Mr. Joe Geeter) you have your name submitted to the National President Carmen Cole.



The convention started with the President's reception and our guest Speaker, retired USMC Major General Cornell Wilson officiated the presentation of three Congressional Gold Medals to the families of deceased Montford Point Marines.

At the Convention's Joint Signature Event, whose theme was "Powerful, Purposeful and Prestigious" on Friday, August 30th Camp Lejeune's Mrs. Lovietta Batts-Herring was crowned our 2019-2020 Association National Queen.



The Queen's Raffle winners came from the following chapters; 3rd place from The Philly Chapter with the name on the ticket as only "Rob" won 3rd place with ticket # 35102 for a prize of \$250.00. 2nd Place, with a prize of \$500.00 and ticket #53967 was won by Michael Lindsey of Chapter #38 and, 1st Place, with the grand prize of \$1,000.00 was won by Camp Lejeune Chapter #10 itself with ticket # 30011.

Triad Chapter #38 President Tammy Williamson her daughter Crystal with support from recently reestablished Charlotte Chapter #40 did an outstanding job at customer service throughout the convention and providing the Association with an extremely entertaining "An Evening with the Stars" event on Thursday evening.

Convention 2021 was awarded to the Shreveport, Louisiana area. We are all looking forward to Convention 2020 in the Philadelphia suburb of King of Prussia, PA

The festivities concluded with our Annual Awards Banquet in which guest speaker Lieutenant General Vincent Stewart who motivated the crowd with a tribute to the Montford Pointers. Also at our Awards Banquet, members John Tate of Camp Lejeune Chapter #10 and Past National Chaplain Reverend James Moore were inducted into the National Montford Point Marine Association Inc. Hall of Fame.

At the convention opening meeting the National Montford Point Marine Association was presented a sculptured bust of Sergeant Major Gilbert "Hashmark" Johnson by Marine Vietnam Combat Veteran Cliff Leonard.



We would like to thank outgoing National President Forest Spencer and his Vice President Eric Nelson for their two terms of leading our Association.



All members and supporters left with a renewed motivation to continue to Preserve the Legacy of our Montford Point Marines.

Joseph JE Geeter III
National Public Relations Officer
Published September 2, 2019

<https://montfordpointmarines.org/>



Daughters of the American Revolution

Deborah "Debbie" Sands

**DAR Vice Regent, Rancho Simi Chapter
Detachment 597 Associate Member**

Rancho Simi NSDAR is back to work after our summer months off! Our first meeting was Saturday, September 14th with a very full agenda.

Over this summer, our wonderful members committed to collecting items needed for 250 Seabees who deployed in April and are returning in October to empty living quarters on base at Pt. Hueneme. In January, I began a conversation with Melissa Rogers, President of the NCMB 4 Readiness for Families organization, about what our DAR chapter could do to help the troops returning to the base. With a long list of items needed to furnish barracks, for the first few days of their arrival, our members went to work to purchase what was needed to make sure they come home to necessities from laundry pods to shampoo. We had fun! One member even swept in the Simi Valley Women's Club for assistance as well.

Our chapter also had the pleasure of having Dick Jennings, State Department of CA Commandant of the Marine Corps League and Jr. Past Commandant of Detachment 597, as our first guest speaker of the year. He talked about his dream of making a Veteran center happen in the Simi Valley area, how DAR could assist and the tragic facts of the active military/veteran suicides update. I was able to present Dick with a small donation of \$25 from our chapter to the Detachment.

Thank you Dick! You added to a great and productive meeting!!





Mardu Lydick
Co-Founder/Executive Director
Military Animal Project
Detachment 597 Associate Member

(805) 551-1168

Mardu@MilitaryAnimalProject.com

www.militaryanimalproject.com

Detachment Members,

As Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Military Animal Project "MAP," I want to personally invite you to our fundraising event, "Celebrating Our Heroes...All the Way Home," held on November 2nd from 5p-10p at the Commemorative Air Force Museum in Camarillo.

The focus of the evening will be on Veteran suicide prevention, local resources and MAP's program that help Veterans heal. We have an amazing program set for the evening-

- This will be a night of **Blue Jeans, Beer & BBQ!**
- New Directions Veterans Choir & The GIs of Comedy will be performing all while surrounded by WWII airplanes!
- Our PLATINUM SPONSOR - O'Brique Brewing Company - will be serving their CRAFT BEER out of a Vietnam Huey Helicopter Bar - HONORING THE MEMORY of Marine Veteran Dan Manrique - Co-Owner of O'Brique Brewing Co. Dan was one of the victims of the Borderline shootings. We will be honoring him as we come into the week of the 1 year anniversary for Borderline.
- Our Chairperson - Dick Jennings, Commandant of the State of California Marine Corps League will be our Master of Ceremonies.
- Mike McManus - Senior Master Sergeant, USAF (retired) County of Ventura's Veteran Services Officer will be doing the Opening Remarks.

Please go to our website at <http://militaryanimalproject.com/gala> for more information and to purchase tickets.

ACTIVE MILITARY/VETERANS/SPOUSE - WE HAVE A SPECIAL DINNER TICKET OFFER!!

Our sponsorships include complimentary tickets for local veterans to attend as their guests! To receive a complimentary dinner ticket, please email info@militaryanimalproject.com. On a first come, first serve basis, you will be added to the list for these tickets. Once these tickets are gone, we have arranged a special dinner ticket price - for active military/veterans and spouse - at \$45.00 per person. Again, please email info@militaryanimalproject.com to get dinner code.

All proceeds go directly to Military Animal Project – providing much needed Therapy, Emotional Support and Psychiatric Service dogs along with our Equine Buddies Program to our local Veterans. Please join us for an evening of celebrating, honoring, music, comedy, live & silent auctions, and special guests! MAP's Therapy Dogs & Veteran's and their matched dogs will also be in attendance!

Please see the flier below.

Thank you for your support!

Mardu Lydick

Co-Founder/Executive Director



Veteran in crisis?
Call 1-800-273-8255, Press 1



*Celebrating Our Heroes...
All the Way Home*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2019
COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE MUSEUM

MILITARY VETERANS – CALL OR EMAIL FOR SPECIAL DINNER TICKET OFFER!!

805-551-1168 **INFO@MILITARYANIMALPROJECT.COM**



*Join us for an evening of
BLUE JEANS, BEER & BBQ!!*

Event Chairperson
Dick Jennings
*Commandant for State of California,
Marine Corps League*



O'BRIQUET
BREW CO.
PLATINUM SPONSOR

Opening Remarks
Mike McManus
*Senior Master Sergeant, USAF (retired)
County of Ventura's Veteran Services Officer*

O'Briquet Brewing Company
*Serving Craft Beer from a Vietnam Huey Helicopter Bar
Honoring the Memory of
Marine Veteran, Dan Manrique
& Borderline 1 Year Anniversary*



GI's of Comedy

Musical Entertainment
New Directions Veteran Choir



New Directions Veteran Choir

Comedians
GI's of Comedy

INFO@MILITARYANIMALPROJECT.COM 805-551-1168 WWW.MILITARYANIMALPROJECT.COM/GALA



Birthdays for the month of October

Richard A. Jennings*	4	Rudy Cordero	18
Dale Dye	8	Debbie Sands	19
Sid Kirschner , Jr.*	9	Linda S. Kepler	19
Juan M. Avalos	10	Cassandra Wallace	21
Ernest Napper	11	Robin Hutton	21
Timothy F. Egan	15	Mitsy M. Farra*	29
Douglas Bamforth	17	Chris Bennett	30
Christopher Cassidy	18		

*Life Member



Matt E. Valenzuela Past Commandant

mattval@aol.com

310-768-2847 Office

310-308-7015 Mobile



Ed Aragon Korean War Veteran



Marines and Associates,

Perhaps some of you "older" members of the 597 may remember Don Montgomery. Don is a Life Member of the Marine Corps League and one of the Charter members of the then Ventura County Detachment #597. As a matter of fact, Don was Commandant Pro Tempore for about five or six weeks, in between Past Commandants Paul Mole and Meade Phillips..."while they got their stuff together." In his younger years, Don was a strong supporter of Toys for Tots and even had an article written about him in the VCStar for climbing a mountain to help a family at the top in need of food, clothing, and blankets.



I had a nice long conversation with Don today, and he wanted me to say "Hello" to all the 597 and at the same time apologize for not attending the meetings. Don's health precludes him from venturing forth. So from Don to all of the 597, a warm "Hello".

Semper Fi,
Matt



MANAGING EDITOR

RICHARD FARRA

richfarra@gmail.com

818-470-3258 Mobile

What can you say about Dick Jennings?

Dick we all thank you for all you do for our Detachment, even if you are with the Dept of CA. Given your track record of getting things done, we know that your dream of getting the Veterans Center will one day become a reality. What you did for Jean Irving is above and beyond the call of duty. (Applause) We all see it and we all look up to you as a "can do" kind of guy, not a Luigi five knuckles guy, but a making the commitment to get things done guy.

Thank you Dick! (More applause)

Richard 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 Veterans Center to help Veterans transition from active duty to civilian life. His idea is getting the attention of those in local government and businesses to bring this dream to reality. Share your ideas and let's make them happen.

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.



2019-2020 BOARD MEMBERS AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

Rank or Title	Name	Phone	E-mail
Commandant	Harry Hodges	805-515-1401	Hodges1951@gmail.com
Sr. Vice Commandant	Martin Spann	805-813-1061	Teamcommando.2004@gmail.com
Jr. Vice Commandant	Jim Wagner	760-898-4548	analogcowboy61@gmail.com
Jr. Past Commandant	Richard A. Jennings	805-328-9817	califcommandant@gmail.com
Judge Advocate	John Miller	805-581-5462	johnmillerusmc@gmail.com
Adjutant	John Coley	805-368-1086	w4simi@yahoo.com
Paymaster	Andy Dobrzynski	805-428-5902	andydobrzynski@gmail.com
Sergeant-at-Arms	Fausto Galvan	818-259-2119	Faustogalvan14@gmail.com
Corporal of the Guard	John Fuentes	805-485-4230	John.R.Fuentes@Nav.mil
Chaplain	Bradley Cantley	805-813-3571	bradleycantley@gmail.com
Color Guard Commander	Ruy Peña	818-912-9863	colorguard597@gmail.com
Color Guard Vice Commander	Fausto Galvan	818-259-2119	Faustogalvan14@gmail.com
Ship's Store Captain	Harry Hodges	805-515-1401	Hodges1951@gmail.com
Director of Events	Ken "Doc" Honaker	805-416-4063	kdhonaker@gmail.com
Director of Speakers	Robert Martinez	805-368-7001	Thebugler597@yahoo.com
Fundraising Chairman	Harry Hodges	805-515-1401	Hodges1951@gmail.com
Historian	John Miller	805-581-5462	johnmillerusmc@gmail.com
Managing Editor, The Gipper	Richard Farra	818-470-3258	richfarra@gmail.com
Young Marines	Fausto Galvan	818-259-2119	Fausto_galvan0471@yahoo.com
	Timothy Stratton	661-257-9690	e-8sierra@sbcglobal.net
	Juan Avalos	(858) 229-1894	avalosimscvym@gmail.com
Toys For Tots Chairman	John Mitchell	805-379-9664	Kathleen.Mitchell.is18@statefarm.com
Fundraising Coordinator	Debbie Sands	818-535-4738	dsandsconsulting@aol.com
Director of Associates	Valeria Galvan	818-302-9816	ValeriaHGalvan@yahoo.com
Department of California Staff			
Commandant	Richard A. Jennings	805-328-9817	califcommandant@gmail.com
MODD			
MODD Pound Keeper	Ben Pfister	805-208-1095	benpdet597@gmail.com
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