



“THE BULLDOG BULLETIN”



*Marine Corps League
South Hills Detachment 726
2409 Bethel Church Rd.
Bethel Park, PA 15102*

Meetings are held the first
Wednesday of each month at
7:30 pm at the listed address.

Jan., Feb., Mar. 2020 Edition

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PURPOSE OF THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

To hold sacred the memory of those Marines, who died preserving our nation and that history marking their sacrifices to our nation. To foster love for those American principles Marines have supported by blood and valor since the founding of the Republic. To maintain true allegiance to American Institutions.

RECENT HAPPENINGS

November 9th.....Det. 726 Birthday Ball

November 11th.....Color Guard @ USC Vets Memorial

FUTURE EVENTS

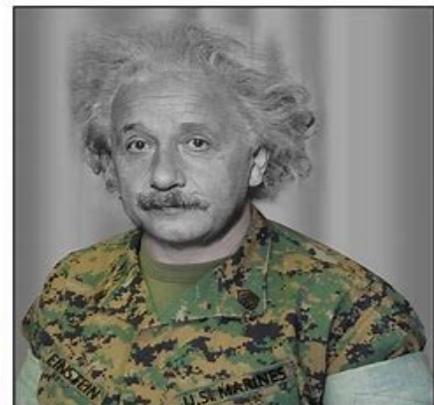
Dates to be announced.....Rose Program

YEARLY DUES

REMINDER! Yearly dues are due at the Detachment each September

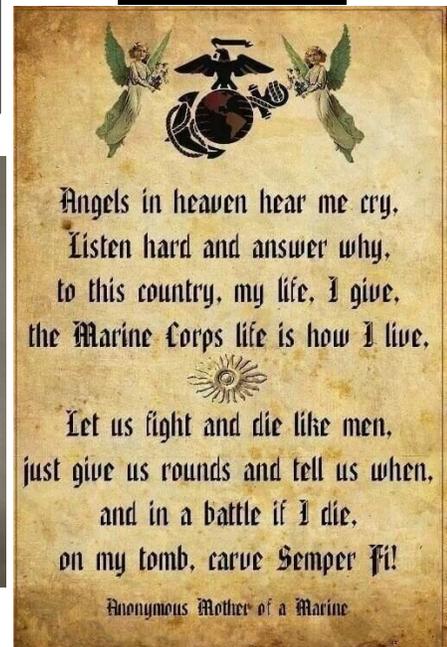
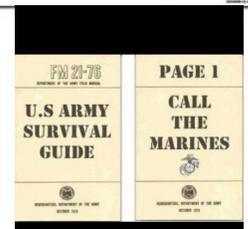
PLEASE NOTE

As our lives change on a daily basis so does technology. We are constantly updating our files with Names, Addresses, Phone Numbers and Emails so please send yours to the Adjutant!



$$E=MC^2$$

Education = Marine Corps to the **highest power.**



Keystone Young Marines

Commandants Corner



Marines and supporters,

Welcome to 2020, This is the first issue of Marine Corps League 726's newly instituted quarterly newsletter named "The Bulldog Bulletin".

All Marines share a long, proud heritage. We endeavor to remind you of that by keeping you informed of past, current and forthcoming Detachment activities and events. We ask that

you read each issue and hope that some of the articles will rekindle pleasant memories of your active days as Marines. Possibly even encourage you to again become a **PARTICIPATING** member of your Detachment., renew past acquaintances and share in our continued strength as a viable Marine Corps League.

Photos from the past, articles from our active duty Marines, news about the Young Marine Program, notifications of upcoming events and spotlighting current member profiles will be in each issue. We encourage you to become an active participant by contacting one of the officers listed in this newsletter **OR** attending our meetings of your Marine Corps League Detachment.

Semper Fidelis



KEYSTONE YOUNG MARINIES is proud to report another successful year due to the collaboration with it's charter – South Hills Detachment 726! As the New Year approaches, we are proud to begin our 24th year of existence as Pittsburgh's secret weapon as a number one youth organization and defense against the war on drugs.

This year we hope to expand the knowledge of what our program has to offer and plan to continue to assist 726 with their needs. The power of knowledge and what our two organizations have to offer our surrounding communities will prove to enhance all beliefs in giving back, having faith in our future leaders and showing how working together can make the difference.

We are always looking for assistance to train as many young people that are interested in improving themselves and becoming responsible young adults. If you are interested in being a part of the Keystone Young Marines, please contact us at 412-884-5893 or at radcliff5@comcast.net. Plan is to begin another boot camp in the next couple months!

Happy New Year and Semper Fi to those who believe in our program!

Bettina Radcliff/Adjutant/Keystone Young Marines



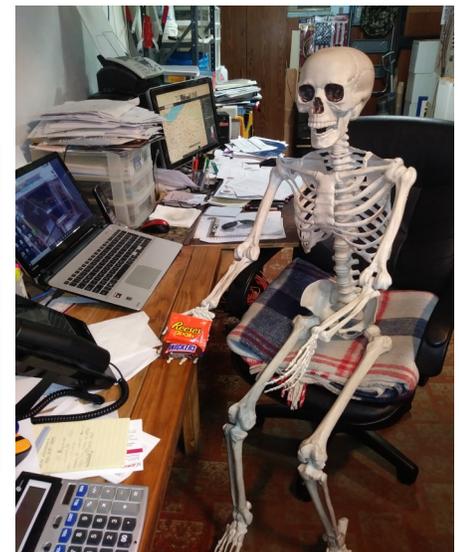
Marine Rose Program

Started by U.S. Marine Eddie Gallagher from New York, it was designed to parallel the VFW "Poppy" program to provide funds for Marine Corps League Detachments to assist veterans and youth and provide miscellaneous other services to the community.

Birthday Ball Cake



Newsletter publisher at work



MUSINGS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

Shawn Kane

As I continue my second career in the Military I marvel at how different it is from thirty years ago and yet how similar it remains. The biggest change is the proliferation of technology on the everyday lives of military personnel. As a young man in the Marine Corps I spent many hours writing letters to all my loved ones. Mail call was a huge event as we lined up to get a letter from home or perhaps that morale box of goodies. Now it is easy to call home and send texts any time I like. In today's modern military, Amazon has taken the place of Mom in the majority of packages sent here. Even in the remotest FOBs of Iraq, a military person can order something from Amazon and get it within about ten days. The biggest thing that remains the same are the people themselves. Yes, the names and faces have changed from the 80's and 90's but in many ways they are indistinguishable. The young inexperienced Lieutenants are still here, the grizzled senior NCOs who have seen it all remain and the hard working troops have not changed one bit. The biggest message I would like to convey is that the generation wearing today's uniform are as dedicated of professionals and have that same love of their country as any I have ever served with.

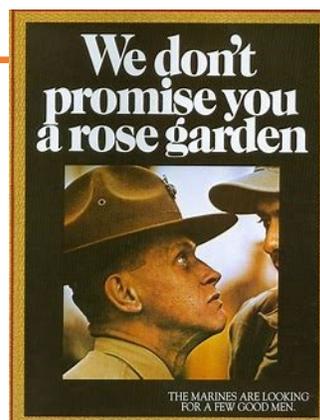
The base I am stationed at is called Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait. One thing that was hard for me to adjust to is the fact that I stay here for the whole six month deployment. In the Marine Corps when I deployed I either got on ship and went to multiple countries or flew to Okinawa, got on ship and went to multiple countries. The only time I deployed and stayed in one area for any length of time was during the first Gulf War sitting in Saudi Arabia and the four months in Mogadishu Somalia. The base here is not exceptionally large as we think of in the Marine Corps. Bases like Camp Pendleton, Camp Lejeune and 29 Palms are huge because they contain all kind of training areas. Ali Al Salem is more like the size of Quantico, MCAS Kaneohe Bay or Camp Schwab in Okinawa. Much has changed since I was last here in 2016. Back then, the E-4's and below lived in tents, they now have hardtops. I have noticed many dirt trails that are now cement walkways. New buildings have been constructed and quality of life has improved for the military personnel stationed here. Kuwait is strategically located in the Middle East, is a stable government whose people are eternally grateful to the United States and want us to be here. All of this tells me one thing, the American military is here to stay at this base and in Kuwait for the foreseeable future.

The weather in July soared to 125 degrees and was initially hard to adjust to. The base is inland from the coast and so we rarely get humidity. The worst days were when the winds blew at times to 35 mph. It felt like having a hair dryer continually blowing in your face. At night the temperatures would drop into the 90's. As I write this down it appears extreme however the readers of this newsletter can most likely relate. You may have endured the heat and humidity of jungles or the extremes of cold weather training or spent time in Middle Eastern heat as well. You know the secret and that is the military person adjusts. They adjust to whatever conditions they have to operate in and thrive. One interesting story concerning this base are the bombed out hangars on the flight line. These hangars were built of reinforced concrete by a French company in the 80s and they contractually guaranteed the Kuwaiti government that their enemies could not destroy them. During the First Gulf War, the Iraqis took over this base and hung the Kuwaiti commanders from the base flag pole. American bombers dropped bombs on most of these hangars that penetrated and blew out all of the planes and personnel hidden inside them, destroying much of the Iraqi Air Force in Kuwait. After the war the Kuwaiti government tried to get reimbursed because the hangars were destroyed. The French company responded that they guaranteed Kuwait's enemies could not penetrate and destroy the hangars. America was not Kuwait's enemy. So those hangars stand there to this day as a reminder of America's military might. The Kuwait government frowns upon pictures taken of them and we are not supposed to do that. However, that is an example of rules that are relayed but often not enforced.

The base is a transitory one for many of its residents. There are those of us who are permanent personnel and many in the Army, Air Force and Marines who are transiting from here to many places around the Middle East. One of my jobs is to help those military personnel get to their destination. I am in the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing (AEW) in the Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron (ELRS). It has a history that dates back to WWII and the European Campaign. I am an Aerial Porter or as we are fondly known a Port Dawg. We are responsible for receiving cargo and personnel from Army, Air Force and Marine units and getting them on planes to their destinations. We are also responsible for downloading cargo and personnel off incoming planes into the Air Base. The majority of our cargo planes are the C-130 (H model) and the C-17. My job here as a Senior NCO in the port is a Duty Officer or DO. My responsibilities are the overseeing of all the Aerial Port operations. We are on shift for twelve hours and work six days a week and one day off. I have a counterpart DO at night and together we oversee all the operations here at Ali Al Salem. This is the first time I have deployed as a Senior NCO either in the Air Force or Marine Corps and is the most responsibilities that have been given me. I am enjoying tremendously what will most likely be my last military deployment ever.



Don't be a
sleeper, join
us for a
meeting



Guadalcanal and Peliliu

This falls in line with the Commandants message.

I would like to tell a story shared with me by a Marine after I graduated from boot camp.

As it was with his generation and most combat vets, they didn't open up to family or friends about what happened when they were in the service. They felt it was required of them at a time when millions of the youth flocked to the recruiting stations after Pearl Harbor.

This story is through a Marine veteran's eyes of what it took to be a Marine in one of our counties defining moments.

As you know from Marine History the men who landed on Guadalcanal had a tough time. No different from any other battle of the war except that after the landing, the Navy had to abandon the area to protect the fleet from the onslaught of Japanese aircraft. They were left with only half the supplies of food and ammunition offloaded, but had to go on with the mission. During the nights when the fighting was at its low points the men had to dig in and wait out the night. Since reinforcements did not make the landing they had to make due, 2 men to a fox hole was a luxury but in most cases only one to guard the large perimeter was all they had.

This Marine was in a one man fox hole, the hole to one side had 2 Marines and the other had a Marine and a German Shepard. The night was long, quiet and appeared to be nothing out of the ordinary. When the Marine was relieved in the morning he found that the Japanese had somehow infiltrated their position. The positions on either side of this Marine were both compromised. Three Marines and a Battle Dog perished that night. This Marine didn't know why he was spared, but being a religious man; he thanked God and did his best to carry on.

Later in the Battle this Marine was wounded. A sniper bullet in the back ended his time on the island, but he was there long enough to see the Marines take Henderson field and succeed in their mission. His rehab was spent back in the states as a corporal on the rifle range at Camp Lejeune preparing new recruits for future combat missions. He thought his combat days were over until he received orders for the south Pacific theater again. This time with a new Platoon and new faces, he headed off to war again.

On the troop transport the rumors, being as they were, ranged from them heading to a restful island retreat to invading the island of Japan. But they were guaranteed by the Brass this island was going to be a cake walk compared to Guadalcanal. The Big Red 1 once again was in the thick of it on a little known island of Peliliu. The Japanese were ready with hidden pill boxes throughout the island and the Marines suffered heavy casualties. They were as always relentless in securing success on this bump of an island in the Pacific. Surviving the landing and starting to work inland, a month of fighting with little sleep and no relief the Marines fought on, fighting not only the enemy but weather, dysentery, malaria and a host of other ailments.

While walking with the platoon through the closely grown palms this Marine did not see the machine gun sticking out of the sand covered by palms but his patrol mate did. When the warning came this Marine started dropping to the ground when they fired. A round that was meant for his chest, because of his quickness entered the top of his forehead and traveled between his skull and his skin lodging in the back of his scalp. He woke up on a hospital ship with other wounded and once again turned his face upward and thanked God. Over the next couple of weeks they got news that the island was secure, another successful mission, but at great cost. Back in the states he volunteered again to teach new recruits at the range. The Marine shared his hope, that as he looked into their young faces, he prayed they would not be needed. Unfortunately some of the recruits he trained did have to go, for the wars end was still months away. It did finally end and he was discharged honorably with the thanks of a great nation.

This Marine married and had children. He lived a good life, a Godley life. Two weeks ago, we remembered him during the 10th anniversary of his passing. I still remember when he sat me down and told me his story. I guess he figured since I was a Marine, I may be asked to perform a similar sacrifice and he thought I should know, still teaching as all parents do.

This generation should never be forgotten for their sacrifice and courage during a time of great consternation. The generations that follow need to understand the sacrifices given by those before us. That's why I share his story with my children and those who can appreciate what my Father did to guard their freedom - so they can pass it on.

Dedicated to PFC George Popovich

Prepare for War but Pray for Peace. Semper Fi

Matt Popovich Senior Vice Commandant

TAPS

Anthony Raffaele.....Aug. 2019

Richard Rush.....June 2019



This newsletter was compiled, edited and produced by members of the committee of the Marine Corps League South Hills Detachment 726.

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Young Marines.....Bettina Radcliff

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Color Guard.....Bob Malley

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Lest We Forget

