



The Bulldog Bulletin



Commandants Corner

Jan, Feb, Mar 2025 Edition

As expected, Marine Corps League (MCL) Detachment 726 had a very busy fourth quarter 2024. On November 8, 2024, Matt Popovich and I conducted a Color Guard for the Bethel Park / Castle Shannon / South Park Chamber Annual Veterans Day Luncheon.

Our November 9, 2024, 249th Marine Birthday Ball was a very exciting event. Major Eric Gass was our guest speaker. Major Gass talked about his Army accomplishments and his appreciation for the Marines. Major Gass is a Mustang Officer, which is an Army term for an officer who came from the enlisted ranks. Haya Eason was awarded Marine of the Year and Bettina Radcliff was awarded Associate Member of the Year.

Thanks to our Communications Officer Chuck Burrow, we had the honor of having three-year old Mini Miss Military Star Eloise Josephine attend as greeter and assisted on ticket selections for the Chinese Auction drawings. Eloise is available to volunteer at military related events. Her mother's contact information is email - eliiza@icloud.com and phone - (310) 409-7817.

Our annual Marine Birthday Ball would not be the success without the efforts of Ralph and Debbie Jedd for organizing another outstanding Chinese Auction, Debbie Jedd and Bettina Radcliff for manning the check-in table, Senior Vice Commandant Chuck Burrow and Sergeant at Arms Joe Spinnenweber for organizing the Ball, Father Jon Brzek for the opening/invocation and closing prayers, Haya Eason for reading the POW/MIA Table Ceremony and Matt Popovich / Alex Papiernik for assisting in the cake cutting ceremony. An extra special thanks to Haya for stepping up as the Ball photographer. We would not have such a great Birthday Ball without all support for these outstanding Marines and Associate Marines. OOHRAH!

The Federation of War Veteran Societies of Allegheny County held the 105th Pittsburgh Veterans Day Parade on Monday, November 11, 2024. Four local MCL detachments joined forces representing the Marine Corps League in the 2024 Pittsburgh Veterans Day Parade. The four MCL detachments included the South Hills Pittsburgh, the 3 Rivers Leathernecks, the Washington County, and the Allegheny Valley detachments. The parade contingent consisted of four vehicles with MCL signs and fourteen marching MCL members, which included a four-member Color Guard.

At the October, November and December Detachment meeting we held nominations for the 2025 elected officers. The 2025 Detachment officer nominations are Gary Woodside for Commandant, Matt Popovich for Senior Vice Commandant, Joe Turba for Jr. Vice Commandant and Alex Papiernik for Judge Advocate. Elections are held at the December 4, 2024 MCL meeting. All nominated officers were elected by the attending membership.

Please enjoy the upcoming Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years holidays with your friends and families.

To continue as a successful Detachment, we need membership participation. Please do not hesitate to step up for elected / appointed positions and bring new members to the detachment.

Semper Fi,

Gary Woodside,

Commandant South Hills Detachment #726.

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MCL South Hills Pittsburgh Detachment 726 Birthday Ball Celebration

Whoopee, we had another humdinger of a celebration, special thanks to Haya Eason for jumping in and taking photos and also Ralph Jedd. Ralph and his wife Debbie always do a fantastic job with the Chinese auction, a lot of work and dedication, kudos to them.

Other than being the SVC, editor and publisher of the newsletters I'm also the Communications Officer. Occasionally, I do receive an interesting call and this particular one was an organization I have never heard of, "Miss Military Star Volunteer" program, I found out later that many other States have adopted this program as well as Pennsylvania.

Miss Military Star is a service based organization that volunteers with our Veterans and service members, along with charity work for military-oriented organizations. Our motto is "We shine for our heroes" because we have a heart to serve those who truly give their all for our freedoms.

Well, as we progressed through our conversations I invited them to attend our Birthday Ball and "Mini Miss 2025 Pennsylvania" volunteered as a door greeter, she is almost three years old and her parents were there as well (how else did you think she was going to get there?)

Here are the Miss Military Star 2025 Pennsylvania Volunteers.



On with the ceremony



Now you know how tall "Mini Miss" Military Star is and yes her Father and Mother are there



Color Guard in red blazers, Joe Turba. Matt Popovich and Bob Malley, bugler Alex Papiernik with Commandant Gary Woodside and guest speaker Army Major Eric Gass.



POW/MIA Missing Man Table



L-R

Guest speaker Army Major Eric Gass

District 8 Commandant Matt Popovich

Attending Fr. Jon Brzek







Detachment members attending the Birthday Ball

Congratulations to MOY Haya Eason and Associate Member of the Year Bettina Radcliff





On another note

Marines attending and marching in the Veterans Day Parade downtown Pittsburgh



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

This year a portion of our donations received from our Rose Campaign went to Wreaths Across America for the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies.



"The American Marine will march down the barrel of an enemy rifle for you. It constantly has amazed me over the years just how good the individual Marine can be."

Captain Paul Goodwin USMC

The Four Chaplains

The DORCHESTER was old and small, and only the exigencies of total war had forced her transformation into the troopship. On this night in mid-January, 1943, she was being loaded with troops at the Massachusetts port; her destination hidden in an envelope of secret orders. At this period of World War II, allied shipping, under constant attack by wolf packs of Nazi U-boats, were being sunk almost as fast as it could be built. All available destroyers were sent to guard the carriers and battlewagons pounding the Japanese Islands in the far Pacific and the vital convoys to the United Kingdom. For such as the lumbering DORCHESTER, there were only a few Coast Guard cutters and make-do craft for escort. A mysterious sense of danger was prevalent throughout the ship. Off the coast of Greenland, on the evening of the second day of the new month one of the three escort's Coast Guard cutters blinked a message across the water:

"WE ARE BEING FOLLOWED BY A SUBMARINE."

The P.A. System crackled with orders, and the crew jumped to their guns! The DORCHESTER'S engine whined and labored to gain speed but could push the ungainly freighter along at only ten knots. The convoy stopped briefly at St. John's, Newfoundland and then moved on northeastward through the strange whiteness of an Arctic night. On the next morning, February third, the ship's bells sounded one o'clock. They never sounded again. A minute later a torpedo smashed into the DORCHESTER well below the water line amid ship. The torpedo exploded with all its terrific fury in the engine room! Bursting steam lines fatally scalded the engineers and oilers with cruel abandon. The sea rushed into the hole like a tidal wave, drowning a hundred men like rats in a trap. Stark panic whipped across the ship, blotting out in an instant the so-newly acquired training in discipline and survival. Men cursed bitterly and others wept -- as they struggled feverishly with boats and lines. Others rushed below deck in search of forgotten life belts - never to return. Through this scene of terror moved a few strong men, purposeful, calm, and seemingly unafraid. Among these were the four chaplains, rushing everywhere about the ship, in the terror-ridden interior and on the crazily tilted deck, giving some men the strength to live and others the courage to die.

Men looked at the four chaplains with new wonder, seeking a sign, some symbol to carry with them into the valley of death. One man, more boy than man, made his way to the group at the rail. "Padre, I've lost my life-jacket. I can't swim. I'll..." One of the chaplains tore off his own and put it about the boy's shoulders "take this I'm staying. I won't need it." The soldier tied the jacket's strings, mounted the rail, and dipped into the sea - now almost level with the deck. The other chaplains followed without hesitation, with the full realization that there could be no survival in the icy sea without their life jackets. During the last dying moments of the freighter, four chaplains, their crosses on their collars and one with the Tablets of the Law on his, stood with arms linked in devoted prayer as the vessel's bow came up and then slid under the raging surface. Somewhere off in the seething seas four other men escaped the jaws of death, supported by the chaplains' lifejackets. Of the 904 men aboard the DORCHESTER, only 209 survived. Many of these survivors owe their lives to the spiritual courage and supreme sacrifice of the FOUR CHAPLAINS who have passed on a legacy of Brotherhood to all men.

Aboard the DORCHESTER were four U.S. Chaplains - Protestant, Catholic, Jewish - who each in his own way answered the call to serve GOD and man. With arms linked, symbolic of their common bond, the FOUR CHAPLAINS remained praying on the deck until it sank into the black waters of everlasting glory.

Rev. George L. Fox - Methodist; Dr. Alexander Goode - Rabbi (Jewish); Rev. Clark V. Poling - Reformed (Dutch) Father John P. Washington - Catholic

"Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Chaplain's Corner



“Chaplains who received the Medal of Honor in Vietnam”. In 1966 William J. Barragy was the first Chaplain to fall in combat in Vietnam. In all thirteen US military Chaplains died in Vietnam, two US Army Chaplains Charlie Watters and Angelo Liteky were awarded the Medal of Honor, America’s highest award for valor. The third Chaplain to receive the Medal of Honor was Navy Chaplains Vincent R. Capodanno who served with the 3rd Battalion 5th Marine Regiment in Vietnam. He was known as the grunt Padre.



TAPS

No Casualty Reported

Mission Statement

The mission of the Marine Corps League is to promote the interest and to preserve traditions of the United States Marine Corps; strengthen the fraternity of Marines and their families; serve Marines, FMF Navy Personnel who wear or have worn the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor; and foster the ideals of Americanism and patriotic volunteerism.



*“If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven’s
scenes;
They will find the streets
are guarded by
United States Marines.*”

