



July 2023



The Spearhead News

Official Newsletter of the Fifth Marine Division Association
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Banquet Speaker: The 33rd Commandant Michael Hagee



The Fifth Marine Division Association is honored and grateful to announce the Keynote Banquet Speaker at our 73rd Reunion in San Antonio will be Gen. Mike Hagee, USMC (retired), the 33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps.

General Hagee graduated with distinction from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1968 with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering. He holds a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies

from the Naval War College. He is a graduate of the Command and Staff College and the U.S. Naval War College. Gen. Hagee served as Commandant from 2003 through 2006.

General Hagee currently serves as President and CEO of the Admiral Nimitz Foundation which manages the National Museum of the Pacific War, located in Fredericksburg, Texas. Both General Hagee and Admiral Nimitz are hometown heroes of Fredericksburg, 70 miles northwest of San Antonio.

General Hagee is passionate about preserving history for future generations. Admiral Nimitz's grandfather built the hotel that is an original part of the National Museum of the Pacific War complex. The Admiral Nimitz Foundation was established in 1964 to support a museum honoring Fredericksburg's native son.





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Contents In This Issue

Gen Mike Hagee	Pg 1
Officers & Tribute form	Pg 2
Skip Werthmuller - President's message	Pg 3
Bill Baumann - VP Message	Pg 3
If There Was No Iwo Airfield	Pg 4-6
Dave Boosinger - Remembrance of Dad	Pg 7-9
Col. Art Sifrenties - The USO Show	Pg 10-11
Skip Werthmuller - LtC Tom Trotti	Pg 12-13
Michael Naya interview Ken Brown	Pg 14-15
New Members	Pg 16
Financials	Pg 16
Valerie Leman- Don Simpson	Pg 17-19
Sgt Bill Genaust	Pg 20
Joe Rosenthal Campaign	Pg 20
Joe Rosenthal's own words	Pg 21-22
New Members FMDA	Pg 22
Book Reviews-Alfredo Cooke & Dan King	Pg 23
Ray Elliott- Tootsie Rolls in Korea	Pg 24-25
Ted Williams a Marine	Pg 25
Morey Butler - A Train to a Past Reunion	Pg 26-27
Final Musters	Pg 28-29
Member News	Pg 30-31
San Antonio Features	Pg 32-33
Reunion News	Pg 34
Registration Form	Pg 35
Mailing and Membership Form	Pg 36

TRIBUTE OF HONOR
FIFTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION
MEMORIAL DONATION



Honor the memory of someone special through a Memorial Donation to the Fifth Marine Division Association General Fund. The names of Memorial Honorees will be published in a future edition of *The Spearhead News*.

Please prepare this form, along with your donation of any amount, payable to FMDA, and mail to
FMDA, P.O. Box 728
Weatherford, Texas, 76086

FMDA is a 501c3, not-for-profit organization. An acknowledgment of your gift will be sent to you at your address listed below.

Please check here if you would like an additional letter sent to the Honoree or his family without the dollar amount included. Please provide that address on the back of this copied form.

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President's Message *by Capt. Skip Werthmuller USN (Ret)*

Greetings!

I hope you and your families have enjoyed good health and happiness this Spring!

Final plans are now in place for our upcoming reunion in San Antonio, TX 4-8 October 2023. Tom Huffhines has arranged for us to stay at the historic Menger hotel downtown across from The Alamo and Riverwalk and only eight miles from the airport.

In addition to Tom's outstanding work, he has had the invaluable assistance of his dedicated team. Many thanks to all who support FMDA with their special skills.

Highlights will include our banquet speaker, General Mike Hagee USMC (ret), the 33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps and the reading of the eulogy at our Memorial Service by Kenneth Brown, the 5th Division Chaplain's Assistant. He knew Rabbi Gittelsohn who gave the famous eulogy for those 5th Division Marines initially buried on Iwo Jima. Additional highlights will include talks by Tom Graves regarding the naming of a Navy ship for WWII combat photographer Joe Rosenthal, as well as a talk by historian Dan King. We will also be treated to a Magic Show and a tour of The Alamo.

We continue to receive notices of the passing of 5th Division Marines. We mourn their passing, while also giving thanks for their service to our nation. We continue to pursue the purpose of our organization ... Legacy ... Remembrance ... Fellowship ... Comradery. We are all bound to the desire to keep alive the honored memory of heroic sacrifice by 5th Marine Division veterans and by the never to be forgotten legacy they provide us. ❖

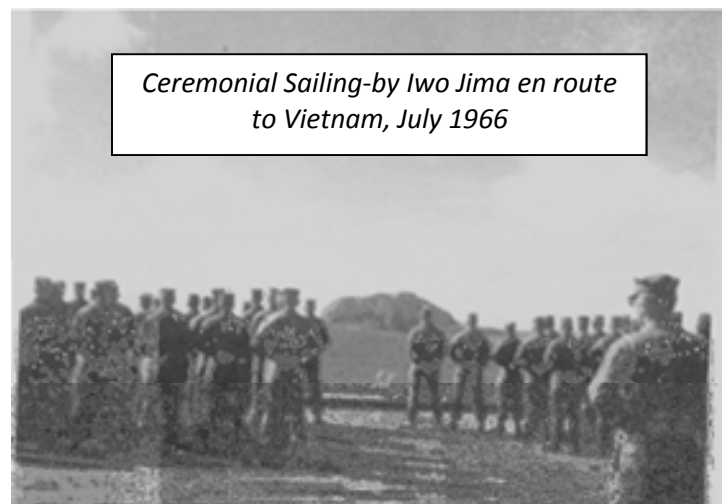
Vice President's Message

Sail-by of Iwo Jima *by Bill Baumann*

In the spring of 1966, the Fifth Marine Division was activated for service in Vietnam. Specifically, the 26th Regiment. The 1st Battalion departed from San Diego aboard the LPH Iwo Jima along with the Vancouver and Thomaston. After leaving Hawaii, we were told that we would be sailing by the island of Iwo Jima to honor and pay tribute to the Marines who fought in that tremendous battle. Of course, 26th Regiment had been a major part of securing the island 21 years prior.

On 24 July we assembled on the flight deck of the ship. Soon the tiny island came into view. I already knew that it was not very big, but to actually see it amazed me. I wondered how did all those Marines and Japanese fit on it? It was heartbreaking to realize that over 7,000 Marines had made the ultimate sacrifice in that battle. I was in awe.

I looked at Mt. Suribachi and tried to visualize the sight of the flag being raised. That must have been an inspiring sight for those aboard the ships. We rendered a hand salute as the ship's band played the Marine Corps Hymn. I got a chill and tears came to my eyes. What an experience indeed! We all knew that we had some mighty big boots to fill. History shows that we did just that. We are very proud to have carried the legacy of the Fifth Marine Division! Semper Parati!!! ❖



Ceremonial Sailing-by Iwo Jima en route to Vietnam, July 1966

If There Was No Iwo Jima Airfield, I'd Have Been on My Knees Praying

March 29, 2023 | Marvin J. Wolf - Reprinted from the War Horse.org via PT Brent's blog.

It is August 1965 and I'm flying to Vietnam, a two-day journey with the First Cavalry Division's advance party aboard an Air Force C-130. Twenty of us boarded the plane at Warner Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. We found the middle of the bird jammed with two jeeps, as many trailers, and a dozen pallets bulging with small-arms ammo, C rations, medical supplies, diesel generators, commo wire, rolls of barbed wire—and everything else required to build a base camp in the Vietnam jungle.

The front half of the cargo space is too warm. The back is too cold. Our veteran travelers grab seats in the jeeps. The rest of us slump on benches down each side of the fuselage. They are like lawn chairs, woven from some kind of plastic, and comfort is not their purpose.

There is a deep metal pan on one side, about three feet above the deck. A tube leads from its bottom through the wall and some valves and out into the slipstream. That's the only place to urinate. Need to go number two? There's a bucket half filled with sand. You use it, you clean it.

We cruise at 220 knots—roughly 250 miles per hour. Our plane is near the head of a sky train of 52 aircraft spaced out at 20-minute intervals—altogether we span more than 4,000 miles of the globe. It's eight hours from Georgia to Travis Air Force Base, near San Francisco. Another eight to Hickam Air Force Base, Honolulu, then, another eight to Wake Island.

At each stop, we're on the ground just long enough to refuel. There's time for the latrine and a gobbled-down burger or some such.

Somewhere beyond Wake I finally manage to fall asleep. It's another 10 hours to Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa, and we've been promised several hours there before going on to our final destination, Nha Trang, Vietnam.

I awaken with a start: The engines sing a different tune and the deck is not quite level. Then a wing dips and we bank, descending through the inky night.

I am elated—I've managed to sleep for eight hours, the whole distance to Kadena. A single point of light appears in my porthole; behind it is an irregular shape infinitely darker than the night around it. I ask myself why Okinawa is blacked out.

Hydraulics screech, flaps and gear are lowered, our descent slows until the engines growl and the props change pitch and we're on the ground, taxiing. We stop in the darkness; as the engines whine into silence, our senior officer, a colonel, calls out, "Leave everything except headgear and weapons."

Something is very wrong.

We jump down to a pitch-black runway. Instead of a bus to take us to the terminal, we march single file toward a distant light until we come to a hangar, atop which burns the lonely bulb that I'd seen from the air. A sign below it reads: "Welcome to Iwo Jima International Airfield"

We form a semicircle and the colonel explains that an engine caught fire and was shut down. A C-130 can fly on three engines, if necessary, but we were loaded to the maximum; extended flight would push them to their limits, inviting another fire or failure. We were more than 850 miles from Okinawa—farther than Los Angeles is from Portland, Oregon—so we landed here.

Iwo Jima airfield's sole purpose is to provide for emergency landings in the Pacific vastness. The 50 airmen manning this remote base are overjoyed to see us. Again and again they ask if there are any women passengers—WACs, nurses, or? As it happens, a woman is behind every tree on Iwo Jima. Alas, there are no trees. Not one. None at all.

Months had passed since the last emergency landing, months since the airmen had reason to believe they served any purpose on this lonesome speck of volcanic rock. Our hosts give us their own bunks for naps, serve us cold chicken, hamburgers, cold cuts, and anything else they had, from milk and coffee to beer, Scotch, vodka, bourbon, or gin—and refused to take our money.



(Left: Marvin Wolf receives the Air Medal from Maj. Charles Siler in 1966.)



(Left: Marvin Wolf on a medical civic action program in a remote village of Vietnam, where more than 30 men and boys had cleft palates. American doctors repaired all of them in one day inside a tent that doubled as an operating room.)

Then they show us two films: Combat footage shot by John Ford's Navy cinematographers of the actual conquest of Iwo Jima, and the John Wayne movie *Sands of Iwo Jima* (which is mostly about the conquest of Tarawa).

The Ford footage was grim: Seven thousand American Marines died taking this volcanic island; 22,000 Japanese gave their lives trying to stop them. The American forces wanted Iwo Jima for emergency landings by shot-up B-29s returning from bombing missions over Japan. By V-J Day some hundreds of aircrews had landed safely here; many if not most would have died had it not been for those 7,000 Marines.

And now Iwo Jima has saved another plane and more Americans. I feel humbled. What would we have done in that empty sky over thousands of square miles of water with no place to land? How many of us would have survived a night water landing? Or the shark-filled waters?

At midmorning I visit the repair hangar to view our C-130. A scorched nacelle and sooty wing marked the burned engine. Mechanics scurry about installing a new one.

Later, as we line up to board, I stopped our crew chief, a technical sergeant of about 35. "Tell me the truth, Sarge," I said. "How much danger were we actually in? Could we have made Okinawa?" He shrugged. "We'll never know," he said. "But I'll tell you this: If there was no Iwo Jima airfield I'd have been on my knees praying the whole way. And if the skipper had tried for Okinawa on three engines, I, for one, would never fly with him again."

All the way to Okinawa I kept thinking about Iwo Jima's Marines. I tried to imagine what it was like in a wave-tossed landing craft, shells bursting all around, slowly approaching an entrenched and fanatical enemy. Were those young men seasick? Fearful? What were their thoughts on that long, scary ride to the beach? Did they know they might die?

Seven thousand dead. Seven thousand mourning mothers. Seven thousand grieving fathers. Legions of orphaned children, shattered wives and sweethearts. I was barely out of diapers when Iwo Jima fell to American forces on March 26, 1945. Yet surely, I, too, owe them my life. They fought and died to protect me as much as anyone who ever made a forced landing on that island of blood and valor. ❖

Marvin J. Wolf served 13 years on active duty with the US Army, including eight years as a commissioned officer. He was one of only 60 enlisted and warrant officers to receive a direct appointment to the officer ranks while serving in Vietnam. Wolf has authored more than 20 books, including three about the Vietnam War: *They Were Soldiers*, *Abandoned in Hell*, and *Buddha's Child*.

TRIBUTE OF HONOR



MEMORIAL HONOREE
WARREN MUSCH

LT. 3/28 S-2



(Honored by Tom Huffhines, friend)

TRIBUTE OF HONOR



MEMORIAL HONOREE
WALTER O'MALLEY

CPL E/2/27 3RD PLATOON



(Honored by Ray Elliott, friend)

TRIBUTE OF HONOR



MEMORIAL HONOREE
BARBARA RUSSELL BOOSINGER

Wife of Plt Sgt Richard C. Boosinger

A/1/27 WIA IWO JIMA



(Honored by David Richard Boosinger, son)

TRIBUTE OF HONOR



MEMORIAL HONOREE
VALERIE LEMAN COHEN

Daughter of Lt Craig Leman

H/3/26 WIA IWO JIMA

Dedicated Contributors to FMDA



(Honored by John Butler, friend)

A Tribute to my Dad, Sgt. Richard C. Boosinger Jr.
(His time on Iwo Jima)
by Dave Boosinger

Sgt. Richard C. Boosinger Jr., of Youngstown, Ohio, landed on Iwo Jima 19 Feb. 1945, in the fourth wave at approximately 9:15 a.m. He was one of thirty-three boat team leaders in the first battalion, twenty-seventh regiment, 5th Marine Division. Out of those thirty-three men, seventeen were killed in action or died of wounds during the course of the battle. Thirteen, including Sgt. Boosinger, were wounded. Three left the island intact. All witnessed horrific combat.

Boosinger was a member of "A" Company, which was part of the designated assault team for the D-Day landing. He was a gunner in a machine-gun section. Boosinger spent the next twenty-four days on Iwo Jima. A long time. Too long, he said more than once. He was evacuated 14 March, after having suffered a gun-shot wound through his right shoulder blade.

His buddy. Sgt. Steve Mikulich, veteran of Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester, died right next to him that day. It was his third campaign of the Pacific War. He rests today at the Punchbowl National Cemetery in Hawaii. At the time of his death, Sgt. Mikulich was twenty eight years old, and had served in the Marines thirteen years. Dad said he was an orphan from Wheeling, West Virginia, who enlisted in 1932 at the age of fifteen. Heard all about him most of my life. Both Mom and Dad spoke very highly of him. Wish I could have met him. He sounded like quite a guy. RIP Sgt. Steve Mikulich.

Sgt. Boosinger's experiences on Iwo Jima provided for a treasure trove of information about the battle. As his son I was privy to some of these stories growing up, and as an adult. I was thirty years old when Dad passed away at age sixty-seven. The worst of his memories, I believe, he kept to himself. Mom told me a lot after his death. She was a native of Los Angeles, and had met and started dating Dad while he was stationed at Pendleton. She met a lot of his friends in "A" Co., including Sgt. Mikulich. After the war, he related to Mom some of the horrific details about the fate that befell these men. I guess he had to tell someone. He also wrote a detailed journal about some of the members of "A" company, and what happened to them on Iwo. Mom said that for years after the war she would wake up alone at night, and Dad would be in the basement crying.

Some of Dad's memories of Iwo were funny, some were sad, some were very disturbing, but they were all fascinating. Here's one of the more humorous ones. Funny now, but probably not so funny on the morning of 19 Feb. 1945. How Sgt. Boosinger "lost" his machine-gun during the landing and was tasked with finding another one.

And when he found an abandoned machine gun near a Japanese pillbox, it had his name, Richard, neatly painted on the side!!

The following transcripts are from a radio program that aired 28 March, 1945, in Youngstown and Cleveland, Ohio. It featured eight men from the area who had been serving on Iwo. Dad was one of them. They had some trouble spelling his name, but you will get the intent of the story.

I think FMDA readers will enjoy it. Especially the poem, which I have never seen re-printed anywhere.

Five Minute Narrative by Marine Sgt. E.C. Schaffer, NCO in Charge

From: Marine Corps Combat Correspondent Dispatches

Marines Mentioned in Script: Sgt. Richard C. Boosinger, 465 West Ravenwood Ave., Youngstown, Ohio
Pfc. David L. Shuker, Pfc. Clyde Sieber, Corporal Kelly, Pfc. Bracho, Pfc. Ralph Griffith, Lt. Diggory Vann

Poem: by Marine Sgt. E.C. Schaffer, USMC, Youngstown, Ohio, NCO in Charge

Produced by Sgt. E.C. Schaffer for Radio Station WFXJ, Youngstown, Ohio on March 29, 1945

Time on air: 4:30 WXBN- 1:45 Tuesday; WFKJ- 4:30 Wednesday; WRRN-4:15 Thursday; WRRN 12:45 Friday

Music: MARINE HYMN..UP FULL TO ESTABLISH..THEN UNDER AS:

Announcer: From the halls of Montazuma to the Shores of Tripoli! From Guadalcanal to the Gilberts...

From Guam to Iwo Jima! Wherever the fighting's the thickest,... that's where their bound to be...

FOR THEY ARE YOUR FIGHTING LEATHERNECKS. Yes...today we bring you another in our series of programs about you men and women in the service...bring you facts, stories, history behind the proudest fighting service of them all. And here at the microphone is your own Leatherneck Reporter, Sgt. E.C. Schaffer of the United States Marines.



Sgt: Thank you, Mr. Fredericks, and hello everyone. You know...probably no Marine who landed at Iwo Jima had a more helpless feeling than Sgt Richard C. Boosinger of 465 West Ravenwood Ave., Youngstown. Ohio... for according to Staff Sgt. Henry Giniger, a Marine Corps combat correspondent, young Boosinger, who landed with the First Battalion, 27th Marines, found himself in a very unenviable position of being behind a machine gun section leader, WITHOUT A MACHINE GUN! Yes... despite mortar fire, artillery fire, and small

arms screaming about his head, keeping the breath of death always close, Boosinger inched his way between the beach and the first airfield they had taken from the Japs... to find an abandoned machine gun near a blasted Japanese pillbox. Was it fate that gave him a savior... or was it co-incident that on the side of the gun was his name ...neatly painted ..."Richard". Well, Richard C. Boosinger, Marine Sergeant, brought his gun into position despite the broken up terrain, and all but put his gun into the openings of caves and pillboxes to stop the Japs, dead.

So to all those boys who fought on Iwo Jima, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Marine Divisions.. and the famous 27th Regiment of the 5th... I want to dedicate this small poem in tribute...

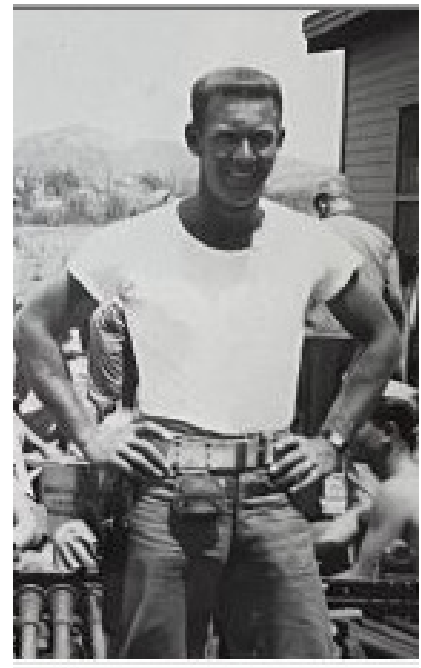
Ode to Iwo Jima

*T'was at Iwo Jima, as I can remember
By the light of the dawn we could see
That the nips had a hold and were opening fire
As we headed straight into the quay
But according of plan and to the last man
They crouched. Laughed over each wave.
I heard one curse as a mortar burst.
The waters closed over his gravel
Through whine and smell of danger and hell...
The ramps of the boats hit the beach.
Our boys as one swarmed over these sands...
With their bolts closing over the breach.
Through sand and smoke... volcanic drug,,,
A forty-five coughed...spat red.
There was death in the hills, each time one
squeezed...
For the lad next to 'Jim' fell dead.
Oh the battle was rough. Our boys were tough.
The 3rd and the 4th held their ground...
As they fired and squeezed shot after shot...
And many's the dead japs that they found.
Yes... the 5th Marines were in for this prey..
They slept through the sleepless light...
And their throats were cut by nips sneakin' in....
As the shadows moved deep through the night.
And if that wasn't bad, shoes that they had*

*Were worn to the soles of their feet.
The battle raging hot ..through those perilous
times...
Got Bill...and Kelly ..then Pete...
As they stormed up the slopes through a hail of
lead...
Relentlessly fought against odds.
And they knew that victory for Iwo Jima...
Now lay in the hands of God.
Yes.. on Mt. Suribashi, they raised our flag...
They put her on high in the sun.
They left her a symbol the U.S. Marines
Once more did a job...well done.
For to pay the price that a campaign costs...
The leathernecks have paid it before
If the surf ran high when the Leathernecks came...
Jap dead now swamp the shore.
For Marine engineers, oh let it be said...
The impossible immediately do...
For B-29's now land on the strip...
Smashing Tokyo to give her just dues
Yes...Iwo Jima... that's a spot we'll remember...
Where by the light of the dawn we can see...
That it wasn't so tough in our own back yard...
For they were fighting for you ..for you.. and for
me.*

MUSIC: MARINE HYMN .. UP FULL TO ESTABLISH... THEN UNDER AS ...
ANNOUNCER: Thank you Sgt. Schaffer, for that mighty fine tribute. Yes,
Ladies and Gentlemen, you have just heard another in our series of
broadcasts about your Fighting Marines, brought to you as a Public
Service Feature of Radio Station WFXJ. Be sure to listen again when we
will bring you Sgt. E.C. Schaffer, with more facts, more stories behind
the proudest fighting service of them all, the United States Marines.
Some of the material contained in this broadcast was gathered from
Marine Corps Combat Correspondent Dispatches. Your announcer was
.....

MUSIC: UP AND OUT ...



The U.S.O. Show - by LtCol Art Sifuentes USMC (ret)

Another Tale of the Lighter Side of Vietnam



Airbase Phu Bai, Vietnam in the '60s was not a major military airfield as compared to the huge Marble Mountain or Danang airfields. It housed a small Army Recon aircraft squadron and a Marine Medium Helicopter squadron.

To that end, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 operated its UH-34D Sikorsky helicopters in support of northern I-Corps area operations up to the DMZ.

Being a small base, it was not graced with the big name USO shows that one often saw on TV back in the United States with

all the movie stars, gorgeous starlets and comedians. We were lucky enough to get an occasional two or three-person small-time acts. Don't get me wrong, they were very welcome at any time to give a bit of respite to our aircrews, especially when ladies were included in the entertainment.

So, on this particular day, to the best of my recollection in late '66-mid-67, we welcomed a three-person troupe consisting of a man, his wife and another very attractive and well-endowed lady. Their routine was the normal sing and dance from the couple and a dancing/gymnastic routine by the lady....heartily enjoyed by all.

For whatever reason, it was deemed the troupe would be spending the night at our squadron area and transported to their next destination the next day. Arrangements were made for the troupe's accommodations to share one end of the Chaplain's "hootch" (hard-back tent) quarters regularly occupied by the Chaplain and a squadron pilot (whom we shall name "John"). The hootch also doubled for religious services, so room was not an issue. The Chaplain and John would displace for the evening to the far end of the hootch with a blanket separating the military/uso occupants for propriety and privacy. As usual, for each hootch, there was the normal, very confined sand-bag bunker at the entrance hootch for protection in the event of a mortar or rocket attack, bunkers were limited in height and area to no more than about 6'x6' and 3' in height.

With that said, be it known that John was a smoker and never far from his lighter and pack of cigarettes.... as evidently was the evening guest "troupe dancer". Did I mention she was a very healthy looking lady in all respects?At any rate, all was well in the compound until the base came under mortar attack in the wee hours of the morning. At the sound of the first explosion all scrambled to get to their assigned bunkers, ie. the Chaplain, John and our guests.



Now, unbeknownst to all occupants, the “gymnast/dancer” and John both slept sans-pajamas or other night-time apparel, and sometime during the attack, safely in their bunker, John and the dancer/gymnast underwent an urge for a cigarette. Keep in mind it was absolutely pitch black, especially in the bunker, literally you could not see your hand in front of your face.



Notwithstanding the attack on the flight line, all was calm and collected in the bunker. It is unknown which of the smokers had neglected to grab their cigarette lighter enroute to the bunker. Nonetheless, once the request for a light was granted and the bic was flicked, the calm atmosphere in the bunker changed with cries of embarrassment, flailing of arms and hands at attempted chivalry and modesty to cover up, and outright embarrassment ensued, notwithstanding what the poor chaplain’s mind was going through at this point.. Needless to say, no more bics were flicked in the bunker and awkward, but good order was later restored following the mortar attack. Needless to say, the casualties were a few damaged aircraft, egos, and modesty. This story made the Stars and Stripes later prior to our end of tour. ❖

TRIBUTE OF HONOR

MEMORIAL HONOREE



Gunnery Sergeant

RONNY L. JENNINGS

Vietnam

8511- Drill Instructor

(Honored by Alfred W Jennings, father)



TRIBUTE OF HONOR

MEMORIAL HONOREE



CLYDE M. GRIFFITH

Iwo Jima -WIA

PFC E-2-27

(Honored by Susan Griffith Mello,
daughter,)



Lt Colonel Tom M Trotti, USMC

5th Division - BN Commander 3/26, KIA Iwo Jima

LtCol Tom M Trotti trained his battalion for over one year at Camp Pendleton and Camp Tarawa in Hawaii. He was KIA during the early days of the battle for Iwo Jima. Like so many, he died at a young age ... all are deserving of our memories and honors.



Tom was from a very patriotic family in Chesterfield, S.C. Displaying leadership from a very young age, he was President of his high school class and was a three sport letterman.

He subsequently graduated from the Citadel (Military College of South Carolina) where he was always a class leader, culminating in his assignment as one of two Battalion Commanders and in his receipt of the school's top leadership awards at graduation ... The Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award - recognizing a noble and unselfish life, devoted to the service of his fellow men as well as a love for others, self-sacrificing devotion, helpfulness and service ... and also his receipt of the General William Moultrie saber awarded to the member of the Citadel graduating class who is judged to have shown the greatest degree of leadership, military proficiency, and soldierly deportment. He had wanted to be a doctor like his father but found his true calling was to lead Marines.

After graduation from the Citadel and completion of Marine Officer Basic School, he was assigned as XO of the Marine Detachment aboard USS Savannah (CL-42). This was followed by several leadership assignments with the 5th Marine Regiment in Quantico, VA. He then completed training in Jacksonville FL and Lakehurst NJ to become qualified as a combat diver and Marine parachutist. He then assumed leadership roles with the 1st Marine Parachute Regiment at Camp Pendleton CA followed by his assignment as XO of the Marine Parachute School in San Diego.

LtCol Trotti next assumed command of 3RD Battalion 26th Regiment 5th Division (3/26/5) in January 1944. After a long training period, 3/26/5 deployed from San Diego 22 July enroute to be the reserve regiment for the invasion of Guam. They were not required for that campaign and proceeded to their next training site in Hawaii. LtCol Trotti was briefly detached to the 4th Marines in Guam to participate in the Guam landings in a training role and spent 15 days there participating in combat patrols on that island in preparation for his battalion leadership role on Iwo Jima. While on Guam he was interviewed by a combat correspondent who quoted him as saying "If anyone in America doesn't know what we are fighting for, they could easily see it in the happy faces of these Guamanian natives."



Upon rejoining his command in Hawaii he led them in training until they deployed to Iwo Jima in January 1945. He led his battalion during the landing and during the initial days of the battle. While at the front line on 22 February 1945 with

Trotti ironically pointing to almost the exact point on Iwo Jima where he was KIA



his Operations Officer, Major William Day, both were KIA by mortar fire. LtCol Trotti was posthumously awarded the Legion of Merit.

In remarks at his funeral, General Charles Summerall (President of the Citadel and a former Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army) said of LtCol Trotti "He was one of the finest young men who attended the Citadel during my Presidency. The loss to his country and the Marine Corps is irreparable." As a true leader and Marine, Tom would have said that these memorable sentiments would apply to all of those lost at Iwo Jima. Tom's Citadel ring is proudly displayed in the Citadel museum.

This remembrance of Tom was written in memory of my mother, Jeannette Trotti Werthmuller, who was married to Tom from 20 August 1940 until he was KIA on Iwo Jima 22 February 1945. ❖ Roy "Skip" Werthmuller Jr, Captain USN(ret)



Christmas 1944 in Hawaii – Men of the 3/26



**TRIBUTE OF HONOR
MEMORIAL HONOREE**



JEANETTE TROTTI WERTHMULLER

**WIDOW OF LTC TOM TROTTI, USMC
CO 3/26/5 KIA IWO JIMA**

**WIDOW OF CAPT ROY WERTHMULLER, SR, USN
CAREER SUBMARINE OFFICER & WWII SUB XO**

(HONORED BY SKIP WERTHMULLER)

**TRIBUTE OF HONOR
MEMORIAL HONOREE**



CAPT USN Roy Werthmuller, Sr

**Career Submarine Officer
XO USS Torsk (SS-423)/ Silver Star
USS Torsk sank the last 2 Japanese combatants
In WWII**

Monument Ship in Baltimore, MD

(Honored by Skip Werthmuller)

D-Day Squadron Young Historians Program

Interview of Ken Brown by Michael Naya on 7/10/22



My name is Kenneth John Brown and I was born on November 5, 1923 in Idaho. As a boy I grew up on a farm and everyone was poor in those days. Everybody struggled to have an existence and farming didn't pay very much, we got by with what we produced, it was the depression era. As a boy I went to a one room school house before attending high

school with about four hundred students from the county. I graduated from high school in 1940 and I went to a government high school and took classes where I became a certified aircraft sheet metal worker. I was all set to go to Seattle before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

When Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941 I had recently had an appendectomy and that was before they had penicillin, I almost died so I was laid up that year. When Pearl Harbor was attacked we all asked where Pearl Harbor was? We never heard of it. We all anticipated that war would come sooner or later. We had no idea that the Japanese would do such a thing, we figured we'd go to war with Europe but never Japan.

I enlisted in the military just after I turned twenty-one. I was considered 4-F for a while during the war since I was recovering from my illness. I was put into 1A after a while and that meant I would be drafted soon. Instead of being drafted my buddies and I decided to join the Navy. We boarded a train to go to Camp Farragut which was a training station in Idaho near the Canadian border. The train stopped in Boise, Idaho where we enlisted on paper. There were five-hundred recruits on that train and they called thirty of our names and told us to go stand on the platform. After we stepped off the train and onto the platform the train started to pull away.

We wondered what was going on and a jeep pulled up and out came a Marine. We eyed his nice uniform and I admired the Marine Corps dress uniform. He said congratulations you men have volunteered to join the United States Marine Corps. We learned that the Corps were a part of the Navy so instead of going to Navy training I went to San Diego where I did my training. After boot camp, we were sent to Camp Pendleton, CA and from there we were all recruits assigned to rifle companies and I ended up in a machine gun platoon. We didn't know

where we were going but we knew we were going to the Pacific to attack an island.

I was at Camp Pendleton and we were under heavy training. We were training with tanks, machine guns, you would have to run, set up the machine gun and it was tenuous but we could handle things like that.

I got what they used to call a Dear John letter while in training. A Dear John is a letter that a girlfriend would send her boyfriend telling them off and that they were finished. My girlfriend wrote me a letter after waiting two months but she ended up marrying another fellow. I couldn't eat or sleep and I realized it was hard to keep up with the job and I asked the CO if I could go see a Chaplain. Each regiment in the Marines had a chaplain and a battalion and a division. The regiments each had a chaplain so I asked to see the chaplain.

In 1945, we kind of landed on Saipan but it was the cleanup of there so I didn't see any action there. We had undergone intense training and we knew that we were going to invade an island but we didn't know which one. The Japanese had captured most of the American outpost in the Pacific and they were island hopping and they had just captured Saipan which was about a thousand miles from Japan. They knew by then that the only way to beat Japan was to attack the home islands. They knew it would be a terrible loss of life since the Japanese were a fanatical group. They believed that their emperor would never let an enemy step foot on a Japanese held island. They had their Army, Navy and civilians brainwashed to believe they were better off dying than let a foreign invader step on their land.

Right between Saipan and Japan there was this little island called Iwo Jima. The Japanese had three airstrips on this island and our bombers were flying over. The American's couldn't have fighters flying over since the fighters couldn't make it that far on the fuel they had. Our bombers were being slaughtered from the Japanese airstrip below. Our bombers had a very difficult time making it there and back and the Marines knew we had to take this island before advancing on Japan.

I was a part of the 5th Marine Division, headquarters battalion, and I should mention one other thing but in the Marines there is no such thing as a non combatant Marine. It is not like the Army or Navy where they have chaplains, medics, cooks who don't see combat. I trained with the Marines and was with a replacement unit when we invaded. I was chosen to be division Chaplain Assistant.

You have to understand that Iwo Jima was five-hundred miles off Tokyo and the fighter planes were knocking our planes out. We didn't know what was going on but back in the U.S. they were preparing the atomic bomb for the defeat of Japan. They could not fly a bomb over to Japan if there was any fear of it being shot down, Iwo Jima was on the path to Tinian where the bomber was going to take off to bomb Japan. Well we took the island, went ashore to Iwo Jima.

First of all Iwo Jima had the highest percent of casualties of any battle of the second World War. More Marines were killed at Iwo Jima than any of the other battles they fought in. The island was eight square miles and seven-thousand marines were killed, about 1,000 men for each mile. The reason it was so hard to fight at Iwo was because the Japanese knew the island would be invaded. They had sent their best men and best engineers to defend the island and make these tunnels. These tunnels were made from the top of Mount Suribachi and they had run these side chutes going out, every inch of the island covered by machine gun and motor fire. We did not fight on Iwo Jima, we fought in Iwo Jima! The bombers hardly killed any Japanese since they were all under the ground.

The Japanese waited until the men had all gone ashore and machine gunned them. I went on Iwo Jima on D-Day plus 1 with medical cases since the medics had been overwhelmed the first day. They gave me U3 bags which had morphine, bandages, and supplies to treat the wounded. When I went ashore it looked like everyone had been killed. Dead were lying all over the beach and they had no way of taking care of them due to the gunfire. When I went ashore they saw I had a bag with the red cross on it and one of the Marines yelled "help!" For the first few days we helped the medics carry stretchers, give morphine, and do all we could to help the wounded. After that time my unit was called to be a replacement unit so I was sent up to the line with a replacement company for six or seven days.

They knew I was a machine gunner and we could only move a little bit at a time and we were taking casualties and we had a ridge to take and we took it on the seventh or eight day. When we had tried to advance and the Japanese were firing down on us. Our commander told us we would take the hill the next morning, we sat around writing letters home saying everything was fine so our families didn't worry. As we were doing that a runner came up and asked "you have a chaplain assistant named Brown?" I said "yeah" and my replacement replaced me and I was sent to assist on burial detail with the Chaplain to process and bury the dead. That was an ordeal, it wasn't pleasant but it had to be done. We took a jeep to bring the bodies, the

Chaplain identified them, put them in a shroud, placed them in the ground properly identified and the bulldozer would cover the bodies with dirt.

I was a survivor on Iwo Jima. Iwo Jima had thirty-seven percent casualties and I was one of the few to make it off uninjured. It is quite a thing to be known as an Iwo Jima survivor.

After Iwo Jima after we had taken the island my division was completely wiped out and I was transferred to the 2nd Marine Division who had been training in Hawaii ready to invade Japan. We were on ship ready to invade the island of Kyushu and we knew that would probably be the end since the Japanese had the coastline defended well and their civilians were armed too. As we were on our way to invade they dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and we pulled into port near where the bomb had been dropped on Nagasaki. I was one of the first people to enter Nagasaki after it had been bombed, the fires were still burning, Nagasaki looked like a plowed field, structures melted down, it was pretty much destroyed. Of course the civilian population was wiped out. I don't think we had any business going in there and we didn't know about radioactivity. I spent about a year in Japan on occupation duty. We were involved with going out and finding airmen who had been shot down over Japan. The Japanese had taken care of the killed Americans and we had to find the graves, exhume them and send them home. That is how I spent my time in the service before returning home.

I saw some of the worst things in the war, what the Japanese can do to the Americans and what the Americans can do back. I came home weighing 145 pounds, they issued me a dress uniform which I still have. That was the war for this old Marine.

After the war, I served as a missionary for my church and with the GI Bill I went to college afterwards, found a beautiful girl, married her, started school, got a bachelors, masters degree and I went to teaching school and I taught religion classes on a college level. When I was forty I got a PHD and I have a doctorate in Religious Education, I taught for forty years including sociology and religion. I have led a fantastic life.

I am proud to be a Marine.

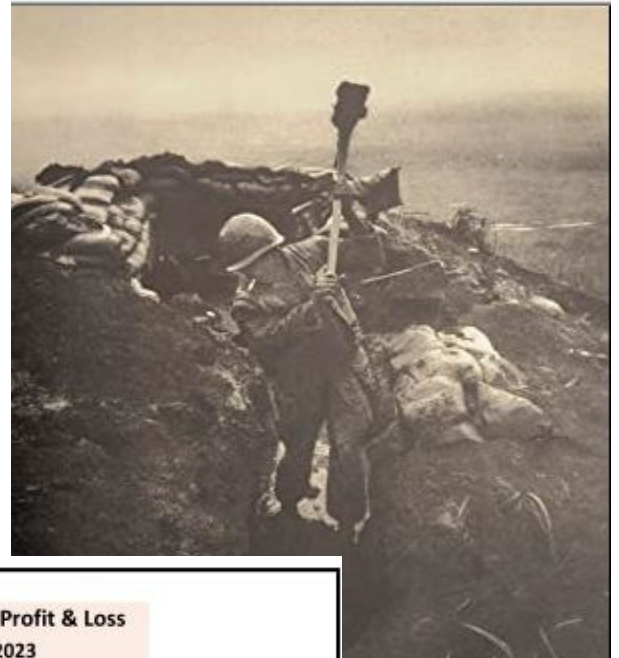




How to pronounce Camp Lejeune – It’s a matter of respect!

Scour Marine Corps history, and you'd be hard-pressed to find a tougher, more accomplished Marine than **General John Archer Lejeune**. He fought in World War I and later, as the 13th commandant, he rescued the Marine Corps from losing its ability to fight on both land and at sea, establishing USMC's identity as an amphibious force - a real Marine's Marine.

In 1941, Camp Lejeune, the largest Marine Corps base, was named in his honor. Lejeune's ancestors from Southern Louisiana, and his descendants always pronounced their name as 'Luh-jern.' There is no 'R' in Lejeune but there is no 'R' in 'colonel' and yet we pronounce it 'cur-nel' not 'col-onel.' Ultimately it's about respect for the General, his family, and for Corps' traditions and history. ❖



FMDA Financial Activity 2023 As of 6-7-2023

Assets

Cash		
Chase Checking	14,427.07	
Chase Savings	4,001.29	
Total Cash	18,428.36	18,428.36
Total Assets		18,428.36

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	0.00	
Total Liabilities	0.00	0.00

Net Worth 18,428.36

FMDA Profit & Loss 2023 As of 6-7-2023

Income

Reunion Donations	-	
Reunion Registrations	-	
Fundraising Projects	26.55	
Donations	6,039.25	
Membership Dues	1,275.00	
Interest Income	0.38	
Gross Income	7,341.18	

Expenses

Bank Fees	-	
Reunion Expenses	-	
Misc Expense	(178.48)	
Fundraising Projects	-	
Fed & State Fees	(110.00)	
Office Supplies	(18.00)	
PO Box Rental	(296.00)	
Postage	(1,006.80)	
Printing	(3,818.77)	
Database Update	-	
Website Develop	-	
Total Expenses	(5,428.05)	

Net Income 1,913.13

FMDA
Finances
through
June 2022

Financials
prepared by Tom
Huffhines,
Reunion
Chairman, and
Doug Meny, CPA
and Treasurer..

Tribute from a Friend: to Don Simpson

by Valerie Leman, daughter of Craig B. Leman

Craig B. Leman (H-3-26; 1923-2014) offered lifelong tributes to his Marine colleagues, and one such example follows here. Leman was a 19-year-old volunteer who left the service in 1946 as a 2d lieutenant who fought in the Battle of Iwo Jima and trained at Camp Tarawa on the Big Island of Hawaii, to serve in the occupation forces in Japan and Palau. Following the war, Leman became an active member of the FMDA and enjoyed contributing to the *Spearhead*.



Ten days after landing on Iwo Jima's Red Beach 2, where Leman served as leader of a shore party platoon, he was sent to the combat unit H Company, Third Battalion, 26th Regiment, as a replacement officer. His platoon had lost 23 of its 45 men, including the leader and all but one of its 13 non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Among the remaining Marines, several particularly stood out in his esteem, including Don Simpson, a former parachutist from Ohio who was the flamethrower in the platoon. Another outstanding Marine was Gene Frost from Michigan, a Solomons veteran who was always up front. Frost was one of the 3 out of 47 in the unit who lasted the full 31 days of the campaign unscathed.

Many years later, after Simpson and his wife had lived out their lives on the family farm in Ohio, Leman sent their friends and family a written tribute that described their common Marine experience, which included a particularly terrific cave explosion. Excerpts of that tribute follow, as an example of the deep bonds formed during wartime. Upon his assignment to the depleted first platoon, Leman met Simpson, a member of the assault squad attached (consisting of Marines with specialized training in demolitions, flamethrowers, and bazookas). Also attached to the first platoon were machine gun and mortar squads. For the next four nights, Leman and Simpson occupied foxholes next to each other in the front line on the northern end of the island.

Leman later told Simpson's family, "All the Marines I met in the next five days made a strong



impression on me, and the assault squad was outstanding. The squad leader (Corporal Clyde Anthony from Oklahoma) had been in the Second Raider Battalion in the Solomon Islands, so everyone called him "Gung Ho". He was a short quiet man who seemed quite old to me (he was probably about 30). Don shared his foxhole with Ken Hoerl, a tall, strong Marine from Wisconsin; I think they had gone through jump school together and then served in the First Parachute Battalion in the Solomons.

"During my first four days with the platoon, we were pinned down in our foxholes most of the time, exchanging rifle, machine- gun, and mortar fire with the Japanese in their caves and pill boxes a few yards from us. Every day our tanks came up to help us and, together, we tried to move forward, but enemy fire from hidden positions was too strong. The ground here was hot from volcanic action, so that we had to make do with shallow foxholes. Deeper than two feet down, the earth was too hot to bear till it had been exposed to air for a couple of hours, when we could dig down another two inches or so. The heat did keep us warm at night and cooked our C-rations so we had hot food. It rained some nearly every day. Sometimes enemy fire was heavy. We had grenade fights every night as the Japanese tried to sneak through our barbed wire barriers.

“During our fifth night, word came by radio that we were to attack at dawn without the usual artillery bombardment (to which the Japanese responded by going underground in caves, returning to their surface fortifications as soon as the bombardment stopped). In the middle of the dark night, I passed this word to Don who passed it on to the rest of our platoon. At first light we silently rose from our foxholes and stalked into the rough high-ground just in front of us till our point man saw a Japanese soldier, sitting up, asleep. He shot the sleeping sentry; seconds later Japanese soldiers rushed out of hidden cave-entrances a few feet ahead of us and began throwing hand grenades and shooting at us.

“Our rifle squads, led by Don’s fellow parachutists Gene Frost, Fred Sisk, and Nick Hernandez, fought back. We quickly figured out that there were two entrances, about ten yards apart, to a big cave. Don’s assault squad blasted one entrance with a bazooka, flamethrower, TNT, and grenades, and our rifle squads hit the Japanese with grenades as they ran out the other entrance. Our captain sent up an armored half-track with a heavy 75 mm cannon to help us.

“In the next few minutes of intense fighting, our unit killed all the Japanese in the area, evacuated our own wounded, and was ready to move forward. I was standing a few feet from the big cave, and Don was perhaps fifteen yards from it. Suddenly I heard and felt a terrific explosion—the loudest noise I have ever heard. I turned around and saw the hillock, where the cave had been, rise up in the air like a huge column of brown rocks and dirt and then fan out like a giant mushroom and begin to descend to earth.



I was so close that the biggest rocks (some were the size of a jeep) went over my head, while the smaller stones, dirt, and dust began to fall on me. I hit the deck, with my carbine and radio beneath me, and began to feel buried. As the debris continued to fall, I managed to push up my body to keep an air pocket around my face, freed myself, and stood up. There was a huge hole where the cave had been. A few men from my platoon were still on their feet, dazed and reeling, like me, while the rest were buried in the thick carpet of debris that had fallen on them.

“Although my radio’s aerial was bent, I was able to tell our captain what had happened and asked him to send up everybody he could with stretchers and tools to dig our men out. He ordered me to organize the survivors into a defensive line in case the Japanese counterattacked. I did so, and then helped the rescue party dig out the survivors. I remember finding Don half-buried, semi-conscious, hurting, but not complaining. He had sustained injuries to his neck and shoulder from falling rocks and was evacuated. (For more on this cave explosion see the following oral history interview at <https://www.pritzkermilitary.org> Scroll down to “Search the Site” and enter “Craig Leman”.)

“The survivors of our platoon then pushed ahead about 500 yards till we encountered strong Japanese resistance and dug in for the night. Sisk and Hernandez were both killed here, and Anthony was wounded; of Don’s closest friends, only Frost was still on his feet and made it through the rest of the campaign. Ray Bartling and Milton Buhrig were the other intact survivors of first platoon. I was hit that day, was hospitalized on Iwo and flown to Guam where I spent about two more weeks in a hospital.

My memory is a little hazy here, but I believe I met Don again on Guam, just after each of us got out of the hospital, that we congratulated each other on being alive, and that we rode back to Hawaii on a British aircraft carrier (HMS Reaper) which was being used to ferry fighter planes to forward bases around Japan. First Lieutenant Gerald Averill, executive officer of H Company who had been wounded before I joined the outfit, was with us on the Reaper. We three returned to Camp Tarawa and greeted the survivors of H Company

(including Frost) when they got back in April just after President Roosevelt died.

“Although Don, Frost, Averill and the rest of us survivors were beat-up, tired, and not too happy, the Marine Corps still had a war to finish, and we turned to the task of invading Japan. Only eight original members of first platoon, plus a few strong replacements that had joined us on Iwo, were still with us... (“Leman chose Frost and Simpson to be squad leaders. Leman’s 2011 memoir, available online, *A Marine Goes To War in the Battle of Iwo Jima*, recounts that “They performed splendidly.”) Late in July 1945, I was asked to recommend candidates for officer training. I thought that these two superb Marines (who happened to have wives back in the States) would be excellent officers. I hated to give up two experienced squad leaders, since we were scheduled to lead the attack on Japan, and we needed their skills. I took them aside and told them of this opportunity (which would send them back to Quantico, Virginia and spare them the deadly risks of invading Japan's homeland). They asked for a day to think it over. Next day they told me that they would stay with their squads and go to Japan with the rest of us.”

Leman explained to Simpson’s family, “One thing we never talked about was our immediate future. We all knew that the Japanese were going to fight to the death for their homeland, that we were going to land on a heavily defended, fortified beach, and that our platoon had had 90+% casualties in 36 days at Iwo. When the A-Bombs destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the war ended. We sailed to Japan and peacefully occupied the city of Sasebo on Kyushu. Because Don and Frost had had combat with the First Parachute Battalion at Vella Lavella and Bougainville in the Solomon Islands, they had earned the right to go home early, leaving their squads to younger leaders. I was promoted to Battalion Operations officer. We confiscated all the Japanese weapons. I sent samurai swords to Don, Frost, and Averill, shipping them from Japan in hand-crafted wooden boxes.”

Over the years, Leman kept in touch with Simpson and Frost. Simpson and Leman both attended the events in Tokyo in 1985 that commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Iwo landing.

On the island, they spent much of the day “trying to find the site of the shoot-out and explosion that almost did us in. No dice; too much vegetation had grown up, and there were thickets, instead of the bare, blasted, burned-over rocks we remembered.”

In 2013, Leman talked to Simpson the day before Simpson’s death, and later remembered him as a “strong, courageous, honest, loyal friend, a loving, caring husband to Martha, and a parent who was proud of their children.” ❖



(Above: Marines of 1st Platoon, How Company, during a Thanksgiving Day beer bash at Camp Tarawa, Hawaii in 1944. Nick Hernandez is standing at left. His best friend was Cpl. Ben Parra, standing second from right. (Below: Craig Leman, Clarence Louviere KIA, Robert Lowell KIA. 12/30/44 in Hawaii before shipping out to Iwo)



Marine War Photographer Bill Genaust



Sergeant Bill Genaust, USMC movie photographer, takes a rest and smoke Iwo Jima

The iconic black and white photo of raising the flag on top of Mount Suribachi was taken on the fourth day of intensive fighting. AP photographer Joe Rosenthal and Sergeant William (Bill) Genaust stood next to each other as they captured history. Genaust used his 16mm moving picture with color film to capture the video of the raising of the second flag. This film was later to be used for years as a sign off for TV stations around the U.S. The frame by frame of his famous motion picture proved doubters that Rosenthal's still shot was not staged.

Before Genaust went to Iwo Jima, he served as a combat photographer in Saipan. On July 9, 1944, Genaust put away his camera and grabbed a rifle. A tank had notified him and fellow combat photographer Howard McClue that they were desperate for infantryman. As they pressed on to find the Japanese soldiers, their tank ran over a landmine and was rendered useless. They continued to pursue the enemy, attacking and killing 12 Japanese soldiers who were holed up in houses. As more infantry reinforcements showed up, they returned to the base to turn in their film. They were ambushed by 15 Japanese soldiers from 200 yards away.

Genaust later wrote to McClue's wife: "We hit the deck and sought what cover we could — Howard on my right. We knocked down several of them on their way down the slope and the rest of them sought shelter and firing positions behind some rocks and 50 or 75 yards in front of us. I was so busy for a while that I didn't notice the withdrawal of Howard who had gone to get help for us. In about 30 or 45 minutes, I saw Howard coming in on the right, leading a group of Marines he had picked up." Genaust was nominated for the Navy Cross but was denied because cameramen couldn't receive awards for combat.

He disappeared on Iwo Jima's Hill 362A after entering a cave to illuminate it with his camera light for Marines searching for the enemy. His remains have yet to be found ❖

Write Your Congressman

The Fifth Marine Division Association fully supports the United States Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association's drive to name a U.S. Navy Warship the USS Joe Rosenthal. Sign the petition at www.USSJoe.org and write your Congressman. This amazingly skilled, as well as lucky, AP photograph who fought alongside Marines, carrying only a camera, certainly deserves to be so honored. Only the Secretary of the Navy can make this happen. Congressmen need to do their part to make sure the naming becomes a reality. ❖





Rosenthal's Own Story

Perhaps no Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph is better known than Joe Rosenthal's picture of six U.S. Marines raising the American flag on Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima. It was taken on Friday, Feb. 23, 1945, five days after the Marines landed on the island. The Associated Press, Rosenthal's employer, transmitted the picture to member newspapers 17½ hours later, and it made the front pages of many Sunday papers.

The 7th war-bond poster was inspired by Rosenthal's prize-winning photo.

The photo was the centerpiece of the 7th war-bond poster that helped raise \$26 billion in 1945. On July 11, before the war had ended, it appeared on a United States postage stamp. Nine years later it became the model for the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va.

Normally, the Pulitzer Prize Board considers journalism published in the previous calendar year for the prizes. It made an exception for Rosenthal's picture, awarding it the 1945 prize for Photography a little over two months after it was taken.

The endless citations which have been made in connection with the flag-raising picture — in Congress, as the basis for the Seventh War Loan drive, as the basis for numerous statue and memorial suggestions — are unprecedented in the history of news pictures."

A member of the AP had transmitted to its members half the 60 pictures Rosenthal made on Iwo Jima. "To the best of my knowledge no news photographer on any assignment before or during this war has achieved such results either in terms of so many newsworthy pictures taken under dangerous conditions, or in terms of consistently high technical quality of the product."

A misunderstanding later led to repeated allegations that the photo had been staged. Sgt. Bill Genaust, who had been with Rosenthal at the time of the flag-raising and made a film of it, was later killed in action. His film proved that Rosenthal had not staged the picture.

Here is Rosenthal's own story about the picture, which the AP put out on March 7, 1945, less than two weeks after the flag-raising.

"See that spot of red on the mountainside?" the boss'n shouted above the noise of our landing craft nearing the shore at the base of Suribachi Yama.

"A group of Marines is climbing up to plant our flag up there. I heard it from the radioman."

He was plenty excited — and so was I.

'This picture has done quite a lot to attract attention of people to what those men were doing out there, and they then want to get more of the story what kind of a battle it was, what their courage and tenacity was and the great losses, great sacrifices,' Rosenthal says here.

The fall of this 560-foot fortress in four days of gallant marine fighting was a great thing. A good story and we should have good pictures.

So in I went, back to more of that slogging thru the deep volcanic ash, warily sidestepping the numerous Japanese mines. On past the culverts where the Japanese dead lay among the wreckage of their own gun positions and up the steep, winding, always sandy trail.

Marine Pvt. Bob Campbell, a San Francisco buddy of mine, and Sgt. Bill Janausk of Tacoma, Wash., were with me and carried firearms for protection (which is disallowed to correspondents).

There was an occasional sharp crack of rifle fire close by and the mountainside had a porcupine appearance of bristling all over, what with machine and anti-aircraft guns peering from the dugouts, foxholes and caves. There were few signs of life from these enemy spots, however. Our men were systematically blowing out these places and we had to be on our toes to keep clear of our own demolition squads.

As the trail became steeper, our panting progress slowed to a few yards at a time. I began to wonder and hope that this was worth the effort, when suddenly over the brow of the topmost ridge we could spy men working with the flagpole they had so laboriously brought up about quarters of an hour ahead of us.

I came up and stood by a few minutes until they were ready to swing the flagpole into position. I crowded back on the inner edge of the volcano's rim, back as far as I could, in order to include all I could into the scene within the angle covered by my camera lens. I rolled up a couple of large stones and a Japanese sandbag to raise my short height clear of an intervening obstruction. I followed up this shot with another of a group of cheering Marines and then I tried to find the four men I heard were the actual instigators of the grand adventure. But they had scattered to their units and I finally gave it up and descended the mountain to get the pictures out and on their way to possible publication.

The way down was quite a bit easier, the path becoming well worn, and men were carrying ammunition, supplies, food and rations necessary for complete occupation of this stronghold.

The Marine history will record Iwo Jima as high as any in their many gallant actions in the Pacific. I have two very vivid memories: The fury of their D-day assault and the thrill of that lofty flag-raising episode. It is hard now in the quiet atmosphere of this advance base to find words for it. The Marines at Iwo Jima were magnificent. ❖

New Members

Annual

Babel, David	Springfield, VA
Bresnahan, Samantha	Marion, GA
Eaves, Jennifer	Houston, TX
Plante, Joe	Torrance, CA
Ross, Pete	Stafford, VA
Treece, J.B. (James)	Midlothian, TX.
Wells, David Benjamin	Pasadena, MD
Yule, Anne	Farmington, MN

Lifetime

Cooke, Alfredo H.	San Antonio, TX
Graves, Tom	Sonoma, CA
Howard, Thomas R.	Hedgesville, VA
Wong, Joseph K.	San Marino, CA

QUOTE ABOUT MARINES: "A Marine is a Marine. There's no such thing as a former Marine. You're a Marine, Just in a different uniform and your're in a different phase of your life. But you'll always be a Marine because you went to Parris Island, San Diego, or the hills of Quantico. There's no such thing as a former Marine"
Gen. James F. Amos

Book on Daughter of Reverend Wachi

by Alfredo Cooke

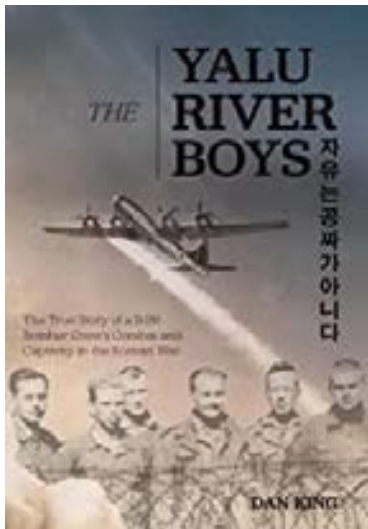


Forgiveness – not only for receiving, but for giving. Forgiving not only between people, but between nations who were bitter enemies. How did a Japanese commander who built the fortress defenses on Iwo Jima meant to destroy the American Marines, end up converting to Catholicism? Read how his daughter converted to Catholicism and then became a pen pal and dear friend of this author, and of his family.

Historically significant, spiritually inspiring, and educational for teaching the importance of “Family”, “Faith”, and “Forgiveness”.

Available NOW from Amazon in paperback \$16.50 or Kindle for \$3.50

This is the first of two books that memorialize the epic battle between two great warring nations and their ferocious and tenacious warriors. It also begins a series of storybooks that embody the tenets of the values that made our country great while emphasizing courage, faith, forgiveness, and love.



Book Review: The Yalu River Boys

by Dan King

Reviewed by John Butler

I have read many accounts of military action but none with as much detailed description of the action and events as this story of the B-29 bombing campaign in North Korea, as well as the ordeal suffered by Americans and UN air crewman and soldiers captured by Chinese and North Korean soldiers during the Korean War.

Motivation for this outstanding book was that Dan King's father was a turret gunner on a B-29 that was shot down on April 12th 1951 and survived a parachute jump into enemy territory. What followed was over two years of harsh North Korean & Chinese POW camps before he was released in the POW swap that capped the negotiated end of combat in Korea in September 1953.

Although this is most interesting personal story of Dan King's father and his enlistment in the then brand new US Air Force through deployment to Okinawa and assignment as a B-29 crewman until his return home, we will learn much about the Air Force in the early years, the B-29 and their role in the Korean war, and what it was like to endure captivity by Chinese & North Koreans.

In summary: This is a book not to be missed by anyone interested in military history or just curious about an unfortunately forgotten war and time in our nation's history. The book is available on Amazon and I am sure will be available at our San Antonio reunion hospitality room. Don't fail to buy and read it. Also signed copies available at <https://historicalconsulting.com/>

How Tootsie Rolls saved Marines during the Korean War

By Ray Elliott - <https://www.talespress.com/blog/>



Imagine my surprise when I opened my mail box recently and saw a slender package more than a foot long like a mortar round. I was surprised further when I opened the package and saw that it was 12 ounces of Tootsie Rolls in a “candy bank.” Then I realized it had to do with the story of the candy and the First Marine Division. It’s quite a memorable tale of woe that turns out to be a tale of wow during the Korean War—often called “the forgotten war.”

At the Chosin Reservoir in the winter of 1950, the First Marine Division and other units survived 17 days of sub-zero temperatures of more than 30 degrees below zero. Everything froze. The Americans had almost 18,000 casualties: some 11,000 either killed in action, wounded or missing; and almost 8,000 who suffered from frostbite. The Chinese estimated their casualties at more than 19,000 killed or missing. However, the United Nations estimated that number to be closer to 30,000, with 20,000 non-battle casualties, many of which were frostbite.

Either way, it was a bad time for all those who were there. Besides it being so cold for so long, the Marines

were out of ammunition and had called in for 60mm mortar rounds. The code name for the rounds was “Tootsie Rolls.” When the radio operator received the request, the word is that he didn’t have the code sheets to tell him what “Tootsie Rolls” were. He knew, though, that whatever was being requested was needed quickly. When he called in the order for “Tootsie Rolls,” pallets of the candy started dropping from the sky to many of those in the First Marine Division.

“You can imagine how angry those Marines were when they discovered the Tootsie Rolls,” Chosin Reservoir survivor Jim Brown wrote in the October-November 2020 issue of *The Chosin Few* news digest. “However, all was not lost.” The Marines soon found that by warming the Tootsie Rolls in their mouths or holding them close to their bodies that the candy thawed and could be eaten. For the next few days, the Marines ate Tootsie Rolls because everything else was frozen, and they survived.

The 12 ounces I received didn’t last long, and they were good. It’s a great reminder of how something so innocent, so unwarlike, and so tasty can have such a dramatic effect on something as serious as war and survival. Not only did the Tootsie Rolls help sustain the Marines, but they soon learned that the pliable candy could also be used to plug the bullet holes in their shelters and help keep out some of the cold. It’s not surprising that “many troops credited their very survival to Tootsie Rolls.”



And that’s why Tootsie Roll Industries continues to support *The Chosin Few* as it does. It’s a quid pro quo that has maintained the relationship of these diverse organizations for more than 70 years.

While he appreciates that relationship, the president of The Chosin Few and retired Marine Col. Warren Wiedhahn has something else for consideration about the Korean War. "In my personal opinion, the entire Korean War is not just forgotten," he says with authority, "it's ignored! Sandwiched between the BIG War and Vietnam, it's 'generally' ignored by the public. (Not ignored by the veterans and their families!!!) I'm dedicated to the term: 'Forgotten no more!'"

And Tootsie Rolls are still there to help The Chosin Few be "forgotten no more" and get the word out to the public. Wiedhahn said Ellen Gordon, CEO of Tootsie Roll Industries, asked how to recognize The Chosin Few members, and it was decided that sending candy banks filled with Tootsie Rolls would be a nice gesture.



Wiedhahn also added that she has contributed to the Chosin Few Battle Monument at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., and the new one just dedicated in July at the "Chosin Few" Memorial in the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.

Nor are the families forgotten. One Chosin Few survivor's widow received the Tootsie Rolls and called to thank Wiedhahn. It was Gordon who needed to be thanked, he said, not him. The widow, who is in her 90s and lives in a nursing home, told him, "The Tootsie Rolls were so special and welcome. I've been to many Chosin Few reunions with my husband, but now he's gone. I'm in a wheelchair and

can't travel anymore." He conveyed that story to Gordon in a note, saying, "That touched my heart, as I'm sure it will yours." ❖

Ted Williams = A U.S. Marine

Theodore Samuel Williams was an American professional baseball player and manager. He played his entire 19-year Major League Baseball career, primarily as a left fielder, for the Boston Red Sox from 1939 to 1960; his career was interrupted by military service during World War II and the Korean War.

Williams is regarded as one of the greatest hitters in baseball history He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility. An avid sport fisherman, he hosted a television program about fishing, and was inducted into the IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame. President George H. W. Bush presented Williams with the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his involvement in the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in helping raise millions in dollars for cancer care and research. ❖



"It's a funny thing, but, as years go by, I think you appreciate more and more what a great thing it was to be a Marine... I am a U.S. Marine and I'll be one till I die."



Tales of Past Reunions=

Remembering the 69th FMDA Reunion in 2018 at Urban/Champlain, IL



by Morey Butler –

Past Reunions to be continued

As most of you know Kath Butler is our current *Spearhead News* editor, a position that Tom Huffiness was more than happy to relinquish two years ago. Darn if she didn't give me another assignment to write something comical about attending a 5th Marine Division reunion. So folks here she goes and I can truly say that it weren't funny at the time.

As cajuns like to say, "I garontee dat."

It all started when brother John and I were talked out of our plans to fly with our wives to the 69th annual reunion hosted by Ray Elliott and Vanessa Fourie. I am not going to identify the person, at least by name, who sold us on using AMTRAC services from New Orleans (most often referred to as Nawlins and her home town) to Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, but I will say that she adopted John and I a few years back as her 'lil bros' and she became our 'big sis.'

Her description of traveling by choo choo included viewing beautiful countryside scenery through panoramic windows, enjoying gourmet cajun cuisine, and partying with her and her Iwo Jima sisters in spacious lounge cars. John and I bought it hook, line, and sinker and rushed to get our reservations locked in.

I guess it took the combined brain power of both of us to ask how long did it take to git from Nawlins to Urbana. Sixteen hours on the rails caused us some concern. Neither one of us or our wives were physically capable of sitting or partying for that length of time. So it was another no brainer; we would secure sleeping berths. It made total sense to us since more than half the trip would be at night.

Well, just like military operation plans things started falling apart at the git go. Kath's right knee said no way, and when my wife, Jeanette, found out Kath had

cancelled she said if my sister-in-law is not going I am not either. So that left John and I with two sleeping car paid for at the tune of nearly ten Franklins for his super deluxe sleeper and seven for my just deluxe berth.

The super deluxe sleeper identified two spacious sleeping accommodations, a wash basin, and a commode. My deluxe sleeper was minus the wash basin and the 'private commode.' So it made sense to us to cancel my reservation and he and I agreed to split the cost of his super deluxe sleeper.

When we boarded the train we were taken directly to our sleeper car via motorized cart and a nice young male porter stored our luggage in the adjacent car just behind our sleeper. I noticed that we were the third car in line behind the locomotive that made the whole darn thing go somewhere. Neither John nor I could foresee that being so close behind the puller was akin to being on the front lines in a battle where things get really noisy and irritating. Over the course of the trip we developed some serious animosity towards the individual who had his or her hand on the switch that made the whoo whoo noise that had very few pauses for the entire trip. The whoo whoo's were evidently not only designed to alert motorist that a big bad train was coming down the track, but also alerted four legged critters to git clear now and run for your life. Removing our hearing aids did not help one (censured) bit.

When the porter escorted us into our sleeper John and I were immediately overcome on how cozy it was. My personal view was that there was just enough space to accommodate two sumo wrestlers and a chihuahua. A washbasin the size of my dogs metal water bowl, a commode that was designed for midgets, and a lower and upper bunk were uniquely engineered to fit into about 50 square feet of living space. From a space saving effort we were both impressed but further examination of our sleeping berths gave cause for concern. Each mattress was about two inches thick and didn't look very fluffy. The pillow in each bunk was the same thickness with calcified chunks of something sewn into it.

It was obvious that John, being the eldest, would have first choice on where he was going to bed down. Wisely he chose the bottom bunk because it was about twice the width of the top bunk which was at eye level and had a canvas webbing hooked to the ceiling and the bunk frame. I have never been afraid of heights having spent time as a derrick man on oil rigs in Mississippi and Louisiana and driving airplanes and helicopters for the military, but the height of that bunk and the distance to the floor surely made me nervous. I was gonna be darn sure that I utilized the safety net.

In the next moment we heard a resounding sound that had the distinct character of a very heavy clank. Our upright standing postures were severely challenged as the floor went one direction and we went the other. We assumed the collegiate wrestling posture signaling the beginning of the match: a good wide stance with hands on each other's shoulders. I think we took two or three steps in that postured position before we got our balance under control. We were underway with only fifteen hours and fifty nine minutes to destination.

John and I, as advanced senior citizens, are long past the stage of being nimble on our feet. His ability to stay upright is more of a challenge due to two previous brain tumor operations and a third which was scheduled after the reunion. He walks like a person who couldn't stop after the third tequila. I am slightly better off being only afflicted with the onset of neuropathy and advanced lower back problems. Neither one of us had any inclination that it would be a roller coaster ride for nearly for the entire trip. I am not sure what caused the train to sway so much, maybe uneven or missing rails, or maybe it wandered off the tracks a few times. I just know it pretty closely replicated the one insane time, as a teenager, when I rode one of those on big Florida Brahma rodeo bulls.

For the sake of brevity let me begin ending this horror story before it becomes book length. John spent the entire trip in his bunk except for two excursions we made to the dining car where chow came in a Styrofoam box warmed by microwave. Our movement there was like co-joined twins fighting to stay upright on the deck of a destroyer in the middle of a typhoon. I couldn't tolerate my bunk laying flat on my back with the ceiling about fifteen inches from my nose with no possibility of changing position to alleviate very unhappy sciatic nerves that had my caboose burning sumtin awful. I left the confines of our cosy quarters about 0100 hours seeking somewhere where I could comfortably sit and cool some of the fire burning in my (censured) and accidentally found Big Sis and her buddies. They were sitting in swivel chairs in the panoramic viewing car all covered up with blankets and weren't in a partying mood.

Last but not least was the use of the commode in our super deluxe sleeper. All transactions had to be initiated and completed in the sit down position other wise the floor was gonna be awful wet.

As we all know good things and bad things all come to termination. Thank the Lord we finally arrived and were greeted by Ray who had transportation for us to the hotel. I think all of us displayed similar symptoms of this epic journey: red eyes and continuous yawning. John and I discussed the possibly of flying back to New Orleans, but for the fact that the fare was rather steep and the railroad folks wouldn't be amenable to reimburse us, we toughed it out and made the return trip. We both swore an oath that this was our last, never again, time to go anywhere on anything that travelled by rail. ❖



(Above: John and Morey Butler who survived the train trip and enjoyed Ray Elliott's great 2018 FMDA reunion which included an interview with award-winning filmmaker Arnold Shapiro and the showing of his 1985 documentary, Return to Iwo Jima)

FINAL MUSTER - Never To Be Forgotten

NAME	UNIT	CITY	DOD
ALLEY, John R.	WPNS-26	Chattanooga, TN	9/21/2012
ANDERSON, Jack R.	H-3-28	Alexandria, KY	12/6/2021
ATWOOD, Cal	F-2-26	Amelia Island, FL	5/15/2018
BACHTTEL, H. C.	HS-5THTK	Calimesa, CA	10/4/2021
BAUMHOEGGER, Fredrick	USN-DD400-MCCALL	High Ridge, MO	11/14/2021
BAY, Judson E., Jr	F-2-27	Casper, WY	8/6/2020
BEACH, Johnnie M.	M-4-13	Simi Valley, CA	7/22/2014
BENJAMIN, Carlos L.	A-1-26	Pasco, WA	5/13/2014
BIENKOWSKI, George J.	D-2-13	Southington, CT	11/28/2012
BLAKE, Stan		Bear, DE	11/9/2020
BORGESON, Wm B.	M-4-13	Beaverton, OR	9/23/2017
BOWEN, Richard "Doc"	E-5THMED	Auburn, CA	10/13/2017
BROSNAN, Jack Joseph	B-1-27	Reno, NV	11/13/2015
BRYAN, William J.	E-2-27	Garner, NC	9/18/2020
BURKE, Glen F	5THJASCO	Hendersonville, NC	5/1/2016
CANTELEMI, Umberto	I-3-28	Bakersfield, CA	1/6/2012
CARLSON, C. Walter	G-3-13	Bloomington, MN	4/13/2009
CARNEY, Alvie N.	WPNS-28	Mcalester, OK	2/21/2015
CHAMPAGNE, Alcide J.	HQ-27	Lockport, LA	1/18/2019
CHAPMAN, Edward P.	HQ-1-27	E Longmeadow, MA	2/22/2019
CHESLEY, Earle M., Jr	5THJASCO	North Sutton, NH	3/2/2004
CLARK, Charles Gerald	E-2-13	West Monroe, LA	3/8/2012
CONNALY, Robert F.	B-1-26	Springfield, VA	11/28/2013
COOK, Andrew J., Jr	HQ-5thENG	Jupiter, FL	5/11/2011
COYNE, Laurence E.	HQ-3-28	Phelan, CA	9/4/2017
CRAIG, George L.	H8S-2-13	Goldsboro, NC	1/9/2011
CREONTE, Dominic J.	HS-2-13	Harwich, MA	1/21/2016
CROSS, Homer		Cuyahoga Falls, OH	8/25/2017
CUSHANICK, Ed	WPNS-28	Canyon Lake, TX	8/24/2011
DABROWSKI, Stanley E.	C Med-1-28	East Hartland, CT	3/27/2017
DANKO, Paul A.	A-1-26	Alexandria, VA	9/22/2020
DAY, Robert E.	WPNS-26	Needles, CA	10/24/2010
DEGEUS, Robert D.	F-2-26	Coopersville, MI	7/7/2011
DEPEW, John D.	HS-26	Media, PA	5/27/2014
DE SANTIS, Anthony		St Petersburg, FL	3/22/2019
DIBBENS, Norman C.	H-3-27	Prescott, AZ	8/21/2011
DIMAS, Ross E.	HQ-27	Albuquerque, NM	10/26/2010
DORSEY, Frank	HQBn	Huntington, WV	1/7/2018
DROLET, Wilfred	E-2-28	Woonsocket, RI	6/6/2006

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DRUMMOND, Milton, Lt Col USMC (Ret)	HQ-13 ENG	Richmond, VA	12/25/2019
DUPAL, Andrew J.	F-2-27	Rankin, PA	11/21/2014
DUTTON, Howard L.	5THJASCO	Chubbuck, ID	12/5/2011
ELSTNER, Francis L.	27TH	Pittsburg, PA	11/24/1989
EYRE, Edwin J., Sr	WPNS-28	Bryan, TX	3/29/2014
FAIRCLOTH, Hayward A.	A-1-26	Clinton, NC	6/14/2008
FELTON, Joseph D.	M-4-13	Boston, MA	9/30/2016
FEMINO, Placido J.	A-5	North Smithfield, RI	5/12/2022
FIELDS, Charles E.	C-5THMED	Indianapolis, IN	8/24/2020
FINK, Mahlon L.	E-2-26	Birdsboro, PA	2/22/2019
FIRST, Jack	E-2-28	Rapid City, SD	9/28/2017
FISK, Kenneth E.	E-2-13	Portville, NY	9/30/2014
FITZPATRICK, Peter J.	11THENGR	Keizer, OR	9/16/2022
FOX, Billy J.	5THJASCO	Texarkana, TX	2/23/2019
FOX, Charles J.	H-3-26	Slidell, LA	10/30/2016
FRADO, James M., Sr	D-2-26	Manheim, PA	4/7/2019
FREEL, James	D-2-28	Topeka, KS	3/3/2023
GILBERT, Henry J.	HQ-1-26	Lewistown, ME	6/30/2020
GROPE, Matthew Jr.	5thPIONEER	Youngstown, OH	4/30/2013
GROSS, Leroy G.	H-3-28	Lawrence, KS	11/29/2010
HAAKE, Philip H.	C-1-28	Kihei Maui, HI	11/1/2012
HAEFELE, Max	E-2-28	Barstow, CA	4/25/2010
HAMMEL, Eric		Pacifica, CA	8/25/2020
HANKS, Sam R.	F-2-26	Hot Springs, AR	2/22/2011
HESTER, J. B.	G-3-27	Abilene, TX	7/13/2018
HIGGINS, Charles T.	B-1-28	Mount Vernon, WA	4/23/2017
HINOJOSA, Daniel	G-3-27	Corpus Christi, TX	3/6/2020
HODGINS, Wilbur Jr.	5THPION	Calimesa, CA	7/30/2018
HOLES, Floyd O.	HS-28	Portage, MI	6/16/2016
HOOKE, Walter G.	HQ-3-28	East Elmhurst, NY	5/21/2010
HRIBAR, John	F-2-28	Davidsville, PA	7/28/2009
JENSEN, Donald	H-3-13	South Bend, IN	1/25/2021
JOHNSON, Charles W.	HQ-1-28	Cresco, IA	1/31/2014
JORDAN, William A.	5THAMPHDUKW	Pittsfield, MA	10/17/2013
KLUG, Fred A.	HS-1-13	N Royalton, OH	1/27/2013
KNICKREHM, Albert	F-2-26	Olathe, KS	11/6/2010
KNOPS, Duane	G-3-26	Spring Park, MN	12/19/2012
KOBOSKI, Walter M.	G-3-27	Kensington, CT	4/19/2014
KOSKI, Joe	G-3-13	Soldotna, AK	7/12/2010

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NAME	UNIT	CITY	DOD
LANCLOS, Alton	F-2-28	Bossier City, LA	6/16/2017
LANSING-JONES, Searle	E-2-26	Napa, CA	3/17/2018
LAUGHMAN, James M.	C-1-27	Eikhart, IN	10/20/2018
LEE, Horace W.	5thJASCO	Hayden, AL	8/9/2019
LINDNER, George Jr.	I-3-27	Pittsburgh, PA	8/16/2012
LINDSAY, Charles W.	D-2-28	Muskegon, MI	1/1/2012
LINK, Bernhardt F.	I-3-28	Grand Rapids, MI	4/29/2019
LOVE, Kenneth A.	HS-3-13	Bogata, TX	4/15/2016
LUPPOLD, Manfred	H-3-26	Denver, CO	11/22/2010
MANIX, William J.	HQ-2-28	Corpus Christi, TX	9/17/2007
MASHBURN, Roscoe V.	B-1-27	Mabelvale, AR	12/22/2015
MAXWELL, James M.	H&S-MOTOR	Grandview, MO	1/9/2018
MCCLAIN, James H.	HQ-2-27	Steubenville, OH	5/4/2012
MCCOY, Robert E.	HQ-3-26	Whitehouse Station, NJ	11/16/2022
MCMEINS, Wayne	MP-28/E-2-26	Lees Summit, MO	2/24/2015
MERRILL, Glenn R.	D-2-26	Ortonville, MI	6/20/2009
MICHAUX, Joseph E.	A-1-26	Quinton, VA	10/8/2014
MILKERT, Harry	D-2-27	Batavia, IL	9/5/2011
MITCHELL, Clyde E.	HQ-2-27	Loveland, CO	11/x/2020
MOON, John L.	E-2-26	Macomb, IL	10/29/2019
MOORE, James L.	H-3-13	Roanoke, VA	4/13/2020
MORENO, Antonio M.	5THMED	Plymouth, CA	5/3/2012
MUSCH, Warren R.	HQ-3-28	Springfield, IL	7/27/2022
NERO, Louis C.	5THENGR	Succasunna, NJ	5/6/1999
NESBELLA, M. B.	D-2-26	Bellwood, PA	10/29/2019
NESTOR, Edward R.	D-2-26	Campbell, OH	5/30/2019
OLSON, Robert E.	1STMAW	Rice Lake, WI	6/26/2019
O'MALLEY, Walter P.	E-2-27	Clinton, MA	4/11/2023
OSBORN, David L.	C-1-26	Fayetteville, NY	4/16/2009
OSBORNE, William F.	HQ-2-28	Wildwood, FL	11/21/2010
OSZKO, Leonard	HS-4-13	Coal Township, PA	3/7/2017
PALMER, Jerome L.	H-3-27	Kannapolis, NC	1/8/2017
PEEPLES, Frank H.	HS-28	Ridgeville, SC	9/25/2000
PERPICH, Charles Carl	4THDIV	Lester Prairie, MN	5/10/2020
PETERSON, Bruce	A-5th PION	St Augustine, FL	8/14/2018
PIERCE, Harold	5THENGR	Marblehead, MA	1/31/2013
PLISKE, Ted	A-1-26	Michigan City, IN	9/9/2022
PONSTEIN, F Jack	D-2-28	Downers Grove, IL	12/20/2010
PRAZAK, Richard J.	I-3-13	N Riverside, IL	7/18/2012

FINAL MUSTER - Never To Be Forgotten

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QUICK, Fred G.	F-2-26	Scottsdale, AZ	9/21/2019
RANDLEMAN, Ronald E.	A-1-26	Tempe, AZ	2/20/2016
REITH, Henry	13 SURVEY	East Syracuse, NY	2/20/2012
RITZ, John B.	F-2-28	Shiner, TX	9/11/2019
ROCHFORD, Thomas L.	5THJASCO	Willoughby Hills, OH	8/15/2016
ROHRSCHEIB, Robert L.	5THSIG	Coeur D'Alene, ID	6/16/2014
ROMAKER, Robert F.	HS-2-13	Perrysburg, OH	7/20/2019
SCHNEIDER, George J.	5THPION	Hilton Head, SC	1/15/2021
SHANNAHAN, Harry	A-1-26	Titusville, FL	1/24/2015
SMITH, Jack W.	I-3-26	Lawrenceville, GA	5/14/2016
SPITALE, Vincent S.	5THMT	Amite, LA	9/13/2013
STAPLES, Leslie R.	F-2-26	St George, UT	5/31/2022
STEGNER, Kent F.	A-1-28	Strasburg, CO	12/23/2012
STEWART, Robert A.	M-4-13	Cleburne, TX	4/7/2021
STOCKHAUSEN, Charles J.	5THSIG	Saint Louis, MO	8/21/2019
STURTEVANT, Clifford J.	5THMT	Savannah, GA	4/10/2013
SULLIVAN, Thomas W.	H-3-13	San Francisco, CA	4/x/2019
SWITZER, Noah R.	I-3-28(USN)	Taylor Mill, KY	6/25/2020
SYMONS, Chandler T., Jr	D-2-27	Petoskey, MI	2/16/2005
TECZA, Stanley M.	E-2-13	Leesburg, VA	9/22/2003
THOMAS, Otis M.	G-3-13	Sedalia, MO	12/17/2022
TOPHAM, Bernard T.	M-4-13	Saginaw, MI	12/23/2020
TORLONE, Louie	M-4-13	Huntington, WV	10/29/2013
VARA, Ralph M.	F-2-26	Mayfield Village, OH	2/25/2015
VARON, Jack C.	E-2-26	Melville, NY	5/14/2016
VESSEL, Robert J.	HQ-2-27	Minneapolis, MN	10/27/2008
WATSON, Newman G.	M-4-13	Melbourne, FL	12/11/2012
WEBER, Roy A.	B-1-28	Foxfire Village, NC	7/11/2015
WEITZEL, Joseph	HQ-5thTK	Lincoln, NE	12/31/2022
WHEELAND, David F.	HQ-2-26	Lake Wales, FL	7/24/2015
WHITTEN, George L., Jr.		Richland, GA	2/10/2020
WICK, Wm R.	F-2-27	Lomita, CA	4/30/2022
WILLIAMS, Mansfield "Smoky"	B-PION	Arden, NC	7/23/2019
WILSON, Marshall W.	HQ-3-28	Palm Desert, CA	4/15/2015
WILT, Robert E.	C-1-26	Hastings On Hudson, NY	10/18/2017
WINTERS, Dean	E-2-28	American Fork, UT	6/8/2008
YANDELL, Marion MD	F-2-27	Port Angeles, WA	1/31/2018
YOUNG, William G.	HS-3-13	Moorseville, NC	11/13/2020

Member News

It is with great sadness that FMDA announces the loss of longtime members:

Janet Marie Kalus, 97, of Aiea, Hawaii, passed away on August 25, 2022. She was the wife of Thomas Kalus, and they hosted the 62th reunion in Branson and the 63rd Reunion in Reno.

Florence Curnutt, 91, of Reno NV, passed away December 2022. She was the beloved sister of Frank Raymond Randlett, F-2-28, KIA at 19 on Iwo Jima. She, along with daughter Ginger, have been longtime members of FMDA. For many years Florence favored us with souvenirs of the reunions.

Anna Rockey, 95, passed away April 16, 2023. Col. Bill Rockey's cherished wife of seven + decades, Anna was a proud Marine Corps wife. Bill is the son of General Keller E Rockey, 5th Division Commander during WWII.

Book Sales to Benefit FMDA



Tales Press has announced that the proceeds of all book sales to members of the Fifth Marine Division Association will be donated back to the organization. To benefit the organization, FMDA members need to make their purchases of "Iwo Blasted Again" and any other Tales Press books online at www.talespress.com.

Marine veteran Ray Elliott started Tales Press from working with, advocating for, and writing about World War II veterans for many years. The comfortable and trusted bonds of friendship that have formed as a result have given Elliott deep insights about the true cost of freedom that lasts over lifetimes for those who served, and their families.



The title of *Iwo Blasted* is from a poem of the same name written by the late Bill Madden, E/2/27, Elliott's friend, who consulted with him throughout the writing of the book. Elliott's novella uses the fictional composite character of an Iwo Jima Marine veteran to tell the story of a man who has carried the horror of combat and the loss of his buddies for many decades. Now, in the last 36 hours of his life in a hospital intensive care unit, he revisits those aspects of his life and grapples with his long-suffering questions about fate and self-doubt through a psychological phenomenon known as sundown syndrome.



"Marines in Forest Green" is a reference gallery of USMC Alpha Service Coats and Navy Corpsman Jumpers and field gear from WWI, WWII, the Korea War, and the Vietnam War. The blog's creator, Leonardo Flores, is FMDA's official photographer at reunions.

He can be contacted at <https://marinesinfoestgreen.blogspot.com>

(left: member looking at Leonard's display at the San Diego reunion)

Extraordinary survivor of the Black Sands



"This 1943 Ford GPW retains its original beach camouflage, UNIS markings for 5th Signal Company, and not one but two nicknames on the hood. The first was "Dah-Dit-Dah" referencing the sound of a Morse Code message when it comes in over a radio. Over top of that is written "Splicer". This Jeep bears evidence of being used by a wire laying team and is so intact that it still has volcanic ash from the beaches settled in the toolboxes and glovebox. It was purchased by a Navy veteran in 1947 and only had one owner after that. If anyone recognizes either of these nicknames and might be able to identify who crewed this vehicle during the battle, please contact me at 19iwo45@gmail.com. Semper Fi!" Dean Laubach

All annual memberships expire on 31 December. Please renew on time.

TRIBUTE OF HONOR



MEMORIAL HONOREE

TOM HUFFHINES

For his time, talent, and dedication to
FMDA

(Honored by Kath & John Butler, friend & co-workers)



TRIBUTE OF HONOR



MEMORIAL HONOREE

FLORENCE CURNUTT

Devoted sister of Raymond Randlett
F-2-28, KIA Iwo Jima, 1945

(Honored by Tom Huffhines)



San Antonio is a historic military town with many sites of interest. It's location in the center of the country makes it perfect for reunions.



The Alamo On March 2, 1836, Texas declared its independence from Mexico. At dawn on March 6, 1836, the 13th day of the siege by Gen. Santa Anna, the Battle of the Alamo commenced. Fighting lasted roughly 90 minutes, and by daybreak all the Defenders had perished, including David Crockett, and Colonels James Bowie and William B. Travis. The loss of the garrison was felt all over Texas, and even the world. Following the battle, Santa Anna ordered the Defender's remains burned. Sam Houston had been named commanding general of the Texas army the month before, but was not present. Although the Texan defenders suffered defeat, the Alamo became a symbol of heroic resistance.



The River Walk Paseo del Río, in Spanish, is a 15 mile long network of walkways which run alongside the banks of the San Antonio River. It now stretches from the San Antonio mission area, through downtown, and up to the major museums in the city. Most, but not all, of the walk is open 24/7 and 24 hrs. Construction of the River Walk started in 1939. The initial funding needed came from the WPA. The first restaurant, Casa Rio, opened on the River Walk in 1946. Casa Rio is still in operation today, along with many others. The River Walk is home to attractions, shops, art, and restaurants, and is today a major San Antonio attraction in its own right.



The Tower of the Americas

Located in downtown San Antonio, the 750-foot-tall Tower of the Americas provides guests the most spectacular view of the Alamo City. Enjoy the gorgeous panorama from the Tower's revolving Chart House Restaurant, take in the scenery from the Observation Deck or experience the thrilling 4D Theater Ride. For a taste of the best dining, and spectacular views, come take a flight with the Tower of the Americas.



Hop-on Hop-off bus Explore all the highlights on a comfortable San Antonio hop-on hop-off double-decker bus tour. You can hop on and hop off for unlimited times from the main stops of the city. An audio commentary is provided. A San Antonio City Card can supply discounts into other attractions, and often includes the river walk boat ride.

There are several bus companies that offer an easy way to view the city.



The Menger Hotel The original portion of The Menger Hotel has been recognized by the state of Texas and was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It was constructed on the battle-grounds of the Alamo by German immigrants Mary and William Menger in response to the popularity of the Menger brewery for beer. Later the Mengers sold the property to J.H. Kampmann, the contractor who was hired to build the hotel. Through the years it has been renovated and expanded.

Over its iconic history the Menger Hotel has been the scene for many important events, and has had many famous guests. The list of guests includes Presidents: Ulysses Grant, Benjamin Harrison, Theodore Roosevelt (who drank at the bar and recruited his Rough Riders) , Woodrow Wilson, William H. Taft, William McKinley, Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Lyndon Johnson, George H. W. Bush, and Bill Clinton; military figures, including Sam Houston and Robert E. Lee; and other public figures, including Oscar Wilde, Roy Rogers, cattle baron Richard King, and renowned sculptor of Mt Rushmore, Gutzon Borglum.



On the left:

Map of Downtown



73RD REUNION NEWS

As the committee chair for this year's reunion, I wanted to say a few things to those members who are planning to attend and to those who are considering attending.

First, all are welcome and encouraged to attend. Participating in the FMDA Reunions gives you a special feeling down deep that will live in you for months beyond the event. Renewing our friendships and hearing the stories of the experiences of our dads, husbands, and brothers never gets old. We should continue honoring the Iwo Jima and Vietnam 5th Division Marines together as a group for as long as it is feasible to do so.

This year the reunion is being held at the historic Menger Hotel located on the Alamo Plaza. We are having a couple of very entertaining events and meals accompanied by musicians, dancers and speakers. And this is even before our Saturday evening banquet at which we will be honored to have Retired U.S. Marine General Michael Hagee as our guest speaker.

NOW... to those who are attending, as usual, on the inside back page of this newsletter is the registration form for this year's reunion. Some of the costs are higher than in the past, as all costs seem to be on everything across the country these days. We have consciously done our best to keep the costs as low as possible. Please send in your registration as soon as you realistically can and for sure by the due date of 4 September 2023. It helps us immensely to get these in early. THANKS!

Finally, just a quick shout out to a few of the dedicated FMDA committee members who have been a tremendous help and are continuing to do so in putting this 73rd Reunion together. Locally in San Antonio Mary Virginia Pittman-Waller and Alfredo Cooke have done a yeoman's job at contacting, communicating and organizing events, vendors and local workers that will help us with the transportation needs. With many other important parts and work that is vital to making a successful reunion, the following have contributed unselfishly with their time and funds. Those include Valerie Leman, Ray Elliott, Lynn Payton and Corey Payton, Claudia Brown, Barbara Hansen Harris, Bill Baumann, Rita Christenson, Cheryl Kozak, Kathy Tinsley and Barbara Allen, Skip Werthmuller, and Kath and John Butler.

Also, we are blessed again to have some truly special donor members who have contributed funds to help ensure a financially successful reunion. A really special thanks to them.

Semper Fi,

Tom Huffhines
Reunion Chair



Registration Form

FMIDA 73rd Annual Reunion - October 4-8, 2023, San Antonio, TX

Please print the following information as you would like it to appear on your ID Badge

1. Your Name _____
2. Your Address _____
3. City _____ State _____ Zip _____
4. Telephone Cell _____ Home _____
5. Email _____
6. Names and relationships of guests accompanying you. _____

7. **Circle** if you are an Iwo Jima Vet a Vietnam Vet relative of Iwo Jima vet relative of Vietnam Vet

8. Vets: List Rank and Unit (Company, BN, Regiment) _____

9. Relative of vets: List name of vet, relationship, & all known rank & unit info

10. For logistical purposes, please *Circle* travel by car travel by airline - Flight #s _____

Arrival time _____ Departure _____ 11. Please list any disabilities or any dietary restricts below:

Cost Per Person:

Please fill in number of persons on each line:

1. **Registration** @ \$ 60 All attendees except Iwo Survivors who are free _____
2. **Banquet** @ \$ 65 _____ [# Beef–New York Strip _____] [# Fish–Grilled Salmon _____][Chicken-Grilled] _____]
3. **Tour 1** – Magic Show (Show & BBQ Dinner) @ \$ 25 each _____
4. **Tour 2** – Alamo Lecture- free & lunch back at hotel @ \$ 25 each _____
(Individual tours after lecture can be purchased at the door at costs range of \$8 - \$50 each)
5. **Breakfast and lunch treats** daily in the Hospitality Room – free

Grand Total : \$ _____

Registration Deadline September 1st, 2023. Mail Registration form & check payable to FMIDA to Tom Huffhines, FMIDA, P.O.BOX 728, Weatherford, TX, 76086 (Reunion Chairman)

Contact for questions: Email thuffhines74@gmail.com Phone (817)296-6487

Hotel Accommodations: You may book your own room reservations by contacting The Menger Hotel at (800) 345-9285; Ask for FMIDA rate of \$169 (+taxes)



From:
FIFTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION
 P.O. Box 728
 WEATHERFORD, TEXAS 76086

Forwarding Service Requested



All donations are tax deductible - 501(c)3 non-profit & all-volunteer organization

5th Marine Division Association - Membership and Donation Form

Mail to: 5th Marine Division Association, P.O. Box 728, Weatherford, TX 76086

All annual memberships expire on 31 December. Please renew on time.

Type Membership: New Annual or Life Membership () or Renewal of Annual Membership ()

Categories Below:

Iwo Vet () **Vietnam Vet** () Div. _____ Platoon _____ Co. _____ Bn _____ Reg. _____

Legacy () Name & rank of Veteran _____

Vet's Div. _____ Co. _____ Bn. _____ Reg. _____ Your Relationship _____

Associate () *(interested person who is not a veteran or related to a veteran)*

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email _____

Dues (please check):

- () Annual\$ 25
- () New Lifetime (Age 64 & under)... \$150
- () New Lifetime (Age 65-79)\$100
- () New Lifetime (Age 80 & over).....\$ 50

Donation:

() General Fund\$ _____

TOTAL\$ _____

(Please make checks payable to FMDA)