

Leatherneck News

Southern Indiana Leatherneck Detachment #931

Upcoming Events

- 1 October—Birthday Ball Reservations Due
- 7 October—USMC Silent Drill Team performance at Scottsburg
- 11 October—National Commander, American Legion visit to Jasper American Legion. 6:30 PM
- 13–14 October —Department of Indiana Fall Convention.
- 14 October—18th District Firefighters Parade, Haysville
- 15 October—Dubois County Veterans' Council, 7PM, St Anthony American Legion
- 18 October—Regular Meeting, Jasper American Legion, 7 PM;
Special Elections
- 10 November—Marine Corps Ball, Jasper Inn

Detachment Grieves Loss of Charter Member

On the morning of September 9th, 2007, the Detachment was deeply saddened by the loss of a charter member and our only elected Paymaster since the chartering of the detachment, Tom Messier.

Tom was born on August 15th 1935 at Bourboness, Illinois. He began his life-long reputation for service to his country at the tender age of 19, by enlisting in the United States Marine Corps, becoming an artilleryman. Tom rose rapidly through the ranks and on May 28th, 1960 he took the lovely Anna Mae Kreilein as his bride.

In August 1965, when the call to arms was made, Tom left his young bride for the jungles and hilltops of Vietnam. As an Artillery Chief, Tom directed accurate fire in support of Marines and soldiers on the ground. It is without doubt that the expert fire support provided by Tom and his teams saved countless

American lives. It would be more than a year before Tom was reunited with his family. After the war, Tom would spend 4 years each on Recruiting and Drill Instructor Duty, lonely duties for a wife and family.

After twenty years spending time in vacation spots like 29 Palms, Camp Pendleton, and the ever lovely Parris Island, Tom retired from the Marine Corps in August 1974, having earned the Combat Action Ribbon, the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Navy Unit Commendation, The Republic of Vietnam Service Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal.

Completing his service with the Active Duty Marine Corps, Tom continued to serve his country and his fellow man. As an active member of VFW Post 673, Tom served numerous years on the house committee and the Honor

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Supporting our Marines—Corporal Scott Gilley

Responding to a request for assistance, the Southern Indiana Leathernecks once again came to the aid of a fellow Marine. This time, though, it was to help celebrate a happy occasion.

On September 22nd, six Leathernecks in dress blues traveled to Washington, Indiana to perform the "Arch of Swords" ceremony at the wedding of Corporal Scott and Alyssa Gilley.

The swordsmen consisted of Dave Englert, Pat Moriarty, Tim Rue, John Wagner,

Matt Truesdale and GySgt Wilson Hutter, who joined the Leathernecks from NWSF Crane.

As the wedding ceremony, held at Saint Simon Catholic Church, came to a close, the Leathernecks formed the colonnade on the church steps. Guests exiting the church were mostly curious about what the six Marines on the steps were there for.

Finally, as Scott and Alyssa exited the church, Commandant Englert explained to

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Commandant's Corner

This month has been one of tremendous ups and downs. Together we shared happy times over Labor Day festivities, as well as several parades and festivals. We also shared our tragedy, losing not only one of our own, but one who did so much for so many, that our grief was shared by many of our fellow Veterans. Needless to say, we're going to miss Tom Messier's presence, but I dare to say that if we look around, we'll see people and things that Tom touched in some way.

Sitting around after one of the numerous committee meetings recently, I overheard the comment, "I keep telling myself, it'll slow down next month, but that doesn't happen." Definitely not alone in that sentiment! As far as my memory allows, I

2 September 2007—League and Family Support Group members enjoy rest and relaxation at the home of John and Leanna Blemker in observance of Labor Day. (Photo by Karen Englert)



don't believe the Detachment has ever so much on the agenda. Thankfully, we have members who willingly give so much of themselves so that we can continue our primary mission of helping Marines and their families.

The next several weeks are fun-filled and packed with action. I hope that many of you will join us on the bus trip to see the Silent Drill Team, and I think it will be a memorable trip with friends! As we finish up October, we still have much to do. The Birthday Ball, Veterans' Day events, Rose Fund Drive, and then we're into the heart of Toys for Tots!

The only reliable method of finding out what's happening in the detachment is to come to a meeting. Even with a newsletter, it's a lot just to get a few key tidbits in. There's always something going on, and there's always room for one more volunteer. Don't wait to be invited to help!



Deadlines for Key Events at Hand.

If you've been procrastinating, you're just about out of time for two of the greatest events this fall.

On Sunday, October 7th, the Detachment will board a bus bound for Scottsburg to see the Marine Corps Silent Drill Team. At last check, the bus is nearly full, but it may be possible to still get on. Contact Pat Moriarty for more details and to put in your reservations. The bus will depart the Jasper Walmart parking lot at 10 AM, so don't be late.

The 10th of November may seem to be a distant thought for some of you, but for the Birthday Ball Committee, it's getting

down to crunch time. Several items need to be ordered very soon to have in time for the Ball. Final contracts have to be signed and before you know it, we'll be dancing the night away! But only if you get your tickets right away. The deadline for guaranteed seating is 1 October, after that it's first come, first served until the seats are full. At last check, many were sending their checks in. There may be birthday balls in the future, but this is the one and only inaugural ball for the Detachment. Don't miss it!

"Eric's Boys" Hold the Line at Dubois.



1 September 2007—First Sergeant Troy Euclide urges the Marine Team on during the Tug of War contest at the Dubois SeptemberFest. (Picture by Karen Englert).

A small group of Leathernecks, Ian Denu, Matt Truesdale, John Truesdale, Ryan Merkel, Ryan "Butchie" Schmidt, and Chad Meringer took on the challenge of out pulling the veteran teams at the 2007 Dubois SeptemberFest. Inspired by Jake Lueken, the team

gathered the night before, settling on the name "Eric's Boys" in honor of Corporal Eric Lueken. Not intimidated by their lack of experience at the event, the Marines brazenly stepped into the freshly turn soil to dig in.

As the first match up began, the Leathernecks under the urging of First Sergeant Troy Euclide and the gathered masses, quickly pulled the rope several inches in their favor. Holding on for the full ten minutes, Eric's Boys stood victorious after the first round.

After two other pulloffs, they took the field once again as the sun set. Pitted against a veteran tug of war team, the Leathernecks were stunned by the seeming lack of progress despite their best efforts. As the minutes dragged on, the rope inched away in favor of their opponents. Unbelievably, the match ended in victory, for the other team.

The Leathernecks vowed to return again.

Detachment Grieves Loss of Charter Member(Cont'd)

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Guard. As a member of the Honor Guard, Tom was a stickler for detail, ensuring each Veteran received the proper honors at the time of their internment. Many weekends, Tom could also be found running the VFW's shooting matches.

Tom also was an avid American Legionnaire, becoming a life member and spending over 34 years in the organization. Tom served on the Executive Committee and over the course of 13 years, became a Wednesday night fixture in the Legion as he became THE bingo caller.

Tom was a longtime member of the Loyal Order of the Moose serving on various committees and as the Bingo Chairman for 11 years.

Amazingly, Tom was able to complete much of his volunteer service while serving with the United States Postal Service, retiring after 20 years.

Once a Marine, Always a Marine. In November of 1996, Tom assisted in the startup of the Southern Indiana Leatherneck Detachment of the Marine Corps League. Without hesitation, Tom took over

the duties as detachment paymaster and continued in that position for the 11 years of its existence. Tom was an avid participant in nearly every event held by the Detachment, selflessly devoting his precious time to ensure the success of the Detachment. In recognition of his service, Tom was awarded both the Silver and Bronze Distinguished Citizen Medals, the Elected Officer Medal – 11th award and numerous letters of appreciation and membership awards.

While it may be difficult to see through the sorrow now, we must rejoice with pride in not only Tom's contributions and deeds, but also those contributions and deeds which he inspired through his dedication. The Streets of Heaven may be guarded by Marines, but knowing Tom, he'll be the Sergeant of the Guard by day's end.

Our heartfelt sympathies go out to Anna, his wife, and to Kurt and Mike, his sons, as well as the rest of his family.

Fair Winds and Following Seas, Tom,

Semper Fi, Marine

Supporting our Marines—Corporal Scott Gilley (Cont'd)

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the mostly civilian audience, the purpose and meaning of the ceremony. On command, an arch was formed, through which the newly wed couple traveled. As they came to the last two swordsmen, Scott and Alyssa found their path blocked. In the usual tradition, Alyssa was welcomed to the Corps and to life as a Marine Wife! Closing the ceremony was "Return Swords",

which the detail performed with exquisite precision.... the sound of a single sword slipped into its scabbard. Corporal and Mrs. Gilley will return to Camp Pendleton until his expected deployment to Iraq in early 2008.



22 September 2007—Mrs. Alyssa Gilley poses with the ceremonial detail. *(Picture by Karen Englert)*



22 September 2007—Corporal Scott and Mrs. Alyssa Gilley exit the Arch of Swords.

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Detachment #931*

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P.O. Box 184
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Email: marines@psci.net

Once a Marine, Always a Marine

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The Marine Corps Ball—A Primer (Part II—The Ceremony)

Last newsletter we finished up the do's and don'ts of the cocktail hour. As the time approaches for the official ceremony, guests should take time to recharge their glasses and prepare to take their seats.

Depending on the size of the Ball, the location, access to equipment, etc. the ceremony may be as basic or as elaborate as necessary. In most cases, the Adjutant will sound Attention, and then Adjutant's Call. This is the signal to start the ceremony. At the Ball, a team of 6 to 8 Marines forms an escort, lining the sides of the ceremonial column. The senior Marine (usually the commander) escorts the Honored Guest to the head of the column where they assume their positions facing the column. The Color Guard brings the Colors forward for the playing of the National Anthem, after which the Colors are posted.

Depending upon the layout of the room, a table, draped in black is either in place or is escorted into place to recognize comrades who have gone to their final reward before us. The table has a full setting for one, with both an

Officer's and an Enlisted Sword.

After a moment of silence, the birthday cake is paraded forward and halts in front of the Senior Marine. The Senior Marine commands the Adjutant to "Publish the Article, Sir!".

As established in 1921 by Commandant of the Marine Corps John A. Lejuene, Article 38 of the Marine Corps Manual is read. Article 38 provides a refresher in the motto, history and lore of the Corps, with a look at its past and future.

As the Senior Marine carefully cuts the cake with his Mameluke Sword, the oldest and youngest Marines present are introduced. A piece of cake is given to each of the Marines, signifying the continuity of the Corps.

The Senior Marine steps forward for comments and to introduce the Honored Guest, who normally will make a short motivating speech. At the conclusion of this speech, the Marines retire from the ceremonial column and the ceremony concludes.

Next newsletter: The Meal; or why do I need so many forks?

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Commandant:
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Senior Vice Commandant:
Patrick Moriarty 812-695-5061

Chaplain
John Wagner 812-683-4997

Jr. Vice Commandant
Unfilled

Paymaster
Tom Messier 812-482-5806

Adjutant
Dennis Englert 812-482-2987

Judge Advocate
Jeramey Osborne 812-295-6005

Public Affairs Officer
Steve Lindauer 812-634-9685

Sgt. at Arms
Allen Fritz 812-683-2192

Historian
Pat O'Keefe 812 630-2567

Quartermaster
Tim Rue 757-880-3138