

# Leatherneck News

## Southern Indiana Leatherneck Detachment #931

### Upcoming Events

- 4 September—Marine Corps League Birthday Ball Meeting
- 11 September—Family Support Group Meeting, Jasper American Legion, 7 PM
- 19 September—Regular Meeting, Jasper American Legion, 7 PM.
- 28 September—Huntingburg Herbstfest Parade Noon
- 4-5 October—Fall Conference Jasper Inn Convention Center, Jasper
- 12 October—18th District Volunteer Firefighters Parade, Otwell, 1PM
- 1 November—Marine Corps League Birthday Ball, Jasper Inn & Convention Center

### Detachment Closes a Page of History

Huntingburg, IN—On 14 August 2008, Arthur David Ragan, a Marine Veteran of Iwo Jima, Saipan, and Tinian reported to his final duty station guarding the streets of heaven. A life member of the Marine Corps League and numerous other civic and military organizations, Art, as known by his fellow Marines, Dave, as known by his family, developed a long standing reputation as a contributor to the greater good.

Although rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army Reserves, most of Art's conversations dealt with his time in the Corps, as a Marine Private First Class. Art's tour of duty in the Corps coincided with some of the most difficult and trying times (see related story, page 4). At the same time, this was an era of pure USMC history in the making. The battles of the Pacific, and especially Iwo Jima sanctified the virtues of the Corps and forever guaranteed a place for the Corps.



17 August 2008 – Members of the Detachment pay final respects to Arthur David Ragan. (Photo by John Blemker)

In keeping with Art's request, his family was joined by a gathering of his fellow Marines for a Ceremony for the Deceased and again during Graveside services. As is fitting for any veteran, Art's family was formally presented with a flag on behalf of the President of the United States and a grateful nation.

### Birdseye's 125th Birthday



24 August 2008—Detachment and Marine Family Support Group members pose for a group photo before taking part in Birdseye's birthday celebration parade. The Detachment's Color Guard led the parade as requested, with outstanding representation from each of the two organizations. Participation in parades not only allows us to show our colors and our name, but also serves to remind the public that our fellow Marines are still serving overseas.

### Labor Day at the Blemker Farmer



31 August 2008— It's bad enough that she out fished all of the "fishermen", but she did it with a kiddie pole! Thanks once again to the generosity and hospitality of John and Leanna Blemker, the end of summer party was fun and exciting. Good food, good friends and good times were aplenty. Fine weather made it a perfect day.

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## Commandant's Corner

Seems like it was a short summer, doesn't it? The Ball Committee is already in the thick of planning and preparation for the Second Marine Corps League Birthday Ball, with everything on track, so far. Invitations are in the mail and should arrive shortly for all members of the detachment and the family support group. Please start dusting off those items that you would like to display at this year's ball.

The Detachment had the honors of laying to rest one of the few remaining survivors of the battle for Iwo Jima. On page four, you'll find a portion of Major General Erskine's speech during the dedication of the 3rdMarDiv Cemetery. Keep in mind, the battle for the island had not yet been completed when the General made this speech.

Earlier in August, we were also asked to provide services for a fellow Marine who was not a member of the Detachment. The decision to support this mission was easy as it is clearly spelled out in our charter and bylaws—to render assistance

to Marines and families of Marines in time of need. Attending to the services for Marine Richard Mills of Rockport required some additional logistical support, but it was essential that we provide an appropriate ceremony for one who had served in Vietnam.

This month is also the time when the planning for Toys for Tots kicks into high gear. The National TFT Conference is mid-month and we'll receive a briefing during our regular meeting.

We'll also finish planning any details remaining for the Fall Conference which is on the first weekend in October. We'll be joined by the Central Indiana Young Marines who will have a collection of USMC materials on sale for their fund raising efforts.

Finally, I'd like to thank our elected and appointed Officers who have given so much of their time and effort to the flawless execution of our mission. Semper Fi!

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## This Month in Marine Corps History

**2 September 1945:** The Japanese officially surrendered to the Allies on board the battleship MISSOURI in Tokyo Bay. With General Holland Smith transferred home in July 1945, the senior Marine Corps representative at the historic ceremony was LtGen Roy S. Geiger, who had succeeded Smith as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

**5 September 1956:** Eleven Marines from the 9th Marines, 3d Marine Division, stationed near Naha, Okinawa, drowned while swimming, from an undercurrent caused by Typhoon Emma. The violent storm, with 140 mph winds, struck the Philippine Islands, Okinawa, Korea, and Japan, causing some 55 deaths and millions of dollars in property damage.

**6 September 1983:** Two Marines were killed and two were wounded when rockets hit their compound in Beirut, Lebanon. Heavy fighting continued for the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit peacekeeping force in the area near their positions around the Beirut International Airport.

**8 September 1942:** On Guadalcanal, the 1st Raider Battalion and the 1st Parachute Battalion, supported by planes of MAG-23 and two destroyer transports, landed east of Tasimboko, advanced west into the rear of Japanese positions, and carried out a successful raid on a Japanese supply base.

**11 September 1992:** Hurricane Iniki devastated the island of Kauai in Hawaii in one of the worst storms the islands had seen in over a century. Marines of the 1st Marine Brigade based at Kaneohe Bay, spearheaded Operation Garden Sweep, the massive cleanup effort.

**15 September 1950:** The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines landed on Wolmi-do Island in Inchon Harbor and secured it prior to the main landing. The 1st Marine Division under the command of Major General Oliver P. Smith landed at Inchon and began the Inchon-Seoul campaign.

**16 September 1814:** A detachment of Marines under Major Daniel Carmick from the Naval Station at New Orleans, together with an Army detachment, destroyed a pirate stronghold at Baratavia, on the Island of Grande Terre, near New Orleans.

**18 September 1990:** A new 40-acre training facility for Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) was dedicated at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, by General Alfred M. Gray, Commandant of the Marine Corps.

**20 September 1950:** Marines of the 1st Marine Division crossed the Han River along a six-mile beachhead, eight miles northwest of Seoul, Korea. Five days later, the 1st and 5th Marines would attack Seoul and

*(Continued on page 3)*

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## This Month in Marine Corps History Contd

(Continued from page 2)

the city would be captured by 27 September.

**24 September 1873:** One hundred and ninety Marines and seamen from the USS PENSACOLA and BENICIA landed at the Bay of Panama, Columbia, to protect the railroad and American lives and property during the revolution.

**27 September 1944:** The American flag was raised over Peleliu, Palau Islands, at the 1st Marine Division

Command Post. Although the flag raising symbolized that the island was secured, pockets of determined Japanese defenders continued to fight on. As late as 21 April 1947, 27 Japanese holdouts finally surrendered to the American naval commander on the scene.

**30 September 1945:** Marines of III Amphibious Corps, commanded by Major General Keller E. Rockey, began landing in North China to assist the Chinese Nationalist government in accepting the surrender of Japanese forces and repatriating Japanese soldiers and civilians.

## The Birthday Ball—

For some of you, the upcoming Marine Corps Birthday Ball is your first. Perhaps you're wondering how to act, what to wear, and what happens during a ball. This is the first of two articles in a series to help you get ready for the ball.

First item is the RSVP. By now all Detachment and Marine Corps Family Support Group members should have received an invitation. If you haven't, contact a Detachment Officer immediately. It is vital to the success of the ball that you place your reservations as soon as possible, but it would definitely be bad form to go past the 20 October deadline. You may invite guests, but as protocol dictates, you are responsible for ensuring they abide by customs and courtesies. Please fill out your attendance forms and get them in!

For as long as the Marine Corps has existed, Marines have celebrated its birthday no matter the clime or place. Whether in garrison (on base) or while deployed, Marines always take time to wish each other a hearty "Happy Birthday Marine".

In a garrison environment, the Ball is a formal event. For members of the military, the Dress Uniform with Medals is proscribed, but the Mess Dress uniform may be substituted in its place. Non-NCOs who have not been issued Dress Blues wear the Service A uniform. For retirees and other former service members, without a uniform, a black tuxedo with black tie and miniature medals is recommended. Civilian men will normally dress in tuxedo or similar black tie suit. For civilian women, a "formal" is the norm.

The first hour or so of a formal ball is the cocktail hour, during which time guests mingle and meet. Typically, displays of military artifacts, photos and other items are about for examination. During this year's ball, you may expect light background music and/or video presentations. It is extremely bad form to become overly intoxicated or boisterous during cocktail hour.

As the cocktail hour ends, the announcer will give a 5 and a 10 minute warning. This is the time to make any necessary stops and make your way to your seats.

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.

This year, the ceremony will conclude at this point and Dinner shall commence. Conversation is kept to a polite volume...use your "inside voice" there grunts! As the Dinner concludes and at a respectable time, the Senior Marine will introduce the Guest of Honor and invite him to speak. It is customary for the Guest of Honor to speak 10 to 15 minutes during which time guests remain attentive.

Next Issue: Our Guest of Honor.

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*Southern Indiana Leatherneck Detachment*  
#931

Southern Indiana Leathernecks  
Marine Corps League  
P.O. Box 184  
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## Dedication of 3rd Marine Division Cemetery—Iwo Jima—February 1945

“There is nothing I can say which is wholly adequate to this occasion. Only the accumulated praise of time will pay proper tribute to our valiant dead. Long after those who lament their immediate loss are themselves dead, these men will be mourned by the Nation. They are the Nation’s loss. There is talk of great history, of the greatest fight in our history, of unheard sacrifice and unheard of courage. These phrases are correct, but they are prematurely employed. The evidence has not sufficiently been examined. Even the words and phrases used by historians to describe the fight for Iwo Jima, when the piecemeal story of our dead comes to light, will still be inadequate. Victory was never in doubt. Its cost was. The enemy could have displaced every cubic inch of volcanic ash on this fortress with concrete pillboxes and block-houses, which he nearly did, and still victory would not have been in doubt. What was in doubt, in all our minds, was whether there would be any of us left to dedicate our cemetery at the end, or whether the last Marine would die knocking out the last Japanese gun and gunner. Let the world count our crosses! Let them count them over and over. Then when they understand the significance of the fighting for Iwo Jima, let them wonder at how few there are. We understand and we wonder, who are separated from our dead by a few feet of earth, from death by inches and fractions of an inch. Of the cost to us in quality! No one will ever understand that, who did not fight side by side with those who fell. Let us do away with names, with ranks and rates and unit designations, here. Do away with terms, regular, reserve, veteran, boot, old timer, replacement. They are empty, categorizing words which belong only in the adjutant’s dull vocabulary. Here lie only – MARINES.”

(Text of speech by MajGen Erskine, Commanding General, Third Marine Division)

### Detachment Officers:

#### Commandant:

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#### Senior Vice Commandant:

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#### Chaplain

John Wagner 812-683-4997

#### Jr. Vice Commandant

Chad Mehringer

#### Paymaster and Web Sergeant

Tina Moriarty 812-695-5061

#### Adjutant

Dennis Englert 812-482-2987

#### Judge Advocate

Jeramey Osborne 812-295-6005

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Allen Fritz 812-683-2192

#### Historian

Dave Englert

#### Quartermaster

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