



Gold Country Det. #885
Grass Valley, California

The Boondocker



We have a few TFT events coming up as our distribution days rapidly approaches.

- 11/30—12/04/09

Kids helping Kids toy drive in participating Nevada County Schools.

- 12/03/09

LeGacy Productions presents a benefit performance of "Miracle on 34th street" for TFT.



- 12/05/09

Roamin' Angels Toy drive



- 12/10 & 11

Move toys to Vet's hall, shop & bike build.

- 12/12/09

Distribution 0900-1200

GV Vet's Memorial Building



Commandant's Message

Merry Christmas Marines,

I know we're not there quite yet but boy is it approaching fast! I was happy to see most of you at the cake cutting ceremony at the Moose Lodge. I also attended a Ball in Reno that was really great. They had a beautiful ice sculpture of the Eagle, Globe & Anchor as you walked in the door; it was spectacular!

We had a good turnout for Veteran's Day. I know as I saw many of you in the crowd.

I imagine that at least some of you are reading this over Thanksgiving leftovers but in case this arrives early, Happy Thanksgiving! With all of our problems, we are truly fortunate to be Americans and live in a place that God has truly blessed.

Although it's the end of the year, I'll quickly mention the election of Officers and ask that you start thinking about not only who you want to lead you through 2010 and into 2011 but what office you yourself might hold. Certainly our League is voluntary but I think each member should serve in some capacity other than "member". Please consider your talents and where you could best serve.

As I said above, the Christmas Holiday's are rapidly approaching! Outside of the hustle & bustle of the season, I love it for several reasons: the fact that for at least a few days a year most of us put others first, the way my children's faces light up when they open their gifts, raising a toast with my

2009-2010 Officers

Commandant	David Voors
Sr. Vice Commandant	John Bynes
Jr. Vice Commandant	David Spencer
JAG	Ed Rossovich
Adjutant/Paymaster	Gary Miller
Sgt-at-Arms	Dan Baldwin
Quarter Master	Skip Rankin
Chaplain	Jim Edwards
Chaplain	Carlos Flores

Boondocker Editor = staff@MCL885.org

Brother Marines from the League and that God sent His Son in the most unlikely way to save us from ourselves. I want to wish all of you and your families the most joyous holidays and a happy, healthy & prosperous New Year!

We have received at least four or five inquiries about membership since the POMB concert. Some may be because of the concert or because the birthday has just passed, either way, I am happy to say that we are attracting new Marines! I think with just a little effort on our parts we could be getting even more folks to stand on the MCL footprints. Please take the time to get a few of our brochures and give them to the Marines that you know. Recruiting is what will sustain us into the future and many hands make light work.

"We will do our best to advance our cause and have a good time doing it."

Semper Fidelis,

David Voors
Commandant



EGA Ice Sculpture at Reno, NV MC Ball

This Month in USMC History

8 December 1941: Japanese aircraft attacked Wake Island within hours of the fateful attack on Pearl Harbor. Marines of the 1st Defense Battalion and Marine Fighting Squadron 211 resisted Japanese invasion attempts for over two weeks before finally succumbing to an overwhelming force.

4 December 1950: LtCol Raymond G. Davis led his battalion into Hagaru-Ri, Korea after four days of intense fighting in the mountain passes against a numerically superior hostile force. His battalion, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, helped clear the way for the 5th and 7th Marines, and LtCol Davis was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism.

19 December 1972: The Marine detachment of the USS TICONDEROGA provided shipboard security for three U.S. astronauts, Eugene Cernan, Ronald Evans, Harrison Schmitt, and their Apollo-17 space capsule. The astronauts had successfully completed a (then) record lunar stay of more than 75 hours.



Gitmo guard tower



Memories of Christmas' past

During my 35 years of active service, I was separated from my family on six occasions during the Christmas season. As I reflect on those six Yuletide's, the Christmas of 1965 was head and shoulders the absolute loneliest.

At the time, I was CO of the Marine Det. Aboard the USS America (CVA-66). The ship had anchored in the Bay of Naples for the Christmas holidays, however, a storm came up on 23 December

and for four days, liberty was cancelled because the seas were too rough to run the liberty boats ashore. Nevertheless, the ship

was still required to maintain a round-the-clock "Beach Guard" station at the Naples fleet landing. I drew the 0000-0400 watch on Christmas day. I can still vividly recall that bitter cold, black night. There was no activity to do except pace back & forth at my post and listen to the rain and heavy seas splash against the quay.

It was the longest, most depressing watch of my life but one I shall never forget!

More joyful occasions were the Christmas days from 1976-78. I was the XO at "Gitmo",

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. These were the days when our reinforced rifle company stood watches in towers along 25 miles of perimeter fence backed up by the largest mine field in the free world, six 155 Howitzers and a platoon of M-60 tanks with live ammunition in their ready racks. For Officer's, SNCO's & some NCO's, this was an accompanied tour with our families living at Marine site #2.

Over the years it had become tradition for the Navy & Marine wives to decorate shoe boxes at Christmas and fill them with notes of thanks and goodies from the donors to the Marines who stood guard over them.

The entire lot would be delivered to the barracks HQ on Christmas Eve and put into two jeeps. Then, myself & Col. Mark P. Fennessey (a highly respected, crusty old Irishman and campaigner in three wars starting at Guadalcanal) would head out at Midnight, Christmas morning.

Mark was really more than CO of Marine Barracks GDF, he was regarded as the Patriarch of the entire naval base.

One of us would drive the Windward side and the other Leeward delivering the boxes to the Sentries at their posts.

A bottle of Bourbon from which each Marine was invited to take a healthy swig always accompanied our personal greetings for a Merry Christmas.

At sunup, the balance of the boxes would be delivered to the Sergeant of the Guard for the off duty watches. Playing Santa was always a very uplifting experience for Mark and me and I believe that it made the troops feel a bit more joyful knowing that their duties were appreciated by the Guantanamo community.

Merry Christmas Leathernecks!

O.K. Steele



I want to say thanks to Orlo for sharing a couple of his Christmas stories at my request.

We're always looking for relevant stories, ideas and news for the Boondocker. If you have a story for the Boondocker please send it to me: dvoors@MCL885.org S/F.....Dave Voors

'Twas the night before Christmas

By **Nathan Tabor**

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone. I had come down the chimney with presents to give, and to see just who is this home did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought came through my mind.

For this house was different, it was dark and dreary; I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.

The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder, not how I pictured a United States soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas Day.

They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,

because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry.

The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;

I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my Country, my Corps."

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep, I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.

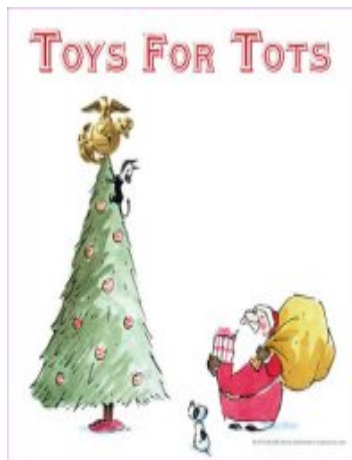
"I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my Country, my Corps."

I kept watch for hours, so silent and still and we both shivered from the cold night's chill.

I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night, this guardian of honor so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure, whispered, "Carry on Santa, It's Christmas Day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right. "Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night!"



The Honor of Our Corps

When the beer, it flows like water,
And the talk, it turns to war,
Then we speak of absent comrades
And the Honor of our Corps.

Of the fights in distant places
And the friends who are no more,
Dying faithful to the nation
And the Honor of our Corps.

Though our bones are growing brittle
And our eyes are growing poor,
Still our hearts are young and valiant
For the Honor of our Corps.

Should the Eagle, Globe and Anchor
Call us to the field once more,
We would muster at the summons
For the Honor of our Corps.

When the years have told our story
And we close the final door,
We will pass to you for keeping Bright
the Honor of our Corps.

Will you take the awesome burden?
Will you face the fire of war?
Will you proudly bear the title
For the Honor of our Corps?

--by Robert A. Hall--

This is why I celebrate Christmas

My Marine Brothers,

As we approach the Christmas season we are made more and more aware of the movement in our country to lose sight of the reason for celebration. While the tradition of sharing and giving has become commercialized, the true gift was shared with the world in the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. What follows is the reason why I celebrate Christmas. Semper Fidelis and GOD'S Blessing to you all. Gary

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

Continued on next page....

The Reason

(By R.A. Gannon, reprinted from the November 1987 *Leatherneck Magazine*)

It was early in November, about the tenth I'd say,
The sun was shining brightly on that brilliant autumn day
The mountains of New Hampshire wore their crimson and their gold

In a large display of color sensing Winter's cutting cold

In a cabin on that mountain was a gathering of four,
Whose only bond in common was their service in the Corps
The man they called "the youngster" had seen service in Chu Lai
He had fought the fight in Khe Sanh and been wounded at Phu Bai

To his left there was another who had landed at Inchon
Before heading on to Chosin back when all but hope was gone
Across the rough-hewn table was a slightly older man
With a history of fighting from Tulagi to Saipan

But the oldest of their number sitting at the tables head,
Was a tall, retired Sergeant who had also fought and bled
He had been at Chateau-Thierry with an infantry platoon
Where the man he called his "skipper" was a general named Le-jeune

They were gathered all together as they did each passing year
To mark an anniversary which each of them held dear
Before they raised their glasses to the scarlet and the gold
It had always been their custom that a story must be told

And so the salty Sergeant said "it seems to be my turn
And when I finish up this tale your ears will surely burn
You may have wondered now and then why our Corps d'Elite
With battle streamers won ashore, works for the naval fleet

There was a time when I was young that it just wasn't so
And we wore Army uniforms so very long ago
Well, the skirmish ended up we thought the wars were done
Since we had quite effectively fought Germany and won

So the Admiral told the General 'it's time to square away
Just who gets what, and who is whose, and go our merry way
We'll take the guns the Army said and you may have the boats
And all the rubber duckies and everything that floats

The Navy grinned and said O.K., that sounds just fine to me
And you can have the iron hats to dress your infantry
The general said that's very good, we'd also like the tanks
But you get docks and shoals and rocks and take them with our thanks

And so they battered long and strong until the sun was setting
And then the general sighed and said there's two thing we're forgetting
I know, the admiral then agreed but they're so far apart
That choosing who gets which of them could surely break a heart

But we have a job to do and I'm afraid that means
That one of us gets stuck with mules and one of us will get Marines
The general moaned and wiped a tear and said with a shaking voice
I've seen them both in action sir so mine's an easy choice

I've seen one breast the flaming fire and see his duty through
Without a thought of battle hot or how the breezes blew
The other one I must admit is every bit as brave
But just trying to work with them could drive you to your grave

Their hides are toughened leather, their muscles solid brick
And just to make them listen you must beat them with a stick
The admiral nodded solemnly and gave his hat a tip
He then produced a silver coin and said, we'll have to flip

And so the general acquiesced and so the coin was tossed
And we are with the Navy cause the doggone admiral lost."



This is why I celebrate Christmas...from P4

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:
"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.



Adopt-a-Squad update

The update from Ed:

36 Marines are currently deployed to Iraq assisting with getting a portion of all the USMC equipment currently in country ready for the pull out. Their support boxes were Mailed out last Monday. Next week their Christmas boxes will be mailed. Recently 12 Marines from the Sacramento Reserve center were tasked for mobilization in February as part of a deployment to Afghanistan. No other info is available. The last Iraq deployment from Sacramento returned in October which included two Marine

Corps League 885 members. Those members are Cpl Matthew Sharp and LCpl Coston Beauchamp. **Welcome Home!!!!**

eMarinePX.com and their loyal customers donated another \$700 to help keep AAS going! Are you doing your part?

Thanks Skip & Sparky, you are the BEST!!!



Christmas at War

The images of Christmas we are most familiar with are Santa Claus, Christmas trees, mistletoe and gifts. But for Marines Christmas is different. Christmas brings no relief to the heat, cold, misery, fear, danger and loneliness that is a sea soldier's life.

Despite the terrible conditions of war, Marines, Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen throughout American history have found ways to acknowledge and to even celebrate this holiday, creating makeshift Christmas trees and GI Santas. Christmas remains in our hearts and like our *Esprit-de-Corps* can't be taken away.

Around the League

Marine Expo West
Jan 27 & 28, 2010
Camp Pendleton, Ca

Southwest Div Conference
Jan 29 & 30, 2010
Location: TBD

Dept. of Ca. 78th Conv.
June 3-5, 2010
Double Tree Hotel/Santa Ana
Committee Chair: Jack
Closson (714) 556-3716
firstsgtclosson@netscape.net

Marine Quotes

"Old breed? New breed? There's not a damn bit of difference so long as it's the Marine breed."
- **Chesty Puller, USMC**

"The safest place in Korea was right behind a platoon of Marines. Lord, how they could fight!"
- **MGen. Frank E. Lowe, USA; Korea, 26 January 1952**

"Marines know how to use their bayonets. Army bayonets may as well be paperweights."
- **Navy Times; November 1994**

"Come on, you sons of bitches! Do you want to live forever?"
- **GySgt. Daniel J. "Dan" Daly, USMC**

Happy Birthday!!!

December:

- Ted Lingenfelter
- Tom O'Flanigan
- Felicia "Sparky" Rankin

January:

- John Bynes
- Ed Rossovic

Adjutant / Paymaster's Corner

Members who's dues are due:

- *December*
 - *Metroka*
- *January*
 - *Beauchamp*
 - *Brodeur*
 - *Davis*

An Irish communication Problem:

"Well, Mrs. O'Connor, so you want a divorce?" the solicitor questioned his client. "Tell me about it. Do you have a grudge?" "Oh, no," replied Mrs. O'Connor. "Shure now, we have a carport." The solicitor tried again. "Well, does the man beat you up?" "No, no," said Mrs. O'Connor, looking puzzled. "Oi'm always first out of bed."

Still hopeful, the solicitor tried once again. "Well, does he go in for unnatural connubial practices?" "Shure now, he plays the flute, but I don't think he knows anything about the connubial."

Now desperate, the solicitor pushed on. "What I'm trying to find out is what grounds you have." "Bless ye, soul. We live in a flat -- not even a window box, let alone grounds."

"Mrs. O'Connor," the solicitor said in considerable exasperation, "you need a reason that the court can consider. What is the reason for you seeking this divorce?"

"Ah, well now," said the lady, "Shure it's because the man canna hold an intelligent conversation."

Semper Fi.....Gary





Our Nation's Capital

*"He who has not
Christmas in his heart
will never find it under
a tree."*

- Roy L. Smith

Upcoming Events

- **December 03 , 2009 - "Miracle on 34th Street" Benefit performance**
1900 at the Nevada Theatre 401 Broad Street, Nevada City, CA 95959
\$20 at the door, please bring a new unwrapped toy valued at \$10 or more.
- **December 05 , 2009 - Roamin' Angels Toys for Tots Drive**
0900-1500 Under the flag in the Brunswick basin
- **December 07 , 2009 -Regular Meeting**
1800 at the Grass Valley Vet's Hall. Please be on time and bring a friend!
- **December 10th & 11th, 2009 - Toys for Tots working parties**
12/10 - Time TBD by Baldwin, Move toys from storage to Vet's Hall with Moose Lodge
12/11 - 1800 Santa shoppers & Bike Build with GV & FNCM
- **December 10th, 2009 - TFT final qual day for applicants at GV Salvation Army**
- **December 12 , 2009 -Toys for Tots Distribution Day!**
0900-1200 Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building

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Semper



Fidelis



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