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# GATOR

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Leathernecks

Gator Detachment of the Marine Corps League, Inc.  
7257 NW 4 Blvd, PMB #166, Gainesville FL 32607  
Editor: Scott DuPree 352.336.5822 [ssgtd@cox.net](mailto:ssgtd@cox.net)

**Jan/Feb 2010**

NEXT MEETING IS ON THURSDAY, 28 January 2009.

**REMINDER - ON GENERAL MEETING NIGHTS, ARRIVE AT 6PM FOR SOCIAL HOUR AND DINNER. JANUARY 2010 IS THE FIRST MEETING IN THIS FORMAT. HELP YOUR FRIENDS REMEMBER. BUSINESS MEETING WILL STILL START AT 7PM BUT WE WILL BE ABLE TO DISMISS EARLIER THAN USUAL SINCE WE WON'T RECESS FOR DINNER. SEE YOU THERE!**

## Commandant's Message by Scott DuPree

Marines and members, 2009 was a tough year. We said goodbye to some great friends. Medical woes affected so many. Economic times tightened budgets. But we still moved forward. Our website was voted #1. Our membership increased. We saw many more members in red covers and MCL uniforms. The turnout at the birthday ball showed strong and increasing support. We are seeing new faces and new ideas. I will tell you with all the challenges of 2009 I was disappointed that we did not achieve some of our goals. Of course we set our expectations high. After experiencing a personally sluggish year due to medical issues, I am committed to stepping it up a notch. And my recent meeting with the Board and staff reflected their readiness to also pick up the pace.

So we will look for ways to do more and be more. We will look to enhance our focus on "Marines helping Marines." We will plan things that make it more enjoyable for you to participate. I will look for your support to help us go there. Join us at our meetings ... that is always a good start.

### 2009-2010 GatorDet Staff

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Master Chef Michael O'Brien 352-481-6031

## Coming Up:

- Saturday January 30th 9:00am  
GatorDet serves BREAKFAST  
At VFW Post 2811
- Saturday January 30th 6:00pm  
Veteran Advisory Board Awards  
Banquet at the Paramount Hotel  
(tickets available at the door)
- February 3-5  
Air Show in Ocala; help needed  
Contact Phil Newman 372-8217
- Thursday February 4th 6:30pm  
**Military Support Group** meets  
First United Methodist, Alachua  
Come pack boxes for Marines.
- Saturday and Sunday  
Feb 13-14, 1:00-3:00  
At Books-A-Million on 13th St.  
Patriotic & Historic Alliance of North  
Central Florida "Iwo Jima"
- Friday Feb 19th 1pm  
Napalitano's, Tower Road  
'Clair Chaffin and Iwo Jima'  
Dinner and presentation  
\$13.00 Come early to eat
- February 19-22  
Air Show, Keystone Heights  
Marine symposium on 20th  
Help needed  
Contact Phil Newman 372-8217
- Saturday February 20th 10:30  
GatorDet Staff Meeting  
Turkey Creek Office
- Thursday February 25th  
GENERAL MEETING  
6:00pm - Social hour/dinner  
7:00pm - Business meeting
- Saturday February 27th 9:00am  
GatorDet serves BREAKFAST  
At VFW Post 2811

***Election of Officers to be held in February***

At the General Meeting on February 25th, the membership will vote on the Officers to be elected for the 2010-2011 term. These positions are the Commandant, Senior Vice Commandant, Junior Vice Commandant and Judge Advocate. Installation of new officers will be held in March. If anyone has any desire to serve in these positions, it is a good time to announce your intention and develop some support. Each nominee needs someone to nominate them. If you have questions about the process, please direct them to Judge Advocate John Murdoch, whose contact info is on Page 1.

**JOB DESCRIPTIONS OF ELECTED OFFICERS:**

**COMMANDANT:** Directs all Gator Det activities within the community, conducts all Gator Det meetings, and serves as advisor to all committees. Administers the oath to all new members and conducts installation of new officers. Ensures all activities of the Gator Det comport with the goals and mission of the Gator Det.

**SR. VICE COMMANDANT:** Assists the Commandant in all his duties. In the absence of the Commandant, takes over those duties necessary for normal function of the Gator Det. Performs such other duties as required by the Commandant.

**JR. VICE COMMANDANT:** Creates and promulgates such programs and incentives as are necessary to ensure the growth of the membership of the Gator Det. Be prepared to assume the role of the Sr. Vice Commandant or Commandant if the need arises. Performs such other duties as required by the Commandant.

**JUDGE ADVOCATE:** The official interpreter of all bylaws from the Gator Det, Department or National organizations. Shall advise the commandant on all issues of procedure or regulation. Shall act as investigator or judge as provided in the bylaws. Performs such other duties as required by the Commandant.

***Marine of the Year nominations being accepted; voting at March meeting***

Now is the time to submit your nominations for the Detachment Marine of the Year Award. The criteria for this award: "Awarded to the Detachment Marine who during the period of consideration has demonstrated by leadership and performance an **extraordinary** contribution to the Detachment, Marine Corps League, Community and Nation; and whose personal conduct has reflected favorably on and has brought credit to the Detachment, Marine Corps League and the United States Marine Corps." All nominations should be submitted to Senior Vice Commandant (Awards Chairman) Bob Gasche (contact info on Page 1) prior to voting at the March 25th General Meeting.

***Guest Speakers for the January Meeting***

At the January meeting we will hear from two guests. John Riley from Veteran Services will be here to tell us about the services his office provides. We will also hear from Laura Pasteur from the Hippodrome State Theater. She will tell us about an upcoming production that tells a story set in Camp LeJeune in the early 1970's.

***Honor a Loved One - Special Engraved Bricks For A Memorial***

Jr Vice Commandant Jim Yakbusin has completed a lot of leg work and the sale of the Brick Pavers has begun. This program will be a major fundraiser for our detachment. The purchase of these bricks is tax-deductible.

**NOW is a good time to place an order for your first brick. We almost have enough for the first order.**

Each 4"x8" brick can be engraved with your message and includes a miniature replica of your brick. Brick is \$110, includes a keepsake minibrick with same engraving, and will be installed in the veteran memorial at the City Hall in Alachua, where it should reside for many decades to come. The first order will be placed in early February. An order form is on Page 7 of this newsletter. For more order forms or more info, contact Jim Yakbusin at 386-462-0493 or by email at yakmarine@aol.com.

**\*\*\* SEE THE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 7 \*\*\***



**Social Director announces event for the February Social Hour**

All League members and spouses are invited to attend and participate in our Valentine's Dessert Tasting to be held during the Social Hour for our Feb 25th meeting. The social hour begins at 6:00pm in advance of the 7:00pm business meeting.

Selected folks whose identities shall remain secret until all the votes are cast will prepare and bring their favorite or most famous Valentine's desserts, for all to sample. Attendees will vote for their favorites using tickets or ballots they receive from Adjutant Bob Barnas at our check-in table. Winners and the chef's identities will be revealed during the meeting.

If you want to suggest yourself or someone else you know to prepare a prize-winning dessert for the February meeting, contact Social Director Kay Quinn at 352-332-9219 or reach her at kquinnfl@bellsouth.net.

**Gatornationals - Group Sales**

If anyone is interested in going to the NHRA Gatornationals in mid-March, we can purchase tickets through the Group Sales office for a reduced rate. We need to have at least 20 ticket days purchased in order to qualify for the discount. If anyone is interested, please contact the Commandant or the Adjutant (contact info on Page 1.)

**Budget to be voted on at January meeting**

At the December 3rd meeting, a proposed detachment budget was presented for consideration. That budget will be brought up for a vote at the January 28th meeting. To obtain a copy of our budget, contact Marine Bob Barnas, Detachment Adjutant/Paymaster. His contact info is on Page 1.

**Polo Shirts with Detachment Logo available now**

Quartermaster Tom Sklens has some polo shirts in stock. These are black Hanes polo shirts with a 3.5" detachment logo on the left breast. If we don't have your size in stock, we can certainly order it. These shirts are only \$20.00 each and are made of good material, so they will look good for a long time.

**HELP! We need some culinary help.**

Our detachment begins this month with gathering at 6:00pm, an hour before the start of the business meeting. This is to have a better chance to mingle and enjoy a meal. We need some help from anyone who is available to get to the meeting hall earlier than 6:00pm and help with the preparation of the entree. If you can help us with this, please contact Mike O'Brien 481-6031 or Kay Quinn 332-9219. You can help our meeting to be a meaningful and well-attended success!

**Marine Corps Scholarship Fund (Department of Florida)**

Our friend Dale Condy in Lake City is the Dept of Florida Scholarship Chairman. Each year he writes scholarship checks to the eligible recipients. For those who have kids, grandkids or parents in school, you know that every little bit helps. Recipients from this fund are relatives of League members. You can make a donation to the fund. For each \$5 you donate, you will receive three tickets for a drawing to be held in June. First prize \$250.00, Second prize \$100.00, Third prize \$50.00. Donations can be made at our meetings, or between meetings by contacting Adjutant Bob Barnas (contact info on Page 1.)

**MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE:** Members of the Marine Corps League join together in camaraderie and fellowship for the purpose of preserving the traditions and promoting the interests of the United States Marine Corps, banding together those who are now serving in the United States Marine Corps and those who have been honorably discharged from that service that they may effectively promote the ideals of American freedom and democracy, voluntarily aiding and rendering assistance to all Marines and former Marines and to their widows and orphans; and to perpetuate the history of the United States Marine Corps and by fitting acts to observe the anniversaries of historical occasions of particular interest to Marines.



***Veteran Awards Banquet, Saturday January 30th***

This annual event will be held on Saturday evening at the Paramount Hotel. Our detachment has purchased two tables and at this point just about all seats are sold. However, tickets will be sold at the door for any remaining seats at the event. Our nominee for Veteran of the Year is Adjutant/Paymaster Bob Barnas. If you have questions about this event, contact Veteran Advisory Board Chairman Greg Williams (contact info on Page 1.)

***Update on the new web site***

Work continues in the development of our new web site. The next release of features in the development tools is a few months away. After those updates, we will assess the status of the site. Many thanks to Marine Mark Stringfellow (CEO of Maximum Computer Systems) for his continuing efforts to make this new site a success.

***Military Support Group - our appointed place of duty***

The mission of the Marine Corps League is to help Marines. The Military Support Group (MSG) has contact with a unit of Marines in Afghanistan. We need GatorDet members to go to the MSG meetings and help us pack boxes going to the Marines. It is simple: we show up, we use the existing system. If we can raise more money and donate to the MSG, we can send more boxes to Marines. See calendar on page 1 for dates. For more info, see their website, [www.msgfac.com](http://www.msgfac.com).

To support our Marines, we need bodies and money. Try to be one of the two. Semper Fi. - Scott

***Meeting Times Change in January***

Beginning in January, our general meetings will begin with an informal hour starting at 6:00pm at the VFW. That hour will be an opportunity for everyone to socialize. Take that time to talk to someone you didn't already know. During that hour, we will have our covered dish dinner as well. At 7pm, the business meeting will convene and should proceed start to finish without delay.

We are making this adjustment to give you more quality time with each other and hopefully be able to wrap up the business meeting a little sooner than usual.

***We Want To See You For Breakfast Saturday Morning***

**When:** 9:00am on the LAST SATURDAY of every month (30 Jan and 27 Feb)

**Where:** VFW 2811 (in the meeting room)

**What:** Breakfast, prepared by Gator Detachment members

**Cost:** \$4.00

Folks, our detachment members come out and fix eggs, grits, sausage, bacon, biscuits, hash browns, coffee, Bloody Marys... what a deal. You pay then go up buffet style. It's a great deal and it supports the detachment. Dick Lester and Michael O'Brien come to be the cooks. **We can use a few helpers.** If you can help, call Mike O'Brien 481-6031 to see what is needed. If you can't come to help, come to eat and show your support.

***Sick And Distressed***

We continue to remember those of our Marine Corps League family that are experiencing sickness, medical recovery or other forms of distress. Our thoughts and prayers to those who are continuing to fight the fight. We all know a number of our members going in or recovering from medical stuff and life stuff. If you know someone, consider picking up the phone and calling them just to let you know you're thinking of them. Also, please contact our Chaplain Mary Hildebrand at 352-338-1538. She can call, visit or send a card on behalf of our detachment.

2009 was a tough year and we kept so many of our members on our hearts. Godspeed to all in 2010.



## **The Power and Perseverance of the American Spirit** By Bob Gasche

**A**s the new year begins to unfold we would do well to reflect upon our heritage of service to other nations in this somewhat chaotic world. It is during both peace and war that the United States generally offers its many resources of materials and manpower to help provide a means of recovery and stability for afflicted nations. Our record of reaching out to countries struck by disasters, both natural and man-made, is without equal.

The Marshall Plan after World War II, the Truman Doctrine that rebuilt Greece and Turkey, the renewal of South Korea, West Berlin, the aid to Japan and of course our most recent efforts in Haiti. A deluge of money and aid has been sent to this very poor and very devastated country with thousands of our military already there to help restore order out of chaos.

Eight months after the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor it was the United States Marines that stormed ashore on Guadalcanal (August 7, 1942) to halt the southward thrust of the advancing Japanese military. The victory achieved by the Marines is legendary as this was accomplished in spite of a reluctant Admiral Fletcher that pulled out his carriers far too early, leaving the First Marine Division stranded without sufficient supplies to carry the fight to the enemy for an extended period.

Fortunately, the supply crisis on Guadalcanal was augmented by a large cache of food and equipment left by the fleeing Japanese and Korean laborers. Early on, Marines were spared the ravages of malaria and dengue fever; however, dysentery put many men in long sickbay lines. Before Guadalcanal was secured there were more casualties from jungle pestilence than from enemy fire.

Beyond Guadalcanal we find the Second Marine Division wading through chest-high surf and intense enemy fire to reach Batio Island located in the Tarawa atoll. A treacherous reef kept the Higgins Boats from getting onto the beach; however "alligators" were able to crunch across without any trouble. The Japanese had boasted, "A million men could not take Tarawa in a thousand years." The Marines did it in 36 hours.

Bouganville, Cape Gloucester, Roi-Namur (in the Marshall Islands), Pelieu (a battle that should never have been fought but MacArthur wanted his "flanks" protected during the Phillipines invasion), Saipan, Tinian, Iwo Jima and Okinawa - all Marine victories that provided the stepping stones across the Pacific so two bombs could be dropped on Japan to bring an end to a very costly war.

Now we have the Marines fighting in Iraq (leaving as we speak) and Afghanistan to help bring about a defeat of al-Queda and the death of Osama Bin Laden. The political ramifications of this encounter are enormous and inhibit many of the efforts by our military to achieve success. We are on a political collision course in Afghanistan as there is just a small number of al-Queda left with most of them hiding in Pakistan caves.

Our chances of stopping a downward spiral are slim as the real surge lies in the political arena. After eight years the people of Afghanistan seem to be tired of foreign troops in spite of the many efforts on our part to improve their quality of life and rebuild their infrastructure.

Our passion for peace is a worthy cause and must not be abandoned. However corrupt foreign leaders do little to help achieve this worthy goal. Pouring millions of dollars into Pakistan has not achieved our desire for defeat of al-Queda or the capture of Osama Bin Laden. We are still entangled with a questionable Afghan government, creeping resurgence of al-Queda and a tremendous drain on our national budget. This is not a healthy situation coupled with our own economic woes.

In spite of these many problems, the American spirit is still strong and will overcome in time, the many issues facing all American citizens.



### ***Air Shows coming up - need a little help***

There are two air shows coming up soon and our resident B-17 bomber pilot is looking for a few good airmen. Or actually anyone who can help out.

On February 3-5, there is an air show in Ocala and they need some assistance with the event.

On February 19-22, an air show in Keystone Heights also needs help.

At the Keystone Heights air show, there will be a Marine symposium on Saturday the 20th. Marine pilots will be on hand to answer questions. More Marine pilots are encouraged to attend. For further information, please contact Phil Newman 372-8217 or by email at [philnewwwii@webtv.net](mailto:philnewwwii@webtv.net).

### ***Honor Guard Commander Bob Curti***

The honor guard meets the first Thursday of every month at 1800 at the VFW. We have had a few Marines step up lately and express their interest to serve us in this way. The Honor Guard is asked to do color guard details for various events in the community as well as funerals. It is a great way to publicize the Marine Corps League. Practice will make that publicity positive, so if you are interested, contact Bob Curti at 352-384-0173.

### ***This Month in Marine Corps History***

**10 January 1995:** The Pentagon announced that 2,600 U.S. Marines would be deployed to Somalia for Operation United Shield to assist in the final withdrawal of UN peacekeeping troops from Somalia. The decision came in response to a UN request for American protection of its peacekeeping forces serving in the war-torn African nation.

**11 January 1945:** The first elements of Marine Aircraft Group 24, commanded by Colonel Lyle H. Meyer, landed at Lingayen, Luzon, Philippine Islands, to provide close air support for Army forces. Over the next three months, MAG-24 and MAG-32 would fly a total of 8,842 combat sorties and drop more than 19,000 bombs as part of the Fifth Air Force in support of the Sixth Army.

**16 January 1991:** Operation Desert Shield became Operation Desert Storm as forces of the allied coalition launched an all-out air campaign against targets in Iraq and occupied Kuwait in an effort to liberate Kuwait and enforce the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. Overall, in the theater of operations, the coalition forces included more than 415,000 U.S. troops.

**18 January 1951:** Marines of the 1st Marine Division began mopping-up operations against guerrillas in the Pohang area, South Korea, following the Division's return from its epic battle with Communist Chinese troops at the Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir.

**20 January 1968:** The second battle for Khe Sanh began when Marines from the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines attacked a North Vietnamese battalion between Hill 881 South and Hill 881 North. More than 100 of the enemy were killed.

**22 January 1969:** Operation Dewey Canyon, perhaps the most successful high-mobility regimental-size action of the Vietnam War, began in the A Shau/Da Krong Valleys when the 9th Marines, commanded by Colonel Robert H. Barrow, and supporting artillery were lifted from Quang Tri. By 18 March the enemy's base area had been cleared out, 1617 enemy dead had been counted, and more than 500 tons of weapons and ammunition unearthed.

**25 January 1856:** Marines and seamen from the U.S. sloop DECATUR went ashore at the village of Seattle, Washington, to protect settlers from Indian raids. The Indians launched a seven-hour attack but were driven off later that day after suffering severe losses. Incredibly, only two civilian volunteers were killed and no Marines or sailors were lost.

**27 January 1988:** About 400 Marines and sailors from the 2d Marine Division, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, and 2d Force Service Support Group deployed for the Persian Gulf. The Contingency Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) CM 2-88 would relieve Contingency MAGTF 1-88 in the volatile Persian Gulf and provide the effective landing force capability to Joint Task Force Middle East.

**29 January 1991:** The first serious ground fighting of Operation Desert Storm broke out when Iraqi troops mounted an attack into Saudi Arabia along a 40-mile front. Iraqi units centered their efforts on Khafji, a port city six miles south of the border. Saudi and Quatari troops, supported by artillery from the 1st Marine Division and attack helicopters and other allied coalition aircraft, recaptured the town two days later.



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## FUNDRAISER ORDER FORM

In honor of Veterans who have fought for our country and to preserve peace and freedom throughout the world, the Marine Corps League - Gator Detachment 990, is proud to offer commemorative bricks to be placed in a memorial in front of Alachua City Hall. Thank you for your support!

### COMMEMORATIVE BRICK INSCRIPTON

**Up to 3 lines---18 characters per line - one letter per box:**

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**Each package is priced at \$110 and includes one 4"x 8" commemorative brick and one mini-replica keepsake brick.**

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Name of Donor (printed) | Signature | Date

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Address | City | State | Zip

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Gator Detachment 990  
7257 Nw 4th Blvd.  
PMB 166  
Gainesville, FL 32607  
www.GATORDET.com

*Gator Det is a registered not for profit organization*

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*“Once A Marine, Always A Marine”*

Gator Detachment 990  
Marine Corps League  
7257 NW 4 Blvd, PM #166  
Gainesville FL 32607



*GATOR DETACHMENT 990, MARINE CORPS LEAGUE*

What do we do?

- Monthly meetings to both talk about League business and to socialize with Marines
- We are not a drinking club. No drinking or smoking in our meetings.
- We initiate and participate in community events to promote patriotism.
- We run the Toys For Tots campaign for this region, even beyond our county's borders
- We help the Military Support Group of Alachua County to serve Marines and others
- We sponsor the Milton Lewis Young Marines, the Nation's Top Unit.
- We collaborate with the County's Veteran Advisory Board to support veteran activities.
- We help our community when we see the opportunity.
- We love the postal service (*are you reading this? Join Us!*)
- We are Marines helping Marines. Semper Fidelis.

*NEXT MEETING is January 28th at 7:00pm, VFW 2811, Waldo Road, Gainesville  
Come early - social hour begins at 6pm.*