



# The Gator ALMAR



<http://gatordet.tripod.com>

Gator Detachment of the Marine Corps League, Inc.  
P.O. Box 5845 (New phone number pending)  
Gainesville FL 32627

Commandant: Bob Gasche 376-0402 NOV/DEC 2003  
Editor: Scott DuPree - ssgtd@bellsouth.net 336.5822

**Next Meeting January 27, 2004**

Food will be available. As always, if you want to share a dish, bring it.  
NOTE: NO MEETINGS IN DECEMBER - SEE YOU IN JANUARY!! HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LEATHERNECKS!

### Commandant's Message:

Today's headlines are consumed with reports of conflict, misunderstanding and death. To quote Charles Dickens, "These are the best of times and the worst of times." We live in a land of plenty for many yet too often we read about starvation and slaughter of human beings in many parts of the world. Numerous reports and articles have been written about this volatile world situation; however, the very best article I have ever read concerning the mistrust that prevails in our world today was written by our own Junior Past Commandant Scott DuPree. A segment thereof follows:

"All of our history, of this nation and the world, is filled with adversity. Many bloody battles have been fought seeking justice and democracy. We are certainly obligated to learn from the mistakes of the generations before us in order to make a better place for our generations and those to come. And yet one mistake we seem to make over and over is in hanging on to the values that prevent further healing, like the discriminatory value we assign to a person, image or group.

The only way for any discriminatory "us and them" condition to exist is for parties to admit there are two separate sides. And as long as we admit there are two parties, there will remain the virtual existence of those parties, fostering the "us and them" condition and preventing further progress. There are those who urge us to keep our differences alive, who will manipulate us with their discriminatory threats and claims of injustice... Using sandlot baseball terms, you only win when you take your ball and go home."

The unity and solidarity that prevails in our detachment is the cornerstone of our success. As we embrace and fulfill our honored Marine Corps traditions and continue to meet the

major objectives of the Marine Corps League, we will continue to forge ahead as leaders in our community as well as in the League. We carried a torch through a comprehensive schedule of events this fall and I am counting on all of you to continue to support and participate in all of our future activities so far as your schedule will permit. Semper Fi. - Bob Gasche.

### NEW ADJUTANT AND PAYMASTER

Upon resignation of our Adjutant/Paymaster, the Board has approved the appointments of Greg Williams as Adjutant and Jamie Hill as Paymaster. Thanks to them for stepping up!

### GATORDET BALL A GREAT SUCCESS!

On Saturday, 1 Nov 2003, the Ball began amidst the red, white and blue decor of the VFW Post 2811. With over 70 people in attendance, the annual ceremony was held, followed by a dinner featuring Prime Rib AND Ham AND Smoked Turkey, as well as salad, green beans, creamed potatoes and dessert. Guest of Honor 1stSgt Dan Brinsko gave a compelling accounting of his unit's activities in Iraq, showing many photos on a video presentation. Blood Donor of the Year Fredrick Peterkin and Recruiter of the Year Gary Powers received their recognition, while Ralph Lewis was awarded the Jim Yakubsin Vision Award. Door prizes were given won and the big raffle was won by member Chuck Talton. We cannot thank the VFW Post enough for their hospitality. We look forward to giving you a financial report on the ball as soon as it is compiled.

### GATORDET RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR INCREASED MEMBERSHIP 2002-2003

Thanks to the leadership of this detachment, the Gator Det was recognized with the National Junior Vice Commandant's Citation for exceeding the previous year's membership strength. This award was received at the Department Conference on October 11 by Past Commandant **Scott DuPree**, and will be presented to Detachment Commandant **Bob Gasche** at the November general meeting. Kudos to Marine **Dick Lester**, Detachment Junior Vice Commandant, who is in charge of the detachment's recruiting efforts.

## THOSE BUSY YOUNG MARINES

The Milton Lewis Young Marines met in October at VFW Post 2811, where they conducted their normal training, received a one-hour talk on the dangers of drugs, and received a 30-minute installment on their rifle safety training. Our thanks goes to the Corner Drug Store for providing a substance abuse counselor for this session. It is our intention to provide information to these youth that will strengthen their lives.

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, our Young Marines and some of the Bulldog Young Marines (Reichert House) went by bus (provided by the Gainesville Police Department) to the Sea and Sky Spectacular at Jacksonville Beach on a beautiful day. This is an air show with an amphibious assault demonstration. Our Young Marines met active Marines from Camp LeJeune, watched hours of air demonstrations including the Blue Angels and watched the Marine Silent Drill Platoon demonstration. Marine recruiters put them on pull up bars to earn their prizes. A good day all the way around for the youth and the adults.

They have also been participating in a flurry of veteran events in early November. On Nov 7 they marched in the Homecoming Parade; on Nov 8 they placed over 800 flags on veterans' gravesites; on Nov 9<sup>th</sup> they helped out at a Bikers rally for veterans while other Young Marines did a flag folding for a local church; on November 10, some of them were at the memorial dedication at the new courthouse; on Nov 11<sup>th</sup> they participated in the ceremonies at Veteran's Park. From October 31 to Nov 9, they also took their turns manning the booth at the fair for the Young Marines and the League.

They will go back to regular training and you will see them at the Toys for Tots events. We enjoy being a positive part of the lives of these kids. Please offer support in whatever way you are able. See our website to find out more. If you are interested in helping this unit, or you have other questions or want information, call Young Marines Adjutant **Jennifer Talton** at 386-418-4185, or see our site at [www.miltonlewisyoungmarines.com](http://www.miltonlewisyoungmarines.com).

## TOYS FOR TOTS COMING UP NEXT

Marine Cary Hill is again leading the Gator Detachment's Toys For Tots Campaign and it is escalating into a bigger program this year. Cary is receiving the full and enthusiastic support of

WKTK and SKY-FM to promote this important venture. Cary has points of contact in other counties that are working with him to provide toys to needy children in those areas. The GatorDet sponsored a golf tournament Saturday November 15<sup>th</sup> to raise money for this effort where more than \$1100.00 was raised. At the Alachua County Fair, our booth collected over \$150.00 in donations to this program. Where they collected around 3,500 toys last year, the goal this year is 5,000 toys. This will be our biggest year yet. The first workday for preparing the toys will be DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> AT VFW POST 2811. The Toys For Tots Party for the kids is scheduled for DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>. To find out how you can help, contact Cary Hill at 495-2710 or email him at [usa056@aol.com](mailto:usa056@aol.com)

## **M**EMBERSHIP

Membership Dues are **\$30.00**. They are due on the anniversary month of your enrollment in the League. Failure to pay your dues could result in your being dropped from the Marine Corps League roster. If you are unsure about when your dues are due, please inquire to the Commandant at 376-0402. **Semper Fi**.

## YARD SALES HELP YOUNG MARINES

The GatorDet had a yard sale in October to help the Young Marines fund a trip to Camp Blanding early next year. They raised over \$400.00. Many thanks goes to Kirby Stewart, Dick Lester, Faye O'Neill Lester, and everyone who either came out to help or donated items. You have the gratitude of the Young Marines.

## STATE CONFERENCE OCTOBER 10-12

The State Conference for the Department of Florida was held in Margate, near Fort Lauderdale. At the business meeting on October 11th, the Board announced that a fund raising cruise for the Marine Corps League in fall of 2004 is being considered. The Department's budget received final approval. It was established that leadership schools can still be conducted at detachment locations (8 hour course) and at conferences (4 hour course.) Lou Calleja briefed everyone on the new web site ([www.mclfl.org](http://www.mclfl.org), the department's new site.) Membership awards were presented - the GatorDet received an award for exceeding the previous year's membership strength. They established the Jim Spears Public Relations Award to recognize the outstanding detachment for public relations. There was a memorial service for our fallen Leaguers. The evening banquet had guest speaker Bgen Michael R. Lehnert, Chief of Staff, U.S. Southern Command, who spoke on the how the old Corps can be proud of the new Corps. The next conference is scheduled for March 2004 and will be held in Lake City, sponsored by the Suwannee Valley Detachment.

## **GATORDET AND YOUNG MARINES SPONSORED BOOTH AT THE COUNTY FAIR**

The Gator Detachment and the Milton Lewis Young Marines shared a large vendors booth at the Alachua County Fair. The booth was in place from October 31<sup>st</sup> through November 9<sup>th</sup>. The booth provided information about the Marine Corps League, displayed our photo albums to show people what we do, and had volunteers standing there to answer questions. During the 10 day period, a number of Marine veterans showed an interest in the League. The booth also did the same for the Young Marines program and provided information about the Toys For Tots program. A collection jar was there, which collected over \$150.00 for Toys for Tots. Barbara DuPree, wife of the Past Commandant, organized and managed the site for both groups. She put in a lot of volunteer hours and we are grateful for her dedication. Also a big thanks to Dick Lester for his work in setting up and breaking down the site. Others contributing to the effort included Ronnie Marston, Faye O'Neill, Chester Lundy, Bob Gasche, Cary Hill, Ray Guyette, "Z" Aquinde, Mary Hildebrande, Doug Abruzzo, Scott DuPree and Chuck and Jennifer Talton.

## **BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A PARADE**

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the University of Florida sponsored the annual Homecoming Parade. The GatorDet was right in it, too. Marine Dick Lester coordinated all of the activity for our unit this year as he did last year. He acquired a HumVee and trailer. Veterans of the VFW Post 2811 and the DAV 90 also rode with us, while the Young Marines from the Milton Lewis and Bulldog units formed a platoon behind their color guard. The parade has an estimated audience of 150,000 people. The weather was great and a good time was had by all who attended. Next year, we hope to see more of our members participate in this event.

## **VETERANS' DAY CEREMONY AT VETERANS PARK**

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, the annual commemoration of Veterans' Day was held at Veterans' Park on Tower Road. The weather was great and over 2,500 people attended the activities. There was music and food, static displays and organizational tents. Guest speakers provided reflections on the sacrifices of the veterans and the respect that is due them. There was a special emphasis this year on the veterans of the Iraqi theater, particularly those who recently lost their lives. The GatorDet had the Marine Corps League tent up and accomplished the mission of letting veterans know we are here. The Young Marines were once again right there working with the League members. League members Fredrick Peterkin and Steve Homewood were dressed in uniforms depicting the military of the past while Junior ROTC students from Gainesville High School gave us a glimpse of our future military material.

During the ceremony, Commandant Bob Gasche read the flag folding ceremony as it was performed by the Young Marines. Past Commandant represented the Detachment in laying a wreath at the end of the ceremony.

## **MARINE FLAG WAIVES PROUDLY OVER CITY HALL**

On November 10, 2003, the Marine flag was raised to fly at city hall beneath the colors representing our nation and our state. A small detail was on hand as Marines Jim Yakubsin and Dick Lester raised the flag. The GatorDet has been doing this since 1999 with the approval of the City Manager and the Mayor.

## **MEMORIAL AT THE NEW CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER DEDICATED TO FALLEN ALACHUA COUNTY VETERANS**

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, a ceremony was held at the new courthouse, also known as the Criminal Justice Center, to dedicate a memorial to fallen veterans from our county. The two marble slates are mounted vertically within two columns near the entrance of the new facility. These memorials contain names of veterans who were lost to conflicts as far back as the civil war and also include the names of three local active duty military men who have been killed in Iraq. Led by the County Veteran Service Officer, Jim Lynch, the ceremony included remarks from local officials and the releasing of doves by members of the families of the most recently lost military men. The GatorDet was represented by at least 8 members. Once again, it is the League members who give their time and effort where they can that complies with our motto: Semper Fidelis.

## **ELECTIONS COMING UP IN FEBRUARY**

Your annual staff elections are coming up in February. Begin thinking now if you would like to serve in a leadership position in this organization. Currently, the elected positions are Commandant, Senior Vice Commandant, Junior Vice Commandant, Judge Advocate, Adjutant and Paymaster. Job descriptions for each of these is available upon request. In February, we will entertain nominations and conduct elections in the same meeting. Ask what you can do to help.

## **GATORDET SPONSORS CEREMONIAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROSTARAMA WORLD FINALS**

The ProStar series is about drag racing motorcycles. Their season consists of nine events held across the United States during the year. The last event of the season is the World Finals and is held in Gainesville. Last year, the ProStar series dedicated their year to the Armed Forces. Past Commandant Scott DuPree provided

a color guard and a singer for the National Anthem for their final eliminations day while Marine Norm Froscher gave them world class motor sports press coverage. With that rapport, the GatorDet once again helped them out this year. Keith "Scooter" Kizer, President and CEO of AMA/ProStar, appreciates the help we provide when their series comes to town.

This year, the Color Guard was provided by Gainesville High School JROTC and the National Anthem was sung by Gainesville's Cindy Short.

## **U.S. MARINES #25 4TH IN NASCAR BUSCH POINTS**

Bobby Hamilton Jr has driven the #25 US Marines Ford to its best NASCAR Busch season yet. He put the USMC-sponsored race car in victory lane 4 times and in the top-10 22 times this year. Look for more of Bobby and the Marines next year.

### **Upcoming at Gator Det ...**

**December 6, 2003 - VFW Post 2811 - Toys for Tots workday**

**December 13, 2003 - VFW Post 2811 - Toys for Tots Party**

**NO STAFF MEETING OR GENERAL MEETING IN DECEMBER**

## **Your Gator Det Staff 2002 - 2003**

**Bob Gasche - Commandant**

**Gary Powers - Senior Vice Commandant**

**Richard Lester - Junior Vice Commandant**

**Scott DuPree - Jr. Past Commandant**

**Ralph Lewis - Judge Advocate**

**Greg Williams - Adjutant**

**Jamie Hill - Paymaster**

**R a y G u y e t t e - Q u a r t e r m a s t e r**

**Ray Harper - Sergeant at Arms**

**Ben Kinard - Chaplain**

**Norm Froscher - Public Affairs Officer**

**Alan Gray - Military Historian**

**Ann Zecca - Photographer/Librarian**

**Bob Casey - Americanism and Education Officer**

**Cary Hill - Toys for Tots Chairman**

**Kirby Stewart - Special Projects Officer**

**Scott DuPree - Newsletter/Birthday Ball Chairman**

**Mary Hildebrand - Telephone Tree**