

**Marine Corps League
Baltimore Detachment #565**



1426 East Fort Avenue (#17 Fire House)
Baltimore, Maryland 21230-5247
Phone: 410-547-7699
<http://www.mclbaltimore.org>
Email: mclbaltimore@gmail.com



BALTIMORE
GUNG HO



*January - February 2024 * Vol. 28, No.1 * Editor Stuart Blair*

*In Memoriam of Robert Kennick * 18 December 2023*

MCL Baltimore 565 host Irreverent Warriors Silkies Hike

Saturday, November 4, 2023.

The annual Silkies Hike is the organizations largest event that takes place throughout the nation. The purpose of the Silkies Hike is to bring veterans together to improve mental health and to honor the military's old tradition of wearing silkies.

Our Silkies Hikes are for veterans, active duty, and reservists only. Maintaining an exclusively veteran element allows our hikers to open up and be themselves in a way that they wouldn't otherwise.

On a brisk November Saturday morning over 150 veterans, in assorted PT colored shorts, representing every branch of the United States military, filled our fire hall for what turned into a sunny 70-degree day stewing with laughter and comradery. The unified forced march that would precede muster, drew upon the veteran's shared experiences, and created an emotional band of marry vets. The 6.4 klick loop and pit stop for chow and beer, forced smiles, stories and fresh air into everyone. True to the mission, Irreverent Warriors main focus is to improve mental health and prevent suicide. We have all been there and know. We just need to put one foot in front of the other one more time to make it.

SB/JD



Irreverent Warriors Silkes Hike The hikes are between 4-10 miles, paced at 2-3 miles per hour.



Irreverent Warriors gather at Baltimore Detachment Hall

Commandant's Message

Greetings Marines,

I hope that everyone has had a safe and enjoyable holiday. These past months the detachment has had several successful events, the Marine Corps Birthday celebration party, Veteran's Day ritual, putting up Christmas decorations and a Christmas holiday party just to name a few. The detachment had a very successful Toys4tots campaign with the help of members, local organizations and local business the detachment was able to collect over 200 toys this year. Thanks to all who helped in this endeavor and we're looking forward to another great year in 2024.

It has been asked why we don't have more social gatherings at the detachment and it is a question that I have not been able to answer. I for one would love to see the detachment get together for more than a once a month meeting. Our past events have proven that we can have some great potluck meals and we can add some activities such as board games, interactive games (Charades) or just find a good movie to watch. We are fortunate to have our own detachment home and it would be great to entertain more detachment activities.

For this New Year there will be several upcoming events, National Mid Winter Conference in February this year being held in Washington DC, Dept of MD Convention in June, the Mid East Conference June to be held in West Va. and the National Convention in August to be held in California. I wish to encourage members to attend as many of the events as possible so that the detachment can have more members aware of as well as involved in the workings of the Marine Corps League.

Happy New Years Marines and here's looking forward to a very productive year.

Semper Fi

*Earl Ruff Jr
Commandant*

2024 Marine of the Year * Associate Member of the Year NOMINATIONS

The nominations for Baltimore Detachment "Marine of the Year" are due at the January detachment meeting.

*Period of performance for consideration:
28 February 2023 through 31 January 2024*

MOY Criteria of Award

* Detachment Marine who during the period of consideration has demonstrated by leadership and performance an **extraordinary** contribution to the Detachment, Marine Corps League and Community.

* Whose personal conduct has reflected favorably on and has brought credit to the Detachment, Marine Corps League and the United States Marine Corps

* **Lifetime achievements are NOT considered**

*If you have a nomination for Detachment Marine of the Year, write an explanation as to why the Marine deserves the award, mentioning the Marine's accomplishments and **place the letter in a sealed envelope**. Please give the nomination to Adjutant Anthony Jackson by the end of the January Detachment meeting.*

The Marine of the Year is selected from the nominations submitted by a committee of the past three MOY recipients.

Associate Member of the Year

Within the detachment, there is no award higher than that of the "Associate Member of the Year" that can be bestowed upon a Marine Corps League Associate Member by the Associate Member of the Year Society.

All detachments have an Associate Member who performs and displays the dedication, leadership qualities and principles of a good Marine above all others.

It is this Associate Member who is always willing to roll up his/her sleeves to do that tough job, the daunting tasks or put in the long hours of personal sacrifice, without hopes or reward, all to achieve the goals of the detachment and the Marine Corps League. All of this is evaluated through the Associate Member participation, and noteworthy accomplishments, perseverance and devotion to duty.

***The 2024 Detachment Marine of the Year
and Associate of the Year will be announced at the
February Detachment meeting.***

Sr. Vice Commandant's Message

Greetings,

By the time you receive this message, we will have celebrated the Maine Corps 248th Birthday, Veterans Day, closed our Toys for Tots Program, celebrated Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and the beginning of a New Year. It is hoped that our friends, members of the League, and their respective family members have a healthy, wealthy, and happy New Year. Almost forgot, I did get a year older in December.

Our Toys for Tots Project ended on December 14, 2023. As of December 13th, we turned over 83 toys and two checks for a monetary donation of \$1,228.00. We want to thank the individuals and groups that continue to support our Toys for Tots Detachment Project each year, because without their support we would not be able to put smiles on the faces of so many children. Special thanks to Commandant Earl Ruff and Junior Vice Commandant Raymond Vaughn for delivering everything to the warehouse. The Organization Rockin' Good Times will have an event to support our Detachment several days after the close of this year's project, but we will not be able to report that information until the next issue of the Gung Ho. Several Detachment items were donated to Northeastern Post Number 285 for their Toys for Tots Project with Tench Tilghman Middle and Elementary School, and more information will be provided on that project in the next issue.

A call was made to Frances Scott Key Middle and Elementary School so that we can begin to reestablish our Scholarship Program, but no response has been received to date. In person contact will be made and hopefully, we will have positive information to report in the next issue.

The VA Medical Center at Loch Raven is still in construction mode, but there are many volunteer opportunities open there and at Greene Street, so if you are interested in a position, please contact me (410-736-9673) or the VA directly. Also, during this period, we lost several donors, which have prevented us from starting up our monthly Bingo at Greene Street and making donations to other VA events. It would be greatly appreciated if you could consider donating any amount so that we can continue to support our Detachment Projects. For members who volunteer, please make sure that you complete your annual training, get your flu shot, and keep your identification current.

Again, a "Special Thank You" to everyone who supports our projects. We look forward having a successful year in 2024.

*Respectfully submitted,
Marian C. James, SVC*

Jr. Vice Commandant Message

Greeting Marines,

Happy New Year, fellow members of the Baltimore Detachment. Here's hoping the New Year finds you and your families safe, healthy and doing well. We all are looking forward to a productive and sane future. Along with that, is the hope that our fellow Marines stationed everywhere around the globe are also in safe, peaceful environments.

Once again, I charge each member with the task of recruiting new members for our Detachment. The need to increase our membership is very important. It's also important to do everything we can to keep in touch with those we have not been in contact with over the last few months. Give them a call, send a text or an email to check on them and see how they are doing.

Encourage them to come on out to a meeting and reconnect with the group. Our strength is in our numbers and increasing those numbers benefits our organization and our ability to interact positively in the community. We need to find ways to recruit new members.

When we encounter potential new members, invite them to drop by the meeting hall, meet the membership and join the Detachment. When we come across new veterans, try your best to remind them of the benefits of associating with like-minded individuals with shared experiences. Marines are proud of the fact that of the many, we few actually earned that title, United States Marine. The Marine Corps League, like many other military fraternal organizations, is having a difficult time increasing our numbers. Somehow, we have to make them see that "once a Marine, always a Marine" is not just a slogan but a way to help foster camaraderie we all once enjoyed. The only difference between Marines of different eras is the times we served. The bottom line is belonging to a group that has shared and similar experiences. Make it your mission to accomplish that goal.

Semper Fidelis.
Ray Vaughn, JVC



Semper Fi Prayer Circle

*"And the Prayer of Faith
shall save the sick,
and the LORD shall raise him up"*

The Power of Prayer

The question then is, how can we feel closer to God? Relationships require communication to flourish, and our relationship with our Holy Father is no different. God speaks to us through his word (i.e., the Bible) and we speak to God through prayer. When we feel distant from God, it is most likely us who has drifted. Perhaps even just a short prayer can help bridge the chasm and boost our feeling of closeness to our creator.

Dear Lord,

We pray especially for Your protection on all those who serve in our armed forces, and we thank You for their commitment to defend our freedoms, even at the cost of their own lives. Be with their families also, and assure them of Your love and concern for them.

Amen

Taps

Marine Robert Kennick was called by the Supreme Commandant on 18 December 2023. Bob was 98. May Bob rest in peace. Blessings and Prayers to Marine Kennick and his family. May his family be able to grieve so as to gain peace and acceptance.

Sick / Distressed

Prayers go out to those on our "Sick and Distress Patrick Davis, Dick & Ailene Lantz, Ray Vaughn, Jerry Brown, Jack Colleran, Marian James, Will Priest, Nelson Dickerson, and Rosemary Koontz.

Most High God, god that Liveth, Heal and deliver all of us that are in need of your healing, mercy and grace Amen.

If you know of anyone sick or in distress, please call: Chaplain Harry Hierstetter. & Judith Hoffman 410-296-1088 / Email: 1stsgtjwhusmc@comcast.net

As always may God's blessing be with all military and their families

*Harry Hierstetter / Judith Hoffman
Chaplains*

Detachment Home Dispatch

Maintenance

The new flagpole has arrived, and the duty hut copier has been repaired and should be good for a few more years.

Milton and Ernie continue to make small repairs as needed along with the weekly upkeep and maintenance of the building. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Wednesday and Saturday 8:30 am to 12 noon.

Big thanks Milt Hazzard for all the decorations and his time putting most of them up and to everyone else that came on December 2nd to help with the trees and hanging of the reefs. The hall looks fantastic.

Also, a big thanks to Lynnette (Earl Ruff's wife) and Lisa (Tony Jackson's fiancé) for making the group a delicious breakfast of eggs, bacon and fried potatoes to go along the croissants, donuts, orange juice and coffee. Hopefully on January 13th when we plan to take the decorations down, we can get Lisa to cook breakfast for us again. A good time was had by everyone.

Your building committee wishes all of you . .

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
A HEALTHY & HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

Baltimore Detachment Hall Rental

If you know of someone who is looking for a hall to rent, please keep your Detachment Hall in mind. We can seat 100 comfortably. Keep promoting the hall rental. Information call: Ernie Disney @ 410-977-7975.

Military Order of the Devil Dogs

*The Fun and Honor Society
of the Marine Corps League*



Woof, woof,

Merlin Pack

The Merlin Pack Growl, led by Pack Leader PDD Tony Rust, was hosted by the LCpl Deane Detachment at the Damascus American Legion Post 171 after the department meeting on 4 November 2023.

Hound Dog Pound 204

Sunday 10 December, Hound Dog Pound Keeper Pat Sharky conducted a growl at VFW Post 160 in Glen Burnie. Morning chow was tail waggin' scrumptious. The dogs maintained their mischievousness conduct throughout the growl, collecting many bones from fines of several infractions. A toy air gun of no value was donated for auction to benefit the children's fund. Also changing Pound 204 Growl day from Sunday to Saturday was voted down. The Dogs continued misbehavin' while saluting the fire hydrant.

Schedule

National Mid Winter Growl
22 February 2024
Registration is online through MCL

Hound Dog Pound 204 Growl
VFW Post 160
3 March 2024
0800 Breakfast
* *Possibly Dog Chow & Alpo Sausage Gravy*
0900 Growl
* *Pound Keeper PDD Pat Sharky, presiding*

Merlin Pack Growl
Sgt. John A, "Jack" Hettchen Detachment
American Legion Post 86, Rockville
9 March 2024
*Following DM Staff Meeting
* *Worthy Pack Leader Tony Rust presiding*

Remember: It is an honor to be a Devil Dog

*Woof woof,
PDD Stuart Blair
Barking Dog*

Auxiliary



*Reaching Further . . .
. . . Touching More*

Greetings,

Our Auxiliary is growing. In the last few months we have had 2 new members. We are looking for someone to fill the vacant slot of President. I received a new roster and I would like to share it with you. As of December 2023 the roster shows 21 members, 9 paid, 10 PLM, 2 outstanding. I am confident that we will have a fully paid membership.

We need information that is missing on the roster. Telephone numbers, e-mail address, life membership number, home addresses, date joined and recruiter. You can e-mail the information to me at my e-mail address of formernavalperson12@gmail.com.

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas; our Christmas party which was held on Friday December 15 was a success. The Christmas decorations were trimmed along with our tree which was set up in the foyer.

I want to thank the extended family of our President Joan Hansen for their purchasing, decorating and delivering the Marine Corps Themed Christmas Tree to the annual auction to benefit Kennedy Krieger Children's Hospital. The Festival of Trees was held from November 24 to 26. We will get the sale price after this issue is published. Our auxiliary has been supporting this worthy project for over 20 years. Every year our tree is one of the first to be bought.

Dues for the coming year will be in effect on January 1st. Dues for new members will be \$25.00, a onetime administrative fee of \$5.00. Dues for old members are \$20. Checks payable to National. Notices will not be mailed.

I wish to ask for any suggestions that we can use for fund raising in the coming year. I got one suggestion to have a garage sale at the firehouse. I remember one many years ago. We sold tables for \$10.00. We packed the house. Every day I see on the internet that someone has household goods and furniture that they want to sell. Locus Point seems to be one big garage sale. Maybe we can help them

Important dates for the future

January 26. Baltimore MCL & Auxiliary Unit meeting
February 16, Baltimore MCL & Auxiliary Unit meeting
February 22-24, Midwinter Meeting

Sheraton Arlington Hotel, Arlington, VA.

March 9, Dept. Staff meeting

Sgt. John A, "Jack" Hettchen Detachment

More information can be found on the Maryland State MCL website for meetings and important dates.

Happy New Year to all and to all, health and happiness.

Semper Fi
Rosemary Koontz, Sr. Vice Pres.



DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

Maryland Veterans Commission

2024 * Year for Military Families

Governor Wes Moore declared 2024 to be the Year for Military Families in Maryland. He also announced a legislative package designed to support service-members, families, caregivers, and survivors. The first legislative announcement by the Moore-Miller administration for the 2024 legislative session include the Families Serve Act, encouraging preferential hiring for active-duty military spouses by both private sector employers and state government, and the Time to Serve Act, granting paid military leave to state employees who are members of the National Guard or Reserves. Senator Dawn Gile (District 33), with support from the Governor, also unveiled a bill to rename the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs to the *Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families*.

VA disability rates increase in January

Veterans will see new VA disability pay rates, based on Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) increases on the first business day of the new year.

The COLA year-over-year increase is 3.2%, the Social Security Administration announced on Oct. 12. It was finalized on Dec. 1.

VA has updated information on its website. The charts are designed to help recipients determine eligibility and anticipate the expected monthly payout for their approved VA disability claims, based on the COLA estimate.

Veterans are encouraged to review this information to assess their individual situations accurately.

Income of Working-Age Veterans Receiving Disability Compensation

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensates veterans for medical conditions or injuries that occurred or worsened while they were on active duty in the military. In fiscal year 2022, VA spent \$125 billion (in 2022 dollars) on disability payments for 5.3 million beneficiaries. By law, those payments are based on VA disability ratings that reflect, as much as practicable, the severity of veterans' service-connected conditions and the average earnings they would be expected to lose as a result of those conditions.

For this report, the Congressional Budget Office compared the earnings, personal income, and household income of veterans who have a disability rating with those of veterans who do not

have one. The agency's analysis focused on differences between those groups for working-age men, ages 22 to 54, from 2017 to 2019. CBO found the following:

- Male veterans who received VA disability compensation (including those who did not work) had average annual earnings of \$52,200—16 percent less than the earnings of veterans without a VA disability rating. Median earnings (the midpoint value) of veterans with a rating were also less, by 12 percent. CBO did not adjust any of those calculations for demographic characteristics. Regression analysis, which accounts for such characteristics, indicates that veterans with a rating of 10 percent or 20 percent earned about the same as similar veterans with no rating; veterans with a rating of 30 percent to 60 percent earned slightly less; and veterans with a rating of 70 percent or more earned much less.
- Annual earnings were substantially lower for veterans with a high disability rating, a finding driven in part by lower labor force participation among veterans with a high rating. For veterans who were not in the labor force, it is unclear whether poor health meant that they could not work, whether the extra income from VA allowed them to exit the labor force, or whether they left the work force for other reasons.
- CBO also looked at the earnings of male veterans who were potential workers—those who were not students and did not report functional disabilities (medical conditions that cause substantial difficulty with physical or mental activities). Veterans in that group had the same general earnings patterns as all working-age veterans, but differences in earnings between those with and without a VA disability rating were smaller.
- Overall, veterans with a disability rating who were potential workers had average annual earnings that were lower by \$1,900, or 3 percent, than the earnings of those without a rating, and fewer of them were in the labor force. Median earnings, which are not skewed by extremely high or low values, yielded a different result, indicating that veterans with a rating typically earned 5 percent more than veterans without a rating. Regression analysis suggests, however, that veterans with a rating of 10 percent or 20 percent earned the same as veterans with no rating and similar demographic characteristics and that veterans with a higher rating earned less.
- The average personal income (earnings plus other income) of all male veterans who received VA disability compensation was about 10 percent higher than that of veterans who did not, mainly because VA disability payments were greater, on average, than any differences in earnings. The annual household income of all veterans, regardless of disability status, was more than \$100,000, on average.

Next MVC meeting
Tuesday January 16, 2024
100 Community Place, Crownsville.

S/F,
Stuart Blair
Commissioner, MCL

Detachment Programs

Marine Family Assistance

Marine families in need from the community are given financial assistance. The Marines are selected by the 4CEB Reserve unit and / or detachment program coordinator.

Francis Scott Key Middle School Scholarship

June of each year students of the 5th and 8th grade Francis Scott Key Middle School selected for their outstanding academic achievements are presented with a monetary award along with a certificate of achievement by the MCL Baltimore Detachment.

MCROTC

MCROTC Programs offered by high schools in the community select an outstanding cadet. These cadets are honored at graduation with awards from community organizations. The Baltimore Detachment presents the outstanding cadet with a plaque of recognition and a monetary award.

Scouts BSA * Eagle Scout Award

Scouts achieving the rank of Eagle Scout are honored at their court of Honor with the "Good Citizenship Award" by the Marine Corps League.

Toys For Tots

Each year from October into December, the Marine Corps League and the Marine Corps Reserve collect new toys and monetary donations for children in need at Christmas.

** These programs are part of the Marine Corps League commitment to serve the community. We are unable to make this commitment without funds to do so. Your contribution is request to make this possible. Make your contribution payable to MCL Baltimore Detachment 565 (note specific program) All donations are tax deductible.*

Marine Corps History Question of the Month

In each month's "GUNG HO" we will feature a question about U.S. Marine Corps history. The question will test your knowledge of well known facts of Marine Corps. *The answer to each question will be in the following issue.*

Answer to November - December Question

December 1950, a Marine officer 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. Who was this Marine officer that was awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism ?

Lt Col Raymond G. Davis

January - February Question

On 25 January 1856, Marines and seamen from a U.S. sloop 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. What was name of the sloop ?

- a) USS Belle Italia
- b) USS Decatur
- c) USS Boston
USS Brockenborough

Members Birthdays

We would like to wish the following Marines a "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" and many more:

JANUARY - BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Donald J. Blum, Wesley T. Harper, Milton L. Hazzard, Jon M. Mekeal, Richard L. Whitehead, Thomas J. O'Toole Jr., Carl G. Holland, George F. Dietsch, Walter H. Naylor, Jr., Christopher S. Chrisian, Gary S. Reif Sr. and George L. Kesselring.

Also celebrating this month is Associate Member Joan M. Hansen.

FEBRUARY - BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

William L. McFadden, Michael M. Gajewski, Sr., Raymond L. Vaughn, James W. Sandoz, John D. Blinke III, James W. Stanley, Welton C. McCallister, Joseph A. Crivello, III,

Marines, if you had a birthday this month and your name did not appear, please let me know.
Stuart Blair, 410-665-6440,
Email: thistleman@verizon.net.

BALTIMORE
GUNG HO

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
BALTIMORE DETACHMENT

1426 East Fort Avenue (#17 Fire House)
Baltimore, Maryland 21230-5247



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
BALTIMORE MD
PERMIT NO. 5964

"To observe a Marine is inspirational, to be a Marine is exceptional."

Who was Colonel Alexander Parris ?

*Born 1661 British West Indies * Passed away 1735 Parris Island, Granville County, South Carolina*

During 1715, an Englishman named Colonel Alexander Parris purchased a large island and eight small surrounding islands on the coast of South Carolina. Until the Civil War, plantation life flourished here. Marines were first stationed on Parris Island in 1891, in the form of a small security detachment headed by First Sergeant Richard Donovan. Donovan's unit was highly commended for preserving life and property during hurricanes and tidal waves that swept over the island in 1891 and 1893. Military buildings and homes that were constructed between 1891 and World War I form the nucleus of the Parris Island Historic District.

It was not until 1915, however, that the Marines arrived for good. Since then, the base has rapidly expanded, first during World War I and more so during World War II. Over the years, much of the physical appearance of the base has changed; yet, through this collection of photographs, former Parris Island Marines will have a chance to relive some of their memories while new recruits can watch the progression of their base unfold.