



John Basilone Detachment #190

Marine Corps League

Detachment Bi-Monthly Newsletter



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January 1, 2013

Mel Meszaros Commandant

January/February 2013 Newsletter

Jim Velcheck Editor

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**MEETINGS ARE HELD THE FIRST (1ST) MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT THE
AMERICAN LEGION POST 25, MILLTOWN, NEW JERSEY AT 1930 HRS**

Please Support Our Corporate Sponsors (check out the new ones!); see page 6

From the Editor

Here is my second newsletter attempt. If you have anything to contribute to future issues, don't hesitate to send it on to me. If you are currently getting it by postal mail and would prefer to get it by email, just let me know.

Tim Braden's grandson is now known as PFC James Bremer with 1st Bn, 6th Marines.

The "One of a Kind" shop at Brunswick Square Mall engraved our Commandant Sword at no charge. When you need watch repair, jewelry or engraving check them out and let them know you appreciate their support.

Come out and join us at the next Basilone Detachment meetings on January 7, and February 4, 2013. At our February meeting we will be conducting our annual tribute to John Basilone; you won't want to miss this meeting!

Happy New Year to all of you!

Semper Fi,
Jim Velcheck

From the Membership Officer:

There have been some problems with National HQ sending out dues reminders. As a result, there are some members of the John Basilone Detachment who are late with their dues payments.

Here is a list of our members who are late by my records. Dues are very important to the survival of the Marine Corps League. Also, if you have MCL license plates and your membership expires, your plates will be re-called by the state of New Jersey.

Griffin, Stanley – Aug. 2012

Niosi Jr, Phil – Aug. 2012

Mansour, Dennis – Nov. 2012

Piccoli, Joseph – May 2012

Schlesier, Vincent – June 2012

Yelencsics, Steve – Oct.2012

Silva Jr, Anthony—May 2012

Trautwein, John—June 2012

Osterman, Andrew – Oct. 2012

Zollinger, Michael—May 2012

Buzney, Donald – Sept.2012

Zollinger, John – Sept. 2012

Daley, Roger – Nov. 2012

DeVito, Patrick – Nov. 2012

Konopka, Raymond – Oct. 2012

Jurewicz, James – Oct.2012

Kane, James – Sept. 2012

Murphy, Donald – Sept. 2012

Make check for \$31.00 payable to John Basilone Det. #190. Mail to John Heacock, PO Box 235, Kingston NJ 08528.

Any corrections or questions please contact me: John Heacock, Membership Officer

Email j.c.heacock@comcast.net

Phone 609/924-0074

Semper/Fi

Officers and Staff
November 2012 - November 2013

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Jr. Vice Com:.....Vincent Schlesier 732-710-0418
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Chaplain:..... Stan Szumel 732-752-3846
Sgt. At Arms:..... Gil Castro 732-248-1915
Food For The Needy: Harriet Sosley 732-469-0005
Membership:John Heacock 609-924-0074
Honor Guard:Norm Bloomfield 609-409-1110
VAS Officer: John Heacock 609-924-0074
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Ed Sphatt 732-247-5792
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Quartermaster:.. Norm Bloomfield 609-409-1110
Aide De Camp:..... Ruth Lincoln Menlo Park
Eagle Scouts....Ray Skarzynski, PC 732-257-4582
Web Sergeants:..... Cliff Walling 732-613-0441
Doug Rattazzi 609-296-2345
Newsletter:.....Jim Velcheck 732-752-6358

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

George Anderson Jan 3	Eric Stevens Feb 15
Frank Conover Jan 5	Milton Fisher Feb 18
Lou Goldstein Jan 16	Anthony Sodono Feb 23
Walter Lapp Jan 25	John Heacock Feb 24
John Nemetz Jan 27	Doug Breen Feb 26
Ernie Mondics Feb 5	John Zuppa Feb 27
Ed Pagan Feb 6	

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Lance & Ellie Dige Jan 6
 Ray & Connie Houck Jan 10
 Doug & Carol Rattazzi Jan 16
 Ernie & Susan Mondics Jan 26
 Walter & Jathina Lapp Jan 27
 Ski Makowski & Gloria Jan 31
 Ed & Susan Peterson Feb 15
 George & Arlene Coyle Feb 15
 Jon & Selena Grossweiler Feb 19
 Jim & Sara Velcheck Feb 20
 Eric & Donna Stevens Feb 22

If your birthday and/or anniversary does not appear here when it should it means we don't have your info. Call or email it to me (732-752-6358 or JimVelcheck@msn.com) or give it to me at a meeting.

Honor Guard Report

Nov. 16: Members of our detachment attended the wake of Marine William Bransfield. Commandant Meszaros and Chaplain Szumel led the services and Marine Jim Velcheck sounded Taps. Members in attendance gave a final salute. Nov.17: The H/C Guard performed a Final Rifle Salute at the cemetery. Marines from 6th Motor Transport Red Bank folded the Flag & sounded Taps.

Dec. 28: Members of our detachment attended the wake of Marine Matt Daley who passed away December 27. Commandant Meszaros and Acting Chaplain Heacock led the services and Marine Gil Castro sounded Taps. Members in attendance gave a final salute. H/C Guard Capt. Norm Bloomfield

Commandant's Report

Saturday Nov.10. Some Members of our Detachment attended the Birthday party at the Governor's Mansion in Princeton. Saturday night, 15 members of our detachment and their guests attended the Avenel Detachment's Ball at the Forge Inn in Woodbridge. Our past Marine Of The Year John Centofanti and Commandant Mel Meszaros presented Marine Gil Castro with the Detachment's 2012 Marine Of The Year Award.

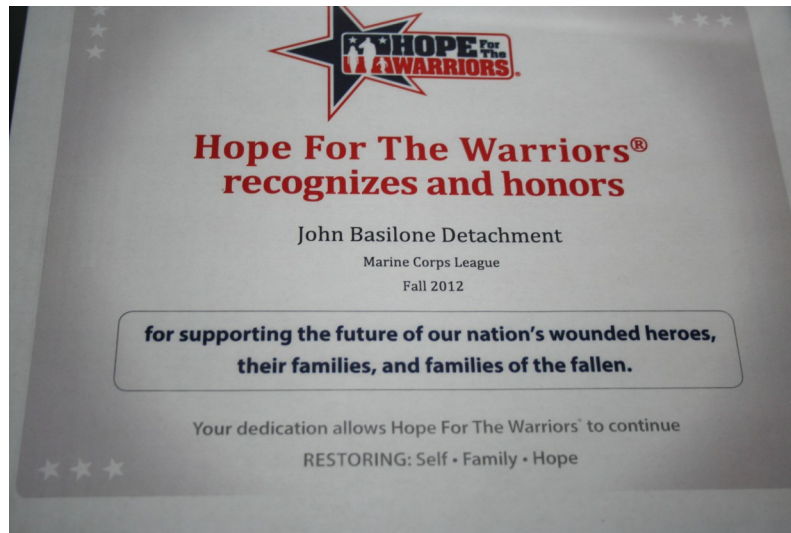


Check out our sponsors; some of them we hope you will never need, but they are ready and able to serve your needs if you ever do need them. Others will serve your dining and drinking pleasure, and motorcycle needs. Patronize them and let them know you appreciate their support.

Marine Doug Rattazzi is now helping to maintain our website. He is putting up pictures from this year's ball. If you have pictures or anything else you feel should be on our website give him a call to make arrangements.

Upcoming events: Jan 26 at 2:00 pm there will be a flag retirement ceremony at the Menlo Park Veterans Home, conducted by the Elks. Our Honor Guard will perform. All members are encouraged to attend.

S/F, M. Meszaros



In September of this year the John Basilone Detachment made a donation of \$2000.00 to the "Hope For The Warriors". In appreciation they sent this plaque and a nice thank you note. Photo by J. Heacock.



Detachment members having a ball at the Marine Corps Birthday Ball. Check our website for more pictures of the ball. A good time was had by all. Come out and join us next year. Photos are by J. Velcheck & J. Heacock.

An Editorial: Women In War Zones Take Risks But Don't Reap Rewards

Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Jennifer Hunt went on what she calls "door-kicking missions" with combat soldiers searching Afghan villages. In Iraq, she was wounded by a roadside bomb. Marine Capt. Zoe Bedell trained female Marines to serve alongside infantrymen in Marjah, once one of Afghanistan's most dangerous districts. Hunt and Bedell are among thousands of women who've served in the two wars, risking their lives, firing rifles, lobbing grenades and facing suicide bombers. Nearly 1,000 have been wounded and 84 killed in action. That's the reality on the battlefield. But on paper, the Pentagon's policy still states that women are excluded from assignment to most units "whose primary mission" is "direct combat on the ground." Last month, Hunt, Bedell and two other servicewomen filed suit in federal court to overturn that 1994 policy. Whatever happens in court, it shouldn't take legal action to change a policy so far removed from reality. Because women are banned from serving in jobs such as infantry, the military is turning away potential talent and leadership. And because they are barred from specialty training, they might be less well-prepared than men, though they face the same risks. Just as demoralizing, it is nearly impossible to reach the highest ranks — three- or four-star general — without serving in a combat arms branch, from which women are excluded. In the military's history, just two women have achieved four-star rank, though women make up about 15% of the nation's 1.4 million-member active duty force. The country long ago got over its objections to women in combat. In a USA TODAY/Gallup Poll in 2007, 74% of Americans agreed that women should be allowed to hold combat jobs, up from 36% in an NBC News poll in 1981. Many of the objections trotted out by opponents simply don't hold up to scrutiny, such as the argument that some infantrymen would be unable to take orders from a female combat leader. If soldiers won't take orders from a female superior, "that is not the problem of the woman, that's *their* problem," says Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, who just relinquished command of U.S. Army Europe. Hertling, a longtime armor officer (another branch that excludes women), says he has seen women engaging the enemy in combat operations, delivering supplies in combat zones and serving on his security detail "under attack and fighting back." Others who've served in Iraq or Afghanistan have observed the same thing — no matter the military's verbal contortions to show that women are "attached" to combat units but not "assigned" to them. Fixing this doesn't need to be complicated. Women should have an opportunity to be assigned to any specialty for which they can pass the test to qualify. Requirements, including physical ones, should be the same for men and women. Today, the Army's basic physical requirements are judged on a sliding scale, based on age and gender. Women 17 to 21, for example, get about three minutes more to run 2 miles. That won't fly in combat training. Further, the opportunity to serve in all jobs ought to come with the obligation to be assigned to all jobs, including combat. The Pentagon recently took some steps to open more jobs to women and to equalize physical requirements. Good. But the progress has been halting. In Afghanistan and Iraq, thousands of women have done what a written policy says they can't. Serving courageously for your country shouldn't be clouded in fiction.

An Opposing View: Change In Policy Could Cost Lives

By Jim Comstock and Al Jacobs

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been asymmetrical. There are no front lines. Improvised explosive devices and ambushes are used, anyone can be exposed to combat actions, and firefights can happen anywhere, often initiated by the enemy. This environment requires that male and female soldiers, regardless of position or branch, be trained and prepared to survive and win. Another result? A controversy over the policy against allowing women into infantry units, which several female military members are contesting in a lawsuit. They argue that the policy hurts their long-term career prospects. The basic proposition that women should serve their country just as men do is sound and wise. Our military is better for their contribution. Women have succeeded because high-tech and automation have made it possible to maximize their skills and abilities. However, these factors have not significantly impacted the mission of the combat arms branches, especially the infantry, whose job is to close with and kill the enemy. Infantry members require tough continuous training, the proper mind-set, unit cohesion, focus, 100% dependence on everyone around them, and faith and confidence in leadership at all levels. Executing missions requires small groups of soldiers who rely on physical strength and the strength of others to survive brutal conditions. They use rifles and what they can carry on their backs. Each soldier must be able to carry or drag an injured 200-pound person with mutilated legs to safety, and carry a 90-pound rucksack for 20 miles to go into a firefight. Allowing women to be assigned to infantry combat would create many systemwide challenges. Despite the physical differences between men and women, there could be no reduction in physical requirements for infantry assignments. Nor could training for positions such as rangers be modified. Commanders would face new issues on their plates, including personal male/female relationships that would develop, the tendency of men wanting to protect women, which would take focus from their mission, and the inability of some men to accept women as leaders in a combat unit. The biggest danger of eliminating the combat exclusion to "correct" a perceived threat to women's careers is the impact on the unit's ability to succeed in its missions. This change could cost lives. If we make the mistake of degrading our fighting units' ability to accomplish their job, we do so at their, and our, peril. *Maj. Gen. Jim Comstock and Lt. Col. Al Jacobs, both retired, served in numerous Army infantry units, in combat and in peacetime.* **(Ed. What do you think about this topic?)**

From PDC BILL WILSON:

For your info. This is an excellent resource for Veterans and is broken down by State to include those benefits. This link will take you to a website featuring veterans benefits for all states. <http://www.veteranprograms.com/id136.html>.

From the Marine Corps Times

Obama signs 1.7 percent veterans' COLA hike

By [Rick Maze](#) - Staff writer Posted : Tuesday Nov 27, 2012 14:19:50 EST

President Obama has signed into law a bill guaranteeing 4 million veterans and survivors will receive the same 1.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment in their benefits that is going to Social Security recipients and military retirees. The increase takes effect on Dec. 1, and should first appear in January payments. While the dollar amount of the increase varies by disability rating, the average increase for the year will be \$500, said Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., one of the chief sponsors of the veterans' COLA bill. That might not sound like a lot of money, but Larry Polzin, national commander of Disabled American Veterans, said the 1.7 percent boost is important. "Compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs is a major source of income for many veterans and their families, so adjusting those payments for inflation is absolutely necessary," Polzin said. Cost-of-living adjustments in Social Security payments and retired pay for the military and federal employees are automatic, linked by law to changes in the Consumer Price Index, a measure of the cost of goods and services maintained by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. However, increases in veterans' disability compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and dependents and pensions for low-income veterans are not automatic. They require Congress to act and the president to sign legislation providing increases.

From the Washington Times December 14, 2012

Panetta Says Autopsy Cast Doubt On Medal Award

By Stephen Dinan, The Washington Times

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Thursday that he denied the Medal of Honor to Sgt. Rafael Peralta because the evidence from his autopsy created more than a reasonable doubt that he was able to knowingly scoop a grenade beneath him - the act his fellow Marines said saved their lives. In a letter to Rep. Duncan Hunter, a California Republican who has taken special interest in Peralta's case, Mr. Panetta said he personally reviewed all the evidence, including videos, and did not see enough new evidence to overturn the 2008 decision of his predecessor, former Secretary Robert M. Gates. "In light of the strict standards that have been established for awarding the Medal of Honor and the fact that a thorough review of the evidence has not indicated 'proof beyond a reasonable doubt,' I cannot in good conscience change the recommendation of Secretary Robert Gates," Mr. Panetta said. The Pentagon alerted Peralta's family earlier this week of the decision. Navy regulations say there must be "no margin of doubt or possibility of error" in awarding the Medal of Honor. Peralta died in Fallujah, Iraq, in November 2004. He was leading a squadron of Marines in clearing houses when they entered a room where insurgents were waiting, and opened fire. Peralta was shot in the head, apparently by friendly fire, and as he fell one of the insurgents tossed a grenade. Witnesses say Peralta collected the grenade to his body, absorbing the blast and protecting his squad. But the medical examiner who performed an autopsy concluded Peralta was probably dead and almost certainly blinded by the gunshot wound, making it impossible that he knowingly scooped up the grenade. "They cast more than a reasonable doubt," Mr. Panetta said. "To disregard this evidence, or to abandon the beyond-a-reasonable-doubt standard for the MOH, would also be unfair to all others considered for the MOH but whose heroic actions fell just short of this rigorous evidentiary standard." Mr. Hunter, who served tours in Afghanistan and Iraq as a Marine officer, said the decision left him "beyond disappointed." The congressman said he had submitted to the Pentagon new videos and a new evaluation by an expert who reviewed the autopsy records and concluded that the gunshot wound would not have prevented Peralta from being cognizant. Mr. Hunter also questioned why Peralta was awarded the Navy Cross, the second-highest award, but not the Medal of Honor. **(Ed. I would also have to question why if he was not cognizant he could be eligible for the Navy Cross. What do you think?)**

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