

Kettle Moraine Marine



February 2009

Detachment #1203

Vol V Issue 2

The Monthly Newsletter for Washington and Ozaukee County Marines.

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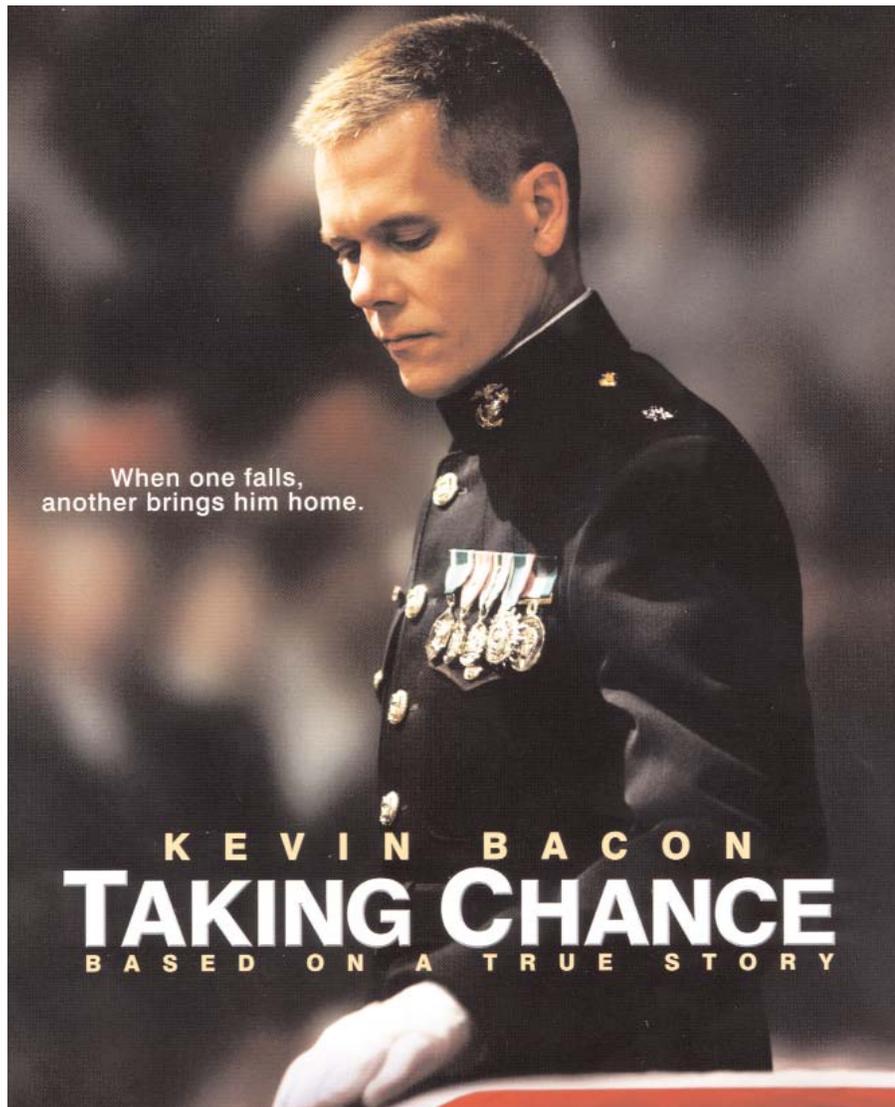
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Taking Chance

The story of two Marines and their journey home.

The story has been told before here in the Kettle Moraine Marine, and numerous places on the internet.

It has now come to life on the television screen.

Based on the real-life events of Lt. Col. Michael Strobl (Bacon), a volunteer military escort officer, as he accompanies the body of 19-year-old Marine PFC Chance Phelps back to his hometown of Dubois, Wyoming.

Taking Chance is about respect, about death and sadness, about honor and the military fraternity, and about the American community during a time of tragedy. It is an extraordinary film from any perspective. (Sundance Film Festival)

Taking Chance

Premieres Saturday, February 21st, 8pm on HBO

Officer Elections will be held starting at 0845 Saturday February 21st, 2009 at the Trenton Town Hall. Located at 1071 State Hwy 33 East, West Bend WI 53095.

Kettle Moraine Detachment 1203, Marine Corps League
Minutes of Meeting Held on January 17th, 2009
24 Members present

The Meeting was held at the Trenton Town Hall in West Bend, WI.

The Commandant called the meeting to order at 0902. The Sgt at Arms presented the Colors, and the Chaplain said the opening prayer.

Roll Call of Officers

Commandant: John Stern present
Sr. Vice Commandant: Glen Brewer present
Jr. Vice Commandant: Danny O'Toole ex
Adjutant: Jason Waier present
Judge Advocate: Sean Rodriguez present

Paymaster: Roger Cross present
Chaplain: Paul Bollmann present
Sgt at Arms: Don Erdman present
Historian: Jason Waier present
" : Jim Krudwig present

Other Members in Attendance

Bertram, Tim	Chantelois, Steve	Fleischman, John	Heiman, Carl	Kaczmarek, George
Krause, John	Link, Paul	Moericke, Chris	Moericke, Rollie	Montag, Fritz
Ramage, Jim	Schleif, Paul(ex)	Smith, Arthur	Straub, Hugo	Wallace Bill
Unertl, Ken	Wujcik, George			

New Members/Guests

There were no new members or guests present.

Reading of the Minutes

Jim Ramage made a motion to accept the October Minutes as posted in the January Newsletter. Seconded by George Wujcik. Motion passed. George Kaczmarek made a motion to accept the December Minutes as posted in the January Newsletter. Seconded by Paul Link. Motion passed.

Paymaster's Report

The Paymaster went over recent transactions including the final credits and debits from the Birthday Ball. Jim Ramage made a motion to accept the Paymasters Report. Seconded by Bill Wallace. Motion passed.

Chaplain's Report

The Chaplain noted that he was informed that John Fleischman's sister has cancer. The Chaplain has also been in contact with a local Marine with terminal cancer, and has sent cards to both. Please keep them in your prayers. The Commandant has contacted the family of the Marine with cancer and has let them know he is available if they need any help. There is a Detachment Member that has recently come under some very hard times. There was a loss of a family member and more recently he has lost his job. Paul Bollmann made a motion to pay his yearly dues and hopes the Marine is back on his feet soon. Seconded by George Wujcik. Motion passed.

Correspondence Received/Delivered

A Thank You card was received from the Sanders' family for the Honor Guard detail that was provided for the funeral of Robert Sanders. Marine Corps clothing gear catalogs had been received from a company attempting to grow a customer base. The catalogs were distributed to the Members or they can viewed at www.marines-direct.com on line. A donation was made by the Germantown School District for a recent Flag History Presentation, and was submitted to the Paymaster.

Report of Standing Committees

Honor Guard: Nothing new to report.

Senior Vice Commandant: Nothing new to report.

Junior Vice Commandant: Marine O'Toole was excused from the Meeting to celebrate his 68th Birthday.

Flag History Presentation Team: There is room on the FHP Team. If you would like to participate please contact Jim Krudwig. If you attend 3 or more per year you are eligible for a uniform. Letters will be going out soon soliciting groups looking to have a program conducted for them. Several dates are already set. Jim Krudwig will be contacting FHPT members for future dates.

VAVS: Nothing new to report.

PAO: Nothing new to report.

Newsletter: Jim Krudwig will be stepping down as Editor of the Newsletter, and Jason Waier will be taking it over following the swearing in of the new Officers. It was noted that the same cover photo that is used this month had been used before, but Jason thought this had a better caption with it and wanted to run it again. Advertisers' dues are due. Jim Krudwig urged the Members to go visit our advertisers and get them to donate again and keep the Kettle Moraine Marine going.

Color Guard: Marine Bill Wallace stepped forward to fill the recently vacated position of Color Guard Commander.

Quartermaster: Paul Schlief was not present at the Meeting.

Adjutant: The Adjutant went to the Winter State Conference in Winnebago Jan 10th and has the following items to report. Winnebago Det will be hosting the Central Div Conference on April 17 18 19. Marines from IL, IN, KY, MI, OH, and WI will be attending. There will be leadership classes conducted by the National Sr Vice Commandant Vic Voltaggio on the 17th and 18th. He will also host a mentoring program. This is an excellent learning opportunity for the new Officers. Your current Officers agree and suggest that the new Commandant, Sr Vice and Jr Vice attend. Paul Link made a motion to reimburse \$100 per diem for each Officer, up to three Officers, that choose to go the Conference and stay overnight. Plus travel pay of \$.55/mile for one carpool vehicle. Motion seconded by Jim Ramage. Motion passed. The Dept of IL will also have a Ship Store there for any MCL

gear needed. The State Commandant (Vern Reidle) has challenged each Det to donate \$100 to help cover the expenses of the Conference. This would be done in the form of an ad. Fritz Montag made a motion to donate \$100 for a full page ad in the Conference Handbook. Seconded by John Fleischman. Motion passed. If anyone is going to be in the Madison area Jan 31st (Super Bowl weekend) there is going to be a Spaghetti Dinner/Silent Auction fundraiser held by the Four Lakes Det. They are trying to raise funds to supply a Fallen Warrior Statue to every Wisconsin Service Members family that was KIA during the War on Terrorism. The Dept. of Wisconsin MCL By-Law Committee is currently working on revamping their By-Laws. It was noted that they are very constraining and have been ineffective for some time. They are trying to find a way to make them easier to use and less cumbersome. If individual Det By-Laws are working for them there is no reason to worry about having to change the Det By-Laws. It is a State problem only. Four Lakes Det will be hosting the State Spring Conf. a week after the Div Conference. April 25-26 in Fitchburg WI, which is just a stones throw south west of Madison. The 86th National MCL Convention is July 31st -Aug 8th in Rochester MN. It is roughly 280 miles from West Bend and is the closest the National Convention will be to us for the next several years. If you would like to go to a National Convention it is recommended that you make this one due to its "close" location. Nat MCL has come out with a Members at Large listing. It gives the names of Marines who have joined the MCL but do not belong to any specific Det. This list has been passed on to the Jr. Vice to see if KetMorDet can enlist any of them. Dept of Wisconsin Scholarship Applications for 2009 were available at the January Meeting. They needed to be filled out and returned postmarked no later than February 10th 2009. Vietnam era Veterans are urged to register with the VA for healthcare benefits. Loopholes on eligibility are expected to close soon. There is a new GI Bill in the works which when approved will necessitate a change to Wisconsin benefits for school. Veterans are urged to see their CVSO now and get locked on as to what these changes would mean to them. Veterans with a 10% or greater service related disability are eligible for hearing aids. Members should see their CVSO if they feel this pertains to them to get the ball rolling. Veterans traveling to the VA for service related injury healthcare will be seeing an increase in travel benefits for mileage. Again you see your CVSO for details. Finally just some ideas from things in general that were discussed. Marine Corps Ball. One Detachment noted they only have it every other year. As a cost savings to our Detachment, and to see a bigger turnout might we want to see if North Shore Detachment would like to come on line with us and have a joint Ball. With the Det's swapping the hosting of it every other year? It could be win/win for both Det's. And it would get us to know our neighbors. Many Members are not happy that Dept of Wisconsin MCL allowed another Det to start up so close to us but they are here now and not going away. Why not attempt to get to know them. Suggestions for increasing Member activity and growth: Raffle for t-shirts, hats, mugs, challenge coins etc. after the monthly meeting. Works well for a few Dets. The coffee and donuts aren't working for us getting attendance up at our meetings. Why not try something else. Dropping off old copies of the Semper FI magazines at local businesses with waiting areas with our Detachment info stuck all over it. Only cost is the time it takes to drop them off, and some Det's have seen membership growth from this.

Old Business

Carl Heiman collected the items donated during a Christmas party at Rusty's Tap in Richfield. Together with help from John Stern, and Paul Bollmann 19 boxes were packaged up to be sent to troops overseas. With money left over from the event, \$100 worth of phone cards were purchased to be sent to troops overseas. Mark Grahams (the Dodge County CVSO) went on the last Honor Flight out of Milwaukee. Although he had the same reservations about the pace of the one day trip for the WWII Veterans as most of our members had, he was surprised by the energy, smiles and sheer happiness shown by them. It was the most memorable thing he has done in recent times and hopes there are more flights. Both the Guardian Application and Veterans Application are available online under the VAVS tab at www.ketmordet.com .

New Business

Officer nominations were taken. Jim Ramage: Commandant, Danny O'Toole: Sr Vice, Paul Bollmann: Jr Vice, Judge Advocate: Sean Rodriguez, Sgt at Arms: Tim Bertram, Paymaster: Roger Cross, Chaplain: George Wujcik, Historian: Jason Waier, the position of Adjutant will be vacated by Jason Waier so he can move onto other jobs within the Det, during the Meeting no one stepped forward to fill this position. Unless someone does step forward, the Commandant will have to appoint one. Let's make the transition for the new Officers easier and have a volunteer. The West Bend Food Pantry has seen a significant reduction in donations, and an increase in people coming in needing basic food items due to the financial crisis sweeping our nation. Hugo Straub made a motion to donate \$200 to the Food Pantry. Seconded by Ken Unertl. Motion passed. Jim Krudwig made a motion to nominate John Stern as the Kettle Moraine Det. *Marine of the Year* for his tireless efforts within the Det and the community. Motion seconded by Tim Bertram. Motion passed. A letter will be sent to the Dept of WI, MCL nominating John for the State *Marine of the Year*. Two Scholarship applications have been received from Samantha Wollner, and Nicholas Ebert and they will be awarded in the near future.

Good of the League

A Blood Drive will be held at St Francis Cabrini Church in West Bend on February 2nd.

Meeting Closed

With no further business to be conducted, the Commandant gave the order to close the Meeting at 1016. The Sgt at Arms retired the Colors, and the Chaplain gave the closing prayer. The Commandant thanked all for attending and asked that they secure new members. The Marine Hymn was sung and the Meeting was closed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jason Waier, Adjutant

Chance
By Steve Robbins

All of us who have seen a war, and survived, have wondered, I'm sure, at the role of little decisions - chances - that saved our lives. I'm sure there are far more impressive examples than the one I tell here, but for me, this one haunts just a bit. I was in the 3rd Recon Bn. in July, 1969. Our six man team was a few days into a patrol along the backside of the high hills east of the Vandegriff base, and just south of the Rock Pile. It was late afternoon, and we moved down into a ravine and then up the side of a long finger leading downwards and north from the heavily jungled area covering the ridge of the long hills along the valley in which the base was situated. We stopped on the side of the finger just where the flatter area of its crest began. This area of the finger had less than waist-high grass. We broke out some C-rats and ate there in the low grass for perhaps ten minutes. It was just becoming dusk when we saddled up and started to move up and slightly across the finger, looking for a position where we would spend the night.

We had moved at most twenty yards when we noticed something in the now chest-high grass and thicker brush. We had come to an area where there were many spots where the grass was beaten down. They were made by a body that had sat or lain. Clarity was instantaneous. A chunk of a unit of NVA had been there, next to us. They had seen us, watched us eating. They had gone up to the start of the jungle trees just another thirty yards up the hill for the rest of their unit. They were coming down to wipe us out. We made an instant 90 degree right turn and moved barely twenty yards across the finger to a few small bushes on the other edge. Within seconds we heard the confident, tramping sound of a large unit moving down through the grass. Flashlights started sweeping the area where we had just been eating. Other flashlights were further down the finger, moving up towards us. Others were in the ravine below us.

No need for details. Suffice it to say that we kept a good number of 105s and 155s busy that night, using the always-fun method of bringing in rounds ever closer by sound. And we all caught the morning helicopter service for a nice ridehome.

Chance. What if the NVA hadn't waited, organizing their attack? What if they had attacked immediately? What if we had gone ten yards further into the finger before eating? What if we hadn't started to move to our night position at the precise moment we did? What if we hadn't noticed the grass? What if we had not made the hard right, gone to the exact position we did? What if mom and her prayers didn't have a bit of pull with the Lord? Which is to say, what if it was not chance at all?

Steve Robbins (1st Lt, USMCR) served with C-1/9 and the 3rd Recon Bn in Vietnam, August, 1968 to September 1969. He makes his home in Colgate, and his wife Susan is a librarian for the West Bend library. His son Christopher is a cavalry officer, 1st Lt., and platoon commander with the 101st Airborne, 4th Brigade, in Afghanistan.

**Words from Major General John F. Kelly during his Change of Command Ceremony
from Al Asad Iraq Feb 9,2009**

It might surprise some here today of what a Marine is proudest of in the nearly three years he's spent on the ground in Iraq since March 2003. It is not the triumphs of the invasion and the rush to Baghdad, Tikrit and Bayji that I lived, while the rest of the world held their breath and watched as we defined military power and prowess. It isn't the fights we had over the summer of 2003 against an emerging insurgency in the Northern Babil Province, or the two battles of Fallujah in April and November of 2004. Or clearing Ramadi, or holding Karma, or cleaning out Al Qaim over the years. It's also not about the number of terrorist we've killed, and the network they served all but destroyed, today making Anbar, Iraq, the Middle East, Europe and the world a safer place protected for now at least against a sick form of extremism no decent man or woman could ever embrace. That the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines that have fought here in Anbar and Western Ninawa Province, and the men and women who commanded them these last five years, are at least has good as the best in the world at this business.

What I am very proud of is the number of human beings we did not have to kill because we never stopped extending the hand of friendship even in the darkest of days gone by, and the damage we didn't do because we resorted to force last, and always restrained its use when we did go to the guns. The other things I am proud of are the cows we purchased for widows to make a living, chicken farms we established or expanded, agricultural experts we hired and brought in to help farmers save their fields and increase production, and advise the shepherds on how to cull and strengthen their flocks. Of the thousands of tons of seed and fertilizer we bought and distributed to reestablish a farm industry destroyed by over

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Kettle Moraine Detachment

Marine Corps League

The Kettle Moraine Detachment of the Marine Corps League proudly introduces its Flag History Presentation Team.



As a public service, it conducts programs on the history of some of the more colorful flags that have represented our nation since its earliest days.



Viewers young and old consider this program educational and entertaining.



Other banners including the POW/MIA and Wisconsin State flags are also described and shown.

A large funeral flag is ceremoniously folded with an explanation of the meaning of each fold.

The origin of TAPS and its words are read as the Detachment bugler plays the haunting melody that is performed at military funerals.



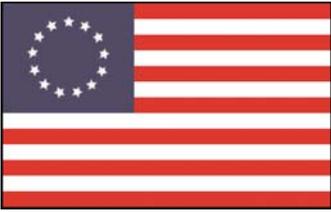
The presentation is followed by a brief question and answer session.

Contact Jim Krudwig by phone at 262-689-5409 or by email at mgysgt@att.net if interested in having a program conducted for your organization. 30 days advanced notice is appreciated.

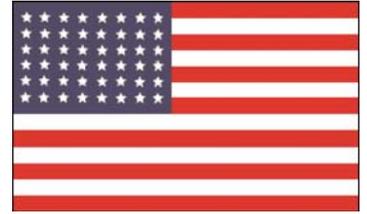


Kettle Moraine Detachment

Marine Corps League



922 Walnut Street
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PATRIOTIC FLAG HISTORY PRESENTATION

The Kettle Moraine Detachment of the Marine Corps League, a Veterans organization, conducts Flag History Presentations as a public service. The Flag History Presentation Team consists of former, retired, and active duty Marines.

The presentation begins with the participation of the audience in the saying of the Pledge of Allegiance and a salute to any veterans present. It is followed by the display and description of 10 historical flags including those from the earliest days of our country up to the present. The POW/MIA, Marine Corps and State of Wisconsin Flags are also described. A large US Flag of the type used at funerals is presented in a formal flag folding ceremony while the meaning of each fold is explained. Flag etiquette is covered. The Civil War history of the haunting song Taps is explained followed by it being played on the Detachment's bugle as the words are read. A brief question and answer period closes the presentation.

These Flag History Presentations are offered to groups of 20 or more persons such as schools, churches, 4-H, scouts, senior centers, nursing homes, adult civic groups like the Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Optimists, DAR, Elks, Moose, Gardening Clubs, Fire Departments, Knights of Columbus, Masonic Lodges, and other veterans groups. Some firms have shown an interest in having this patriotic presentation conducted for their staff and employees.

The Flag History Presentation Team of five to seven members can provide this service during the morning, noon luncheon, afternoon or evening. It takes approximately 15 minutes for the team to set up and the presentation itself lasts about 45 minutes. A lectern and PA system on-site are helpful. There is no charge for a presentation. However, any donation is added to the Detachment's fund which may be used to include support for troops in harm's way and other charities.

Because of the demand for these presentations, 30 days advanced lead time is requested. If your organization or group is interested in having a presentation conducted, call (262) 689-5409 or e-mail mgysgt@att.net.

Semper Fi,

Jim Krudwig
Master Gunnery Sergeant, USMC, Retired
Flag History Presentation Team Chair



Once a Marine, Always a Marine

KETMORDET OFFICER REPORTS FOR FEBRUARY 2009

In order to expedite the regular monthly meeting, all officers and standing committee chairs are afforded the opportunity to provide their input to the Newsletter by the first Monday of each month. Members are also welcome to submit something. This will enable all Members to review items of interest and reduce discussion at the meetings. Additionally, it provides any Member who is unable to make it to a regular meeting, the opportunity to remain abreast of current Detachment activities. Any submission may be edited and use depends on available space.

COMMANDANT JOHN STERN REPORTS:

Honor Guard: Since last reported the detachment's Honor Guard participated in services for:

24 January 2009 Marine Joseph Francis Metejka.

Marines Erdman, Heiman, Montag, Stern, and Wallace participating.

27 January 2009 Marine George Francis Noller.

Marines Brewer, Heiman, Montag, O'Toole, Stern, and Wallace participating.

Since its inception the detachment's Honor Guard has rendered military honors to 21 veterans throughout Ozaukee and Washington counties.

Support the Troops Packages: There were no packages mailed the month of January. Marines, remember I need ALL of the following information before sending packages. Name and full address of recipient. Name of the person and relationship submitting the request. And finally an e-mail address to determine rotation date and any personal needs

Notes from the troops:

Marine Ken Unertl's grandson Jesse Murphy wrote:

Mr Stern- Thank you so much for the package. I really appreciate you and the Marine Corps League thinking of me. Getting stuff in the mail makes my day a little better. I can't wait to come home. Please relay my thanks to everyone involved.

Sincerely Jesse Murphy

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Stern

SR VICE COMMANDANT GLEN BREWER: Nothing reported.

JR VICE COMMANDANT DANNY O'TOOLE: Hello Marines. We are quickly drawing down on the end of another Marine Corps League year. Our detachment has stayed at about the same size during the year.

We all need to be recruiters during the upcoming Marine Corps League year. We will soon have several new officers in the detachment. Each of these Marines is pledging to accept the responsibility of their new office. We can pay these Marines back by being proactive as recruiters.

Any organization depends on growth for its very existence. We Marines are no different. We really need each of you to contact friends, relatives, workmates and neighbors who are retired or former Marines and encourage them to attend a meeting. Once they come to a meeting we are almost assured of them becoming members.

If you see a new member Marine at a meeting, take just a few private moments to welcome them. They will appreciate it. Hand out the detachment ball point pens to prospective members, they are a great recruiting tool.

Semper Fi Danny O'Toole

JUDGE ADVOCATE SEAN RODRIGUEZ: Nothing new to report.

ADJUTANT JASON WAIER REPORTS: Marines It was good seeing such a large turnout for the January Meeting, let's keep the momentum up with another good turnout for the Elections. By now you should have received your ballot in the mail. If not do not fret I will have blanks available at the Meeting. I am happy to see a few of our Members step forward to take on new responsibilities within the Det, but am disheartened by the fact no one came forward to take over the Adjutants job. It is a shame that the first act the new Commandant will have is to find someone to fill this position and appoint them Adjutant. I was appointed to this job back in 2005 myself, and then re-elected to it for the next three years, but it is time for me to move on. If you are still considering taking on the responsibility of this job I will be happy to answer any questions. Just give me a call at 262-623-1417. Please wish to Rory Ott, Bill Wallace, and John Stern Happy Birthday next time you see them.

CHAPLAIN PAUL BOLLMAN REPORTS:

Now that the National Elections are behind us, we can concentrate on our elections within the Detachment. It seems as if the same individuals are there each year to volunteer their time and efforts to keep the detachment going. When we took our oath of membership we pledged to work and help our detachment be the best there is.

The problem of individuals making decisions on the basis of which you like or dislike should have no bearing on our Detachment. The beliefs and faith that we pray to as we open our meetings has no limitations, that faith treats each and everyone the same. Our Lord died on the cross for all of us. He blessed us and prayed for us, now why can't we do the same? Our Lord has His hand in them Marine Corps activities for the past 200+ years, His blessings go to us each and every day! Let's be there for Him

as well as all of our Comrades in Arms. Any questions ,concerns or someone sick please call Rev Paul Bollmann at 262-628-0469.

FLAG HISTORY PRESENTATION TEAM COMMANDER JIM KRUDWIG REPORTS:

The center page of this newsletter is a copy of the letter which was printed up to be sent out to all schools in Washington County. The second mailing will go to nursing homes and senior centers with copies to follow to civic organizations, scout units, etc. If a Member is aware of an organization that would be interested in a FHP, you can pass the center letter on to them.

The FHP scheduled for Badger School in Feb has been re-scheduled to April 9th. Info will follow later.

COLOR GUARD COMMANDER BILL WALLACE REPORTS: Nothing new to report.

continued from page 4 General Kelly's comments

a decade of UN sanctions, and exacerbated by the current drought. Of the hundreds of miles of irrigation canals we repaired or opened up, and the schools and clinics built and stocked with supplies. The impact we had on the province's health. By fixing or building sewerage plants and systems, and water treatment facilities, we began to reduce infant mortality by reducing the unseen killers of the new born-killers that thrive in filthy water. And then there was the cholera epidemic this past summer-that didn't happen; the dreaded tuberculosis outbreak in Hadithah-that we miraculously contained and treated without the loss of a single life.

I am also very proud of the Iraqis we Americans, along with our brothers in the Iraqi police and army, safeguarded as the insurgency was systematically defeated. It wasn't all done with guns and violence, but as much with the kinds of nation building and "hearts and minds" programs we established for the people of Anbar, and now those of Western Ninawa, who are today working with us, and not fighting against us. And when the few remaining Al Qaeda do crawl out from under whatever rock they call home, those who once aided them now reject their presence and the venom they spew, and tell us where to find them. Of the month-long voter registration drive in August without a single accusation of fraud, without a single violent incident, and with 100% of the eligible registered. Of the election just held with nearly 100% of those registered walking miles even when you knew full well hundreds and even thousands of you might die. You ignored the threats of death. With the full knowledge that the terrorists were frantically building vehicle bombs, and outfitting as many suicide bombers as they could talk into their murderous assignment, you gathered at polling places in your millions and exercised the right of free men and woman and the forces of evil here never had a chance of stopping you. By dipping your fingers in a bottle of ink you sounded the death knell of terrorists and extremists who only destroy, never build. Who kill, and never nurture. Who want to tear down societies now, but have no plan for the future. Who simply can not stand the thought of men and women living their lives the way they want to live them safely in their own homes with their children, and enjoying the God-given rights of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

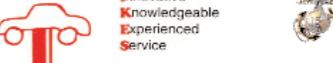
It's harder-ininitely harder-fighting this kind of war as patience, and innovation and economic development are the most effective ammo, with trust, influence and personal relations the most effective and really only usable arrows in the quiver. In this dangerous world we live in the sad fact is that the kind of war we are fighting today in Iraq was made possible only after all those who have to be killed because they are murderous irreconcilables, are read. And diplomacy and good will only work once these kinds of men are hunted down and killed or put in cages, and those more reasonable men and women are finally convinced they can't win with the gun, are tired of dying, and realize their only hope is through dialogue.

These are the things I am proud of as I end my third, and I am sure my final, tour here in Iraq; however, what I am proudest of is why we came here and regardless of what the talkers back home thought this was all about, those of us on the ground that were putting our lives on the line had the noblest of all intentions in 2003, and they guide us today as well in our every action. Reasons only the American military would march forward to do with happy hearts, and without regard for our own lives or wellbeing. Not for land, or oil, or prestige, or for anything else other than our country's security, and another people's freedom. I know it sounds naïve or corny, but our Iraqi brothers and sisters who have come to know us the best, believe it the most.

As we surged into Iraq six years ago the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of the Coalition came not to conquer a nation, but to free a people. We sincerely believed we came to help free Iraq from a terrible tyrant who not only ordered the deaths of thousands of his own countrymen he was morally and ethically bound to protect as the leader of a nation in the modern era, but also crushed the spirits of the living holding you all in a grip of fear that turned brother against brother, sons and daughters against their parents, and Muslim against Muslim. A man that fostered murderous religious, ethnic, and social suspicions and hates as the means to keep you divided.

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This is what those of us in uniform who have served here are proudest of, and not any number of cynics or the entire chattering class can ever take that away from us. We who serve the colors risked everything in this endeavor, while they throw their darts. We fought here in the unimaginable heat of Iraq's summer, and they criticized. We walked the most dangerous streets in the world hunting the most murderous men on earth, and they slept safe at home in their beds. We send the people we hold as dear and precious to us-as close as our own sons and daughters-home to be buried, and the best they can do is cast doubt on our mission, our motives, and our humanity. They should come to Anbar and see what we have done together as partners in the same fight, and, as a sheikh recently said to me: "as brothers now and forever because we have endured the same agony for four years and emerged victorious. You never wavered and we have won."

These are the things I am proud and proudest of, but what makes me eternally grateful is the relatively small number of American soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines I have lost or had maimed in comparison to what it was like the last two times I was here. Eternally grateful, but their loss and suffering still breaks my heart and I think about them everyday. I will think about them for the rest of my life because I failed to bring them home. I will never forget them, or their families. I am painfully aware that for their families, and their buddies who knew them best in their squads, sections, and platoons, that their single casualty is for them an overwhelming statistic. Their grief, is my grief, forever...but I still thank God there were so few this time.

These men and women served because they are the best of their generation. They understood above all else the notion of service to one's country, and of selfless devotion to duty. They died for their buddies, for their Army and their Marine Corps, and for millions of their countrymen who will never know their names but sleep safe in their homes every night because of men and women like them. They are part of our legend now, and we will never forget them...

To the people of Anbar and Western Ninawa-our friends and allies-I wish you well and pray that you will see this experiment in democracy through that has been bought with so much suffering and pain. Treasure this new and wonderful way to live your lives, cherish it, nurture it, make it grow, never stop trying to make it better as it is gift from God to you, and your children. Semper Fidelis.

Major General John F Kelly USMC

KETMORDET'S REPORTED SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EVENTS (Always subject to change)

Feb 21	Sat	0845	Regular Monthly Meeting, Trenton Town Hall, Hwy 33 East of West Bend	Officer Elections
Mar 21	Sat	0855	Regular Monthly Meeting, Trenton Town Hall, Hwy 33 East of West Bend, Dept of WI, MCL	
				Commandant Vern Reidle to be on hand for the Installation of Officers
Mar 28-29			Dept Of WI MCI State Conference in Fitchburg,WI	
Apr 9	Thu	TBD	FHP, Badger Middle School, West Bend	
Apr 10			Dept of WI, MCL Applications for	Scholarships must be turned in
Apr 17-19			2009 National Marine Corps League, Central Division Conference in Neenah	

NEWSLETTER INFO

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The *KETTLE MORaine MARINE* Newsletter is normally published prior to monthly scheduled meetings for the information and use of Detachment Members. Articles and letters are invited but the Editor retains the right to edit any submission. Submit typed materials or photographs marked for the Newsletter to the Editor by the **first Monday** of the month using either e-mail to mgysgt@att.net or snail mail to 922 Walnut St, West Bend, WI 53095. Annual donation for ads is \$100 for a single block and \$175 for a double. Half or full page ads are also available. Check with the Editor.

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