



The

Kettle Moraine Marine

September 2011 Serving the Kettle Moraine area since 2005 Vol VII Issue 9
Commandant: Jim Ramage Kettle Moraine Det, MCL#1203 Editor: Jason Waier



Our next Meeting will be held: 9am September 17th, 2011!
It will be conducted at the Trenton Town Hall located at 1071 State Hwy 33 East, West Bend.
Hope to see you there!

Newsletter Highlights

Cover: *The Kettle Moraine Marine gains national notice!*

Page 3: *Minutes from August*

Page 4: *Five Rounds of Death- The Dakota Meyer story*

Page 5: *Officer Comments*

Page 8: *Veterans Affairs*

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George Wujcik
(262) 338-8426

Calendar of Events(subject to change)

Sep 17 0900 Regular Det Meeting held at Trenton Town Hall

Oct 15 0900 Regular Det Meeting held at Trenton Town Hall

Nov 10 Marine Corps 236th Birthday Ooh-Rah! Marines!

NO MEETING IN NOVEMBER HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY THANKSGIVING

AND GOOD LUCK TO ALL OUR DEER HUNTERS, COME HOME SAFE!

Dec 17 0900 Regular Det Meeting held at Trenton Town Hall

Dec 25 Merry Christmas!

Mar 17-18 MCL State Convention Hosted by KetMorDet

NEWSLETTER INFO

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THE KETTLE MORAINÉ 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: jwaier@charter.net or snail mail to 2235 Sylvan Way Apt #6 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.

Editor: Jason Waier (262) 623-1417

See the Newsletter and other Detachment info at www.ketmordet.com



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Kettle Moraine Detachment 1203, Marine Corps League
Minutes of Meeting Held August 22, 2011
17 Members Present

The meeting was held at Moraine Park Technical College, West Bend, Wisconsin
The Commandant called the meeting to order at 1904, the Sergeant at arms posted the colors, and the Chaplain opened the meeting with a prayer, the bible is open.

Roll Call of Officers

Commandant: Jim Ramage
Sr. Vice Commandant: Danny O'Toole (not present)
Jr. Vice Commandant: John Stern
Adjutant: Paul Schleif
Judge Advocate: Charlie Keller

Paymaster: Roger Cross
Chaplain: George Wujcik
Sergeant at Arms: Bill Wallace
Historian: Jason Waier

Other Members Attending

Other members attending were Steve Chantelois, Dan Coulter, Carl Heiman, George Kaczmarek, Gil Lucka, Cal Racine, Hugo Straub and Ken Unertl.

New Members and Guests

At the opening of our meeting Dave Gardner was sworn in as our newest member. Dave, welcome aboard! It was exciting to meet you; Dave has an interesting personal Marine history and it's an honor and privilege to have him with us. Be sure and take the time to say "hello"!

Reading of the Minutes

Charlie Keller made a motion, with Jason seconding, to accept the minutes of the last meeting as published in the newsletter. The motion passed.

Paymasters Report

Roger presented the paymaster report to the detachment. As noted the Brewers fundraiser on July 8th was a good success with the work by the guys who participated. Well-done! Roger did renew 2 CDs for the detachment and he does a good job looking out for our interests.

Fritz Montag was reimbursed for prizes he picked up for Allenton youth. As you know, for the past couple of years we have sponsored an Allenton Little League team. At the end of the season they have an event where kids can win prizes and have fun. This being a very worthwhile outlet for us to be involved in Fritz does a really nice job coordinating between them and our detachment. Thank-you Fritz!

A motion was made by Dan Coulter, and seconded by Charlie Keller to accept the paymaster report. The motion passed. Thanks Roger.

Chaplains Report

George had no news of any members sick or in distress at this time.

Correspondence Received or Delivered

Jason brought a letter of thanks that Rollie received after donating razors at the VA.

Report of Standing Committees

Honor Guard: No services rendered since our last meeting.

Junior Vice Commandant: John did send out one care package, they are up to about 50 dollars now. Roger talked about how we have to be really careful with our care packages, they need to be addressed to a particular person and it needs to be known where they are going. In addition, servicemen can communicate with Skype and they do have PX privileges regularly where they are working. A motion was made to cease sending care packages for now, which generated passionate discussion among the detachment. The motion was amended to the following: Unless there is a specific request for a care package to be sent to a specific serviceman we will not send packages to a non-specific address, as they likely will never be used.

Color Guard: The color guard participated in the Allenton Parade Saturday August 20th. In addition, it was brought to the attention of the detachment that there is a parade in Kewaskum on September 11th in remembrance of that day in our history. A sign-up sheet was made up and available for members to register.

Continued on Page 7



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Five Rounds of Death

Launched with 60 Afghans and 45 Americans, Finished with 3 Afghans and 4 Americans

In a previous book, I wrote that corporals are the backbone of the infantry. They are the leaders in the actual firefights. This action took place five miles east of the Korengal Valley, along the Pakistan border in Kunar Province, where I embedded with 1-32 Infantry Battalion. Even among corporals, Dakota Meyer is exceptional. **Bing West**

Operation Dancing Goat

In early September of 2009, 1-32 Infantry conducted Operation Dancing Goat. The scheme of maneuver was simple. Thirteen Marine advisors, 60 Afghan soldiers and 20 Border Police would walk into Ganjigal to hold the *shura*, while a platoon from 1-32 remained in reserve and three teams of scout-snipers took positions on a ridge.

From the start, one advisor - Cpl. Dakota Meyer - didn't like it. Dancing Goat 2 seemed haphazard, with too many loose parts and no single commander.

"We should go in expecting contact," Meyer argued, "not expecting to sip tea."

Meyer was a fit, intense grunt inclined to speak his mind. The patrol order remained unchanged and the units moved out shortly after midnight on 8 September, 2009. Meyer was driving a humvee with a Mark 19 40mm grenade launcher in the turret. His job was to provide fire support if the four advisors advancing with the lead platoon ran into trouble. As he stood beside his truck at the release point in the predawn light, women, children and goats flocked past him, fleeing out of the valley. He tried to question an old man with a long white beard, but the man refused to shake his hand and hurried past.

Ahead of Meyer, four advisors accompanied the Afghan platoon into the village. The terrain provided no cover. The stone houses lay upslope of the rocky dirt road. Lt. Mike Johnson radioed that he was approaching the mullah's house. A long concrete schoolhouse lay off to the right, together with a series of terraces supported by stout, chest-high stone walls that prevented soil erosion.

The Enemy Entrenched Everywhere

Unseen, enemy fighters were crouched below the windows of the schoolhouse and inside the houses. They were hiding in the alleyways and, most critically, they were dug in behind the stone terrace walls to the east. They had concealment, bulletproof cover, surprise and superior numbers. They opened fire on the lead element at 0530, shooting machineguns and RPGs downhill with the rising sun at their backs.

Swenson ran up to the mouth of the wash and grabbed at two *askars* [Afghan soldiers] who were running away. As he yelled at them, bullets chipped the stones at his feet. Altogether, over a hundred enemy were shooting from entrenched positions to the north and east. Swenson was carrying a radio called an MBTR 148 with a long whip antenna. He called to the Ops Center.

"This is Highlander 6," he screamed. "Heavy enemy fire. Request immediate suppression. Fire KE 3354. Will adjust. And get that air in here!"

Fifty meters behind Swenson, Captain Ray Kaplan took up the cause, yelling over his radio that KE 3365 was the proper target. Fire. Fire, damnit. Smoke. Smoke. Kaplan sent the message seven times. Everyone was trying to talk over the same frequency, cutting each other off in mid-sentence. Kaplan was sure his requests were heard loud and clear.

"The TOC won't clear a mission," plan radioed to Swenson. "The f--ks won't shoot the arty."

Major Peter Granger, the executive officer in command of the battalion while O'Donnel was on leave, arrived at the TOC after the fight had started.

"They didn't know where all their soldiers were," Granger said later. "They didn't know if they'd be calling fire on their own. They didn't have SA [situational awareness]."

An enraged Swenson screamed that he wanted rounds placed on the enemy. How the hell was he to know where everyone was? He was ducking machinegun fire, and he knew exactly where the enemy gunners were on a knoll to his right front, trying to kill him. They're all over the place, Swenson thought. I may not make it out of here.

Advisors Surrounded

Several hundred meters to the west, Corporal Meyer and Staff Sergeant Juan Rodriguez-Chavez were standing next to their humvees, listening to the heavy firing. Meyer called 1st Sergeant Garza, who was pinned down next to Lt. Ademola Fabayo, asking to go forward to rescue Johnson.

"Negative," came the reply.

SSgt Aaron Kennefick, one of the four trapped advisors, came up on the net.

"They're all around us," Kennefick yelled. "They're in the house next door. If we leave this house, they'll shoot us down."

Over the radio, Meyer intermittently heard Lt. Johnson trying to send his grid. The net was clogged with a dozen soldiers trying to talk over the din, stepping on each other's communications.

Johnson found a hole in the constant stream of cluttered conversations. "Clear the net," Johnson said. "I have wounded here. My pos is 793...."

He never finished the sentence.

Meyer paced back and forth as the fight raged on without him. Several *askars* stumbled by, some bleeding, a few without their rifles, all exhausted.

Continued on Page 6

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Report of Officers and Committee Chairs

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 Jim Ramage reports: Nothing Reported

Sr Vice Danny O'Toole Reports: Nothing Reported

Judge Advocate Charlie Keller reports: Nothing new to report

Honor Guard/Jr Vice John Stern reports: Nothing Reported

Chaplain George Wujcik reports:
The Flag History Team had a presentation scheduled for Fair Park in July during the County Fair. To say the least it did not go as expected due to the deluge of rain that occurred that day. The rain kept many people away from the fair and also from our event. Marines Carl Heiman, Gil Lucka, Fritz Montag, George Kaczmarek, Ken Unertl, and George Wujcik did the presentation in spite of conditions to a group of about 30 people. One of those in attendance was Marine Paul Schlieff's mother who happened to be present at a historical bench under the same tent. We had hoped for greater attendance to help promote our unit and gain new members. Maybe another day.

George Wujcik

Paymaster Roger Cross reports: Nothing reported

Newsletter Editor Jason Waier reports:

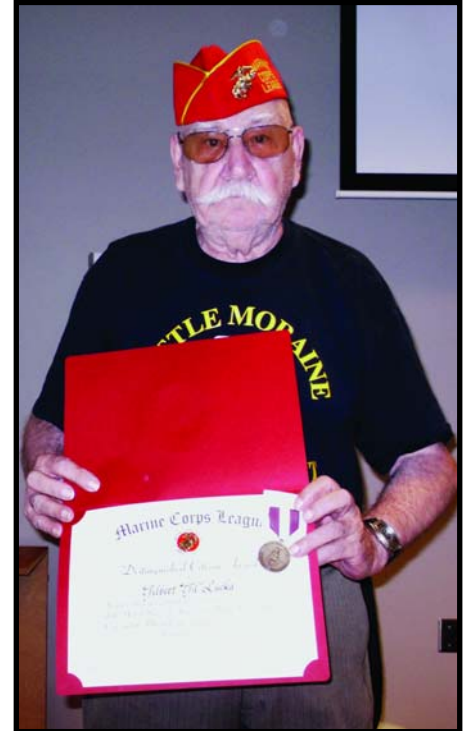
I have some great news to report this month. **The Kettle Moraine Marine** has received many accolades and kudos over the years. Including honorable mentions in past years Newsletter Competitions at Marine Corps League National Headquarters. After many attempts and some close calls I am very proud to be able to announce that the **The Kettle Moraine Marine** has taken **1st Place** - Central Division, Marine Corps League with this year's entries!! **Ooh-Rah!!**

This Month Dakota Meyer will be awarded the Medal of Honor. This month and next month you will be able to read the back story of the events leading to this day. It was copied from an article that was forwarded to me via an email. I believe it to be from an older issue of Soldier of Fortune. And is a shorter story in one of Bing West's books. Please check back next month for the conclusion of the story and find out what book you can find it in!

For his work with the Boy Scouts of America and specifically the Eagle Scouts the Department of Wisconsin has awarded our own Gil Lucka the Distinguished Service Award! Congratulations Gil!

And be sure to give our newest member, David Gardner a hearty Ooh-Rah next time you see him at a meeting. Welcome aboard David!

A winner has been chosen for the Patriotic Photo contest be sure to check in next month to see who won!



Finally I am still waiting for someone to come forward and take over the newsletter. Please contact me at 262-623-1417 if interested.

Semper Fi
Jason Waier

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Continued from Page 4

"Where Americani?" Meyer yelled. "Dost? Dost?"

The Afghan soldiers pointed vaguely down the draw leading to the village.

"They're down!" Meyer yelled. "We gotta get in there now!" Meyer turned to SSgt Chavez, the other driver. "You drive my truck," he said. "I'll man the Mark 19."

Round One

On the ridge 500 feet above, Valadez watched the lone truck leave the rendezvous area and draped a plastic orange air panel on a boulder so that Meyer could track his directions. He told Meyer to take a sharp left and watched the humvee disappear into the ravine.

As the humvee crawled out of the ravine, Chavez could see the first row of stone houses about a hundred meters uphill. When a mortar round crumped in to his right, he jerked the wheels to the left and the humvee skidded sideways. As he rolled a few meters down hill to straighten out, three RPG rockets exploded in sharp succession, again to the right. He couldn't hear the radio over the racket of the Mark 19. Meyer was shooting at a rock wall right next to the truck.

"Stop, stop!" Meyer screamed.

Chavez hit the brakes while Meyer climbed down from the gun turret and ran over to several *askars* huddled behind a boulder, also shooting to the right. Meyer pulled first one Afghan and then another back to the truck. Inside five minutes, he had packed three wounded soldiers in the back seat. He ran back, opened up the trunk and pushed an *anskar* soldier in. Another *askar* soldier stumbled over. Meyer piled him in and climbed back into the turret. Several Taliban had run forward and were shooting from stonewalls along a terrace about fifty meters to the east, or right hand side of the truck. When the Mark 19 jammed, Meyer switched to the backup gun, a 240 machinegun. When he shot one man with a heavy black beard, the others ducked behind the wall. Chavez turned the truck around and they jounced back into the ravine, with Meyer firing bursts in crazy directions.

About 150 meters southwest of the village, Chavez stopped behind a small hill that shielded them from direct fire. As Chavez and Meyer unloaded the wounded, a humvee from Dog 3,

the Army platoon, drove up. Meyer asked for help in attacking the village. A soldier said they did not have permission from their command to enter the valley.

"I'll go," said Fazel, Meyer's interpreter.

Round Two

Chavez, Meyer and Fazel left the Army platoon and went back into the valley in a single truck. Again as the truck pulled out of the ravine, bullets pinged off the armor and Meyer went back to work with the 240 machinegun. And again he yelled, "Stop!" Four more Afghan soldiers were stumbling out of the village, including their first sergeant, the right side of his trousers covered with blood. Meyer hopped down and pushed all four into the vehicle. Fazel climbed into the turret and manned the machinegun, firing burst after burst.

It was 0700, ninety minutes into the fight, and two Kiowa helicopters with the call sign Pale Horse had come on station.

"In the village," the lead pilot Warrant Officer Silano said, "I could see men at the windows of buildings and in the doorways. I saw Meyer repeatedly run into the open kill zone to recover dead and wounded men (Afghan soldiers)."

When the truck stopped behind the hill where the other wounded were, the first sergeant was babbling incoherently, begging Meyer not to go back. "You get killed!" he screamed. "You get killed!"

Meyer angrily pulled him out of the truck. "This truck is shot to hell," Meyer said to Chavez. "Let's get another one."

Round Three

They drove back to the rendezvous point and hopped into Chavez's truck with a .50 caliber in the turret. Again into the ravine and up the slope to the village houses. Watching from the ridge to the east, Valadez radioed a warning that fighters hiding in the irrigation ditches were sneaking up on the truck from the right. Meyer swung the gun around and pumped heavy slugs into a tall, full-bearded man in his thirties who was running behind the vehicle. Two more fighters rushed in

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from the right side.

"I can't depress the gun," Meyer yelled, grabbing his M4 rifle.

Chavez watched wide-eyed as a fighter approaching the front hood was shot in the head. As the truck swerved a bit sideways over the rocks, he yelled to Meyer that they might get stuck in the valley.

"Well," Meyer yelled down, "I guess we will die with them."

Chavez drove straight ahead, bullets pinging off the doors, while Meyer fired the .50 caliber.

Chavez saw yellow smoke several meters to the right of the road. "Maybe we've found them," he shouted.

Swenson's party had been pinned down for about an hour. Three border police, too frightened to return fire, had run away. Fabayo was watching groups of two and three enemy fighters darting from one terrace wall to another. A woman in a purple and and dress ran from one house to another with a belt of machinegun bullets dangling from her shoulders. Fabayo shot one man and yelled to Swenson to cover his back.

Shooting over a wall, Williams had taken shards of rock in his elbow. First Sergeant Garza had been concussed by the near miss of an RPG rocket and Williams had dragged him to cover.

Over a captured handheld radio, a Taliban leader was taunting them. Ahmad Shafi, Swenson's interpreter, provided a translation.

"You came in," a mature voice said. "Now I decide how you leave. We killed the Russians here. Now we kill you, unless you surrender. Stop shooting and I will let you live."

These were frontline fighters from Pakistan, many in their 30s and some in their 40s, veterans of dozens of skirmishes and several large battles. Unlike in the Korengal and at Barge Matal, their radio discipline was excellent. There hadn't been any

Continued next month!

From Minutes Page 3

There was detachment discussion in regard to how difficult it is getting to be to field a color guard for a parade. In Allenton there were only 4 people, and that was only due to the fact that I could make it at the last minute. Would there be interest in more people to participate if we could get hold of a trailer to pull, thereby allowing some of our members who can't really do parades anymore to ride, and be part of things that way? This will be looked into.

Fundraising: As our fundraising season winds down on behalf of the detachment I want to say thank-you and well-done to all who have participated in fundraising efforts this year. It has been a really good year, and it's not an easy job to go out and perform. My hat is off to all of you!

Old Business

Roger talked about a bowling event we had been talking about sponsoring earlier in the year. We are now looking at possibly having this event at Lighthouse Lanes north of West Bend. He is going to check into the month of October and will report back at the next meeting.

As you all know our detachment is sponsoring the spring conference next year as well as the summer convention. Jim has spoken with the Radisson in Menomonee Falls about those dates, March 15-16 for the spring and June 15-16 for the summer. They have rooms and facilities available at this time!

New Business

Jason presented some information on an organization called Fisher House. This is an organization that provides facilities for families to stay while the veteran in their family is in the hospital, similar to a Ronald McDonald house. There is actually a local effort in progress at the VA in Milwaukee, and we are going to see if somebody from Fisher is available to come and talk with our detachment at our next meeting about what they provide. It sounds like this could be a very worthwhile charity and it is something going on that we can see, as it is right in our area!

Rollie has been talking with the food pantry in addition to Wal Mart about a slightly different angle on donating. He was wondering, would it be possible to go to Wal Mart with a large sum of money, possibly receive a discount therefore being able to buy more product and take it directly to the pantry, versus just making a monetary donation? We would need to know what items were needed at the pantry of course. This received a positive response from the detachment and will continue to be looked at as a possibility! Thanks for your efforts Rollie, well done and a great idea!

Good of the League

Jason informed us that the red t-shirts that have been talked about are in the works and coming soon. Speaking of shirts and uniforms, the issue was raised regarding members who are no longer active in the detachment who were issued uniforms to participate in funerals, parades and so-forth. I checked my records and the roster and there are approximately 3-4 members/former members who have uniforms. These people will be contacted to see if the uniforms could be returned, thereby offering the opportunity for the detachment to save some money if somebody else can use it. (Provided it could be tailored to fit!) I did find since the meeting that one member had returned his already, quite some time ago.

The issue was also discussed, (briefly), as to how many people seem to be getting "junk mail" that could be coming off of the Marine Corps League mailing list. Jim will look into this situation and see what he learns about it.

Gil displayed the award that he received for all of the work he has been doing with the Eagle Scout Program. He has a lot of the State of Wisconsin that he is taking care of. Well-done Gil, it's a lot of work!

Jason mentioned that Fox Company is having their Marine Corps Ball this fall and if someone is interested in attending the opportunity is there.

A reminder to all members! Our next meeting will be held at Trenton Town Hall September 17th at 0900! That's a Saturday morning, as it is fall and we're back to Trenton.

Meeting Closed

With no further business to conduct, the Commandant gave the order to close the meeting at 2003. The Sergeant at Arms retired the colors and the Chaplain gave the closing prayer. The Commandant thanked all members for attending and asked that they secure new members. The Marine Hymn was sung in closing the meeting. The Bible is closed.

Respectfully submitted by:
Paul Schleif, Adjutant



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-OR-

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(*Korean War Era Marines See National Bylaws, Article 6, Section 600) (*Korean War Era Marines See National Bylaws, Article 6, Section 600)

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