

**LEWIS G
WATKINS
DETACHMENT**



**DETACHMENT
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Jim Koerner
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**Jr. Vice-Commandant
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**Judge Advocate
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**Past Commandant
Robert Walker
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**Paymaster
David Wessinger
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**Adjutant
Jim Day
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**Chaplain
Leon Davis
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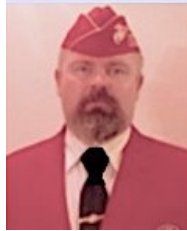
**Sergeant-at-Arms
Charlie Brickett
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**Detachment #1131
website is:**

mcl1131.org

Tip of the Spear

VOLUME XI ISSUE 6 JULY/AUGUST 2023



Commandant's Corner

It is with sadness that we said farewell to another Lewis G. Watkins Detachment member this month. Ron Bode passed away on September 7 2023 at Prisma's Cottingham Hospice after a long illness. A Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot, he joined the Detachment in 2013 and attended functions as he was able.

Bob Walker, Bill Thompson and Jim Day attended a Veterans Last Patrol celebration at his hospice residence on August 31, 2023. VLP is a non-profit organization that connects veteran volunteers to veterans in hospice care so their last patrol isn't alone. The ceremony lasted about an hour and was attended by family members and about 75 other guests. See the pictures inside. The Detachment will provide an honor guard for the memorial Service at Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church on September 23, 2023. Help with a fitting farewell to a comrade-in-arms.

Thanks to Bob Walker's efforts, it looks like we have found a permanent home for the Toys for Tots store. We've been assigned four former classrooms at the Code Learning Center/Blue Ridge Community Center on Holland Avenue in Seneca. A team from the BASF VETS organization helped take down concrete block walls to give us a big display/shopping area plus a storage room. This is the same team that built the wheelchair swing for us. Thanks to them and our Detachment crew for a job well done.

The rifle raffle is in full swing. The winner will receive a brand new Henry .22 cal "Golden Boy" rifle. This is our latest fund raising effort. New member Tommy Holland is in charge of ticket sales. SC Department Commandant Helen Breen will draw the winning ticket during the Oconee County Veterans Appreciation Festival in October. We canceled the Detachment picnic in August due to very hot conditions. The picnic has been moved to the Veterans Appreciation Festival too. Food is being served at the festival so we'll focus on desserts.

We have some important events coming soon, not the least of which is the Lewis G. Watkins Honors Day on October 7, 2022, at Wolf Stake Cemetery. The fall Belk Charity Sale event is scheduled for October and early November. This is one of our largest fundraising events each year so we need as many volunteers as we can muster to man the ticket sales positions. Bob Walker is coordinating the schedule. Toys for Tots season also kicks off in October with box placement and our first TFT float event. Bob Walker is the TFT Coordinator again this year.

We'll place USMC flags at Oconee Memorial Park in early November, and the Marine Corps Birthday Dinner will be held November 10, 2023 at Paisano's.

Please remember to check the website at mcl1131.org and this newsletter to keep up with the upcoming events.

Semper Fi!

***Todd Alexander
Commandant***

No Photo
available

Jim Koerner
Senior Vice-Commandant



Len Rock
Junior Vice-Commandant

Hello all,

We've lost another member, Ron Bode, among the last if not the last Vietnam veteran. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family. Thanks to all the detachment members that participated in the Last Patrol event at Cottingham Hospice and as the honor guard at the memorial service.

The new TFT toy store looks great. Thanks to the demolition and clean up crew from the Detachment and BASF VETS.

The next few months are among the busiest in the Detachment calendar. We can use your help to make these a success.

Semper Fi

Jim Koerner
Senior Vice Commandant

My thoughts and prayers go out to the the Bode family at this difficult time.

Thanks to all of you that helped with our new TFT toy store at the Code Learning Center/Blue Ridge Community Center. The new spaces are great, especially since it looks like it will be a permanent home for us. We will be doing table set up and begin setting out our hold over toys in September. We'll publish the store hours for toy collections as TFT season moves into full swing.

Just a reminder, we have one last recruiting event at Lowe's in 2023 is on September 30th so come and help us recruit new members for a couple of hours. The second event is on October 14, 2023 at the Oconee County Veterans Appreciation Festival to be held at South Cove Park. The Festival will be held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm with free lunch and beverages being served from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Come out and enjoy the festivities and help us grow our numbers. You can meet SC Department Commandant Helen Breen as she will draw the winning rifle raffle ticket at the Festival.

Semper Fi.

Len Rock
Junior Vice Commandant



Don Alexander
Judge Advocate

Well, folks, sadly we have lost another Vietnam veteran member. All of us need to be on the lookout for potential new members and help where we can with recruiting efforts.

Fall is already just around the corner. What that should mean to all of us is the Belk Charity Sale and TOYS FOR TOTS. Coordinator Bob Walker and his staff will need our help in making this another dynamite year for both events. If any of you can volunteer some time, please let Bob know.

Thanks to Paymaster David Wessinger and Adjutant Jim Day for their hard work on the budget. Our vote next month includes some of the bylaws changes that were approved by the Department to include a travel budget line for the Commandant to attend Department meetings in Columbia.

Semper Fi

Don Alexander
 Judge Advocate

2nd Annual Oconee County Veterans Appreciation Festival
 October 14, 2023 9am-3pm

Live Entertainment

Heath Rankin
 Cecil Thompkins
 Cannon & Cohen Duo

South Cove County Park
 Free Park Admission
 Lunch Provided 11am-1pm
 Veteran Organization Booths

All Veterans and their families are encouraged to attend so that we may thank you for your service

Sponsored by the Oconee County Veterans Affairs Office and Oconee County Government

The 2nd Annual Oconee County Veterans Appreciation Festival will be held again this year at South Cove County Park on October 14th. We'll hold our rescheduled annual picnic at the same time — the August date was too hot so October should be cooler.

The inaugural event was a big success last year. We'll have our tent set up along with many of the other area veterans' organizations. Free food and beverages will be served from 11 to 1 pm and music will be provided this year. The festival will be attended by the SC Department Commandant Helen Breen and Jim Breen. She will draw the winner of rifle raffle at 2 pm. Volunteers are needed to man the tent.

Be sure to pick up your Oconee County parking pass at the office ahead of time. It's free for veterans and is good for a year.

July 2023 Business Meeting and Award

Marine of the Year

Last year's Marine of the Year presented this year's award to Past Commandant & TFT Coordinator Bob Walker. He missed the ceremony earlier this year because of illness.

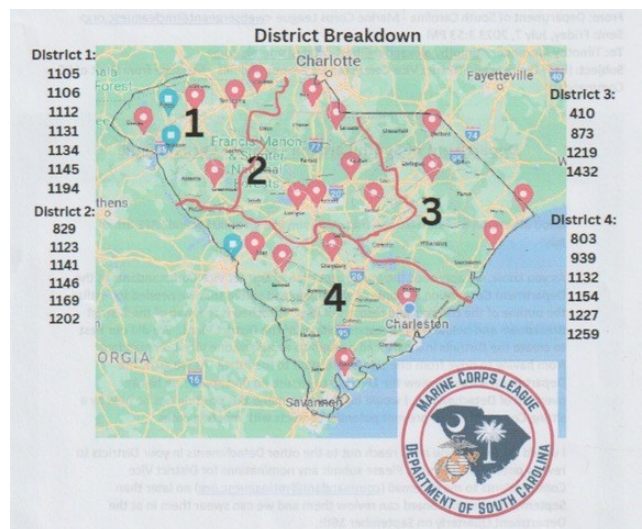


SC Associate of the Year

SC Department Commandant Helen Breen and Jim Breen presented the SC Department Associate of the Year Award to Detachment Adjutant Jim Day.



Commandant Helen Breen answered questions about recent changes to the SC Department Bylaws approved at the annual Department Convention in July. Focal point of discussions were establishment of four districts, replacement of Detachment Commandants on the Department Board of Trustees with four District Vice Commandants, and the role their roles within the districts. Rationale was largely disciplinary-related. For 2023, District Vice Commandants and at large members of the Board of Trustees will be selected at the September Quarterly Conference.



In Memoriam

Ronald August Bode

January 10, 1942—September 7, 2023



Veteran's Last Patrol

VLP volunteers line up for brief remarks and gifts. Presentations included a quilt, afghan and needlepoint.

A native of Wood Lake, Minnesota, Mr. Bode was a USMC Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot.

He was awarded twenty-eight air medals throughout his career. He retired from a civilian career in the corrugated paper manufacturing industry. He joined the LGW Detachment in September 2013.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Marilyn, two daughters and a son. A memorial service will be held at Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church at 1 pm on September 23, 2023. The Detachment will provide an honor guard.



Toys for Tots Toy Store's New "Home"



Hard hats off to the MCL & BASF VETS team! Thanks to their efforts we now have 3 former classrooms for the toy store operations plus another former classroom for storage. The Code Learning Center/Blue Ridge Community Center is located on Holland Avenue in Seneca.



Upcoming Meetings and Events

Friday, September 2, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.
TFT Move. Relocate fTFT materials rom Stor-
 age Sense, 365 Keowee School Road, Seneca to
 Code Learning Center location on Holland Ave.

Thursday, September 7 at 5:00 PM. De-
 tachment **Trustee's Meeting** at American Le-
 gion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay Street, Seneca.

Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm:
 Detachment #1131 **Business Meeting.** Ameri-
 can Legion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca.

**Saturday, September 23, 2023 at 8:00
 am: Family Breakfast** at Seneca Family Res-
 taurant, 123 Bypass.

**Saturday, September 23, 2023 at 1:00
 pm. Ron Bode Memorial Service** at Eter-
 nal Shepherd Lutheran Church, 220 Carson Rd,
 Seneca. Rifle detail and bugler assemble at
 12:45 pm.

**Saturday, September 30, 2023 at 11 am to
 1 pm. Recruiting event at Lowe's,** 195 Bilo
 Place. Set up at 10:30. Last Lowe's recruiting
 event for 2023.

Thursday, October 5, 2023 at 5:00 pm.
 Detachment **Trustee's Meeting** at American
 Legion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay Street, Seneca.

Saturday, October 7, 2023, 11:00 am.
Lewis G. Watkins Honor Ceremony, Wolf
 Stake Cemetery. Assemble at 10:45. Volunteers
 needed for the rifle detail.

**Saturday, October 14, 2023 Oconee Coun-
 ty 2nd Annual Veterans Appreciation
 Festival & Detachment Annual Picnic,
 9:00 am—3:00 pm,** South Cove County Park,
 Seneca. Food & beverages served from 11:00am
 to 1:00 pm. Rifle raffle drawing at 2:00 pm.

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 6:00 pm:
 Detachment #1131 **Business Meeting.** Ameri-
 can Legion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca.

Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 6:30 pm:
 Detachment #1131 **Business Meeting.** Ameri-
 can Legion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca, SC

Salem, South Carolina 29676
 910 Stamp Creek Road
 Editor Jim Day

Lewis G. Watkins Detachment#11321, MCL

Postage