

**LEWIS G
WATKINS
DETACHMENT**



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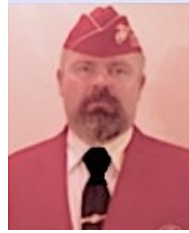
**Detachment #1131
website is:**

mcl1131.org

Tip of the Spear

VOLUME XI ISSUE 9

NOVEMBER 2023



Commandant's Corner

Hello Marines,

As usual, we had a busy and productive November. Now the holiday season is upon us again, and I know everyone, myself included, gets extremely busy this time of year. We have a few major events still planned and I hope many of you can participate.

The annual Toys for Tots Golf Tournament was a huge success again this year thanks to organizers Eddie Brown and TJ Grove. The weather was spectacular and we received a bunch of toys and several bicycles too. The tournament truly embodies the spirit of Christmas and is proof positive of the generosity of the community.

The other major event in November was the USMC 248th birthday dinner. Paisano's Restaurant provided a private room and their staff gave us excellent service. We had three guests of honor at the dinner and used the opportunity to present Certificates of Appreciation to the wives of three former members: Colleen Wakeman, Sally Williams and Marilyn Bode. As you know, the success of the Detachment is dependent not only on members but on spouses and others as well. In addition to the 248th USMC birthday, it was also the Detachment's 20th anniversary. Thanks to Bob

Walker for getting the cake and making arrangements with the restaurant, and to Adjutant Jim Day for his preparations.

We had another teaming opportunity with the BASF VETS organization by putting out flags at USMC gravesites at Oconee Memorial Park. Detachment and BASF VETS volunteers placed USMC flags on gravesites of about 60 known USMC veterans. Thanks for helping honor them.

We also swore in two new members at the November business meeting — Eric Nelson and Rich Partynski. Our recruitment efforts are paying off and Len Rock has done a great job following up with potential new members. Please continue your efforts to expand our ranks with new Regular and Associate members.

Major December activities include Toys for Tots, several parades and Wreaths Across America. We received applications for about 500 children this year so we will need plenty of volunteers at the Toy Store to help the shoppers. Check with Bob Walker if you can help with TFT or Wreaths Across America. See upcoming events for details.

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,

Fall and December are a very busy time for us each year. I had fun selling Belk Charity Sale tickets and thank the rest of you for helping out. My family had a great time at the Marine Corps Birthday Dinner at Paisano's. Thanks to everyone that made the golf tournament, the Marine Corps birthday dinner and other events a success — especially the coordinators!

Semper Fi

Jim Koerner
Senior Vice Commandant

Fellow Marines,

December is Toys For Tots month for our Detachment. As of 12/2/23 we've collected 1,565 toys. A little less than last year at this point but the quality is better. With collections, purchases and holdovers from last year we are in EXCELLENT position to support this year's campaign. Thanks to all who have contributed to this year's success. A special thanks to BASF VETS crew and Detachment volunteers who transformed old classrooms into our new Toy Store at Blue Ridge Community Center. It's an excellent facility and location and plans for improvements next year are already on the drawing board.

I was unable to attend last month's meeting but want to welcome our two new members, Eric Nelson and Rich Partynski. Their background and experience will be a great asset to our Detachment.

Semper Fi.

Len Rock
Junior Vice Commandant



Don Alexander
Judge Advocate

Congratulations to our new members. And thanks to all the members that made our November events a success. We'll need your help for our December events a too.

I forwarded the three proposed changes to our bylaws endorsed by attendees at the November business meeting to the SC Department Judge Advocate for approval. Commandant Helen Breen has already acknowledged receipt and thanked us for continuing to refine our bylaws.

I found the following on the web and feel it is a fitting tribute for Veterans Day:

Being a Marine is a state of mind. It is an experience some have likened more to a calling than a profession. Being a Marine is not a job — not a paycheck; it not an occupational specialty. It is not male or female, majority or minority; nor is it a rank insignia. Stars, bars or chevrons are only indicators of the responsibility or authority we hold at a given time. Rather, being a Marine comes from the eagle, globe and anchor that is tattooed on the soul of everyone of us who wears the Marine Corps uniform. It is a searing mark in our innermost being which comes after the rite of passage through boot camp or Officer Candidates School when a young man or woman is allowed for the first time to say, "I am a United States Marine." And unlike physical or psychological scars which, over time, tend to heal and fade in intensity, the eagle, globe and anchor only grows more defined — more intense — the longer you are a Marine.

"Once a Marine, always a Marine."

Semper Fi

Don Alexander
Judge Advocate



WREATHS
Across
AMERICA

Our Mission: Remember the fallen, Honor those who serve, and Teach the next generation the value of freedom.

The Detachment, the BASF VETS organization and others will participate in Wreaths Across America again this year. Nancy Walker and Flora Riley are co-coordinators. The approved Detachment budget includes a donation to purchase wreaths. They will be placed at several cemeteries in the area by various organizations. The primary ones for us are being placed on December 16th at the Mountain View Cemetery in Seneca at 12 noon, and immediately following at Oak Grove Cemetery at about 2:00 pm. Volunteers are asked to assemble 30 minutes ahead of time. We are filling in for Pam Dowd as coordinator for the Wolf Stake Baptist Church cemetery on Sunday, December 17th following church services. See an email for additional information.



Toy Store Hours

The TFT Store at the Blue Ridge Community Center/Code Learning Center on Holland Avenue, Seneca will be open everyday from December 4-8 at 10:00 am for several hours. Contact Len Rock if you have toy deliveries after the December 4th cutoff date.

Bob Walker will publish the organization shopping times December 12-14 via email. We need lots of volunteers to help bag and load the toys. We expect to have application for about children this year, as appropriate.

TFT Golf Tournament

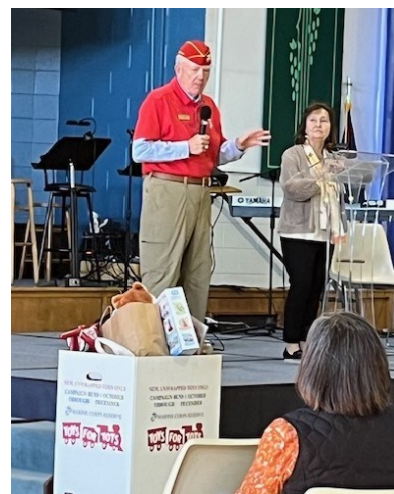


This year's tournament at Cross Creek golf course was another rousing success. At event's end, the TFT float (and several other vehicles) were filled to the gills. The haul for our TFT kids included several bikes and tons of toys.



Honoring Marines on Veterans Day

MCL members & BASF VETS volunteers put out flags on USMC veteran graves at Oconee Memorial Park for Veterans Day.



Recruiting at Keowee Key

Len Rock at the November Keowee Key New Comers meeting.

USMC Birthday Dinner

This year's dinner began with Certificates of Appreciation for Colleen Wakeman, Sally Williams and Marilyn Bode (left to right).



This year was the 248th USMC Birthday & the Detachment's 20th. anniversary

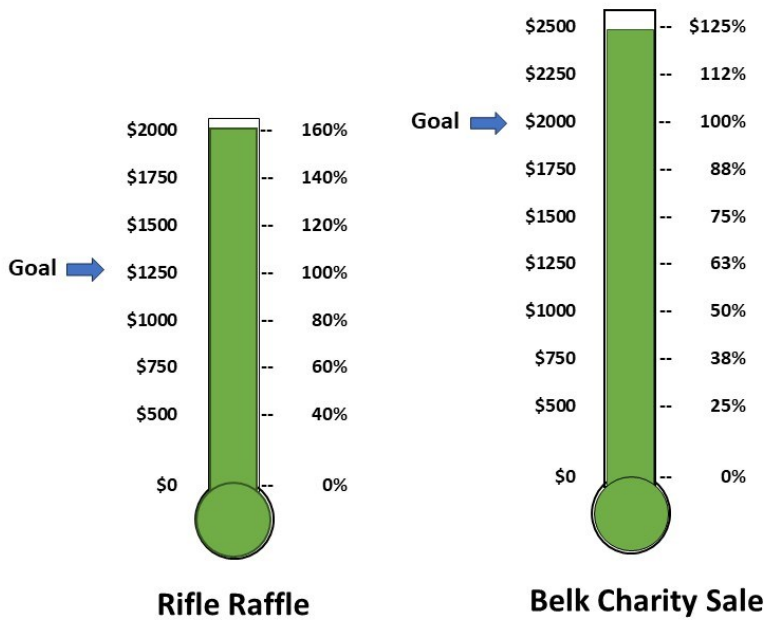


The dinner was held at Paisano's Italian Restaurant on Friday, November 10th. After welcoming members and guests and placing food orders, Commandant Todd Alexander presented three Certificates of Appreciation. After dinner, Commandant Todd Alexander cut the birthday cake, handed pieces to the oldest Marine present (Don Alexander) who in turn presented a piece to the youngest Marine present (Todd Alexander). Adjutant Jim Day read the USMC Commandant's 248th annual birthday message.

Latest New Members!



New members Eric Nelson and Rich Partynski hear new member responsibilities from Commandant Todd Alexander before taking the Regular Member oath.



Our fall fundraising campaigns were a huge success. Tommy Holland headed up the Rifle Raffle and gathered lessons learned for the next raffle event. Bob Walker coordinated the Belk Charity Sale effort this year. Results will let us take on one or more community support projects.



Oconee County 2023 Toys for Tots Campaign

Lewis G. Watkins Detachment #1131, MCL

Boxes & Application Key Dates

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • All TFT Collection Boxes in Place | Friday, October 13, 2023 |
| • Toys for Tots Golf Tournament | Monday, November 13 2023 |
| • Last Date to Submit Toys Applications | Thursday, November 30, 2023 |
| • Last Date to Drop Off Toys | Sunday, December 3, 2022 |
| • Pick Up Date for Toy Collection Boxes | Monday, December 4, 2022 |

Toy Distribution Dates

This year the store is located at the Code Learning/Blue Ridge Community Center on Holland Avenue in Seneca. Each Town/Organization/Church signed up with Detachment #1131 have scheduled to come to the Toys for Tots Store on the following dates to pick out Toys for their families:

- Tuesday, December 12, 2023
- Wednesday, December 13, 2023
- Thursday, December 14, 2023

Bob Walker is the TFT Coordinator again this year. Each Town/Organization/Church has been asked to contact him by phone (864-884-3532) or email at bobcpssc@bellsouth.net to schedule the date and time that works best for their group. Groups will pick their own Toys again this year. Each group has been reminded to bring enough help and sufficient vehicles to handle toy bags efficiently. Several groups will be scheduled on each of the three distribution dates. Bob Walker has also reminded the groups that parents/caregivers are not allowed to pick out toys — group representatives only.

TFT “Store” Managers Carol and Len Rock have inventoried the toys, stocked the tables, and are ready for this year’s event. Once again, the community has been very generous this year with toys and bicycles.



Upcoming Meetings and Events

No Family Breakfast in November due to Thanksgiving or in December because of the holidays and other activities.

No further 2023/early 2024 recruiting events due to other scheduled events & weather.

We will be participating in selected holiday parades this year. Dates are subject to change based on weather. The Walhalla parade has already rescheduled. Check the website for latest details. We will not be participating in the West Union or Fair Play parades this year.

Monday, November 27, 2023 at 6:30 pm. Seneca Parade. Assemble at the Shaver Center at 5:30 pm. Must walk to hand out candy.

Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 4 pm. Salem Parade. Join up at NLT 3:30 pm in the Community Center parking lot. Can throw candy from the float.

Monday, December 4, 2023 – Last regularly scheduled day for TFT toy and box pick up.

Toy Store Schedule – Open everyday the week of December 4th. Contact Len Rock if you have deliveries after normal store hours..

Thursday, December 7, 2023 – Trustee Meeting at 5:00 pm. American Legion Hut, 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca. No Business meeting this month.

Sunday, December 10, 2023 – Walhalla Parade at 4:00 pm. Weather dependent. Rescheduled from December 2. Assemble near the Military Museum at 3:00 pm. Check the Walhalla Facebook page for latest info..

Tuesday, December 12 thru Thursday, December 14, 2023 – TFT Shopping Days, Blue Ridge Community Center/Code Learning Center on Holland Ave, Seneca. Multiple volunteers needed every day.

Saturday, December 16, 2023 – Wreaths Across America. Mountain View Cemetery at 12 noon, immediately followed by Oak Grove Cemetery at about 2 pm. See page 3 for additional information.

Sunday, December 17, 2023 – Wreaths Across America. Wolf Stake Baptist Church following church services.

Thursday, January 4, 2024 – Board of Trustees Meeting at 5:00 pm. American Legion Hut, 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca, SC.

Tuesday, January 16, 2024 – Monthly Business Meeting at 6:00 pm. 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca, SC.

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Editor Jim Day

Lewis G. Watkins Detachment#11321, MCL

Postage