

**LEWIS G  
WATKINS  
DETACHMENT**



**DETACHMENT  
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**Detachment #1131  
website is:**

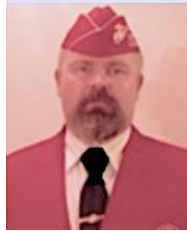
***mcl1131.org***

# Tip of the Spear

VOLUME XI

ISSUE 8

OCTOBER 2023



## Commandant's Corner

After a productive October, we are fully into our busy season now with Toys for Tots including the annual golf tournament, and a heavy November schedule with the birthday dinner and several Veterans Day events. We'll need volunteers for all these. I was disappointed in the execution of our Lewis G. Watkins Honors Day ceremony on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Adjutant Jim Day will prepare a timeline and procedures document for next year's ceremony.

There won't be family breakfasts or anymore recruiting events at Lowe's until next year. Additionally, November will be our last monthly business meeting until January 2024.

Tommy Holland did an outstanding job with our rifle raffle. The winner picked up the rifle from Deep South. We cleared about \$2,050 after expenses and have lessons learned for future raffles. We paid the \$50 fee to the SC Treasurer, and are obligated to do so in future years regardless of whether we hold raffles, so we'll be looking for other fund-raising opportunities. We'd appreciate your ideas. Our thanks go out to SC Department Commandant Helen Breen and Jim Breen for showing up at the Oconee County Veterans Appreciation Festival to draw the winning ticket and support us. We are wrapping up the fall Belk Charity Sale event, our other big Detachment fund-raising event in early November. You can help by volunteering for two-hour shifts to sell tickets. Success at these two events will enable us to fund more community charitable projects.

TFT is in full swing. Bob Walker is TFT Coordinator again this year. Boxes have been placed in about 120 county locations. A few of our regular helpers were under the weather this year so many thanks to the volunteers that took up the slack and got them out in early October. As usual, gift giving is slow in October but should pick up around Thanksgiving. Oconee County is very generous. If the annual TFT ride on October 29<sup>th</sup> is any indication, we should have a banner year again this year. And we will be able to use our new and hopefully permanent home for the TFT Store at the Blue Ridge Community Center in Seneca.

Len Rock is doing a super job at following up on prospective members. Two new members, Eric Nelson and Rich Partynski, should be sworn in at next month's business meeting. It's getting dark early so meeting attendance tends to drop off this time of year. Please attend the meeting so we have a quorum. Call if you need to arrange a ride.

I'm looking forward to the birthday dinner at Paisano's Restaurant on November 10<sup>th</sup>. We are presenting Certificates of Appreciation to guests of honor Colleen Wakeman, Sally Williams, and Marilyn Bode, the wives of three long-time members we lost over the past year. Provide your RSVPs to Bob Walker. Social hour begins at 6 pm.

Thanks for all you do to make the LGW Detachment a success. Please continue to stay involved and help grow our ranks. We are an asset to the community and we want to do more!

***Semper Fi!***

***Todd Alexander***

No Photo  
available

**Jim Koerner**  
Senior Vice-Commandant



**Len Rock**  
Junior Vice-Commandant

Hello all,

Thanks to Tommy Holland for the great job he did on the rifle raffle. We sold lots of tickets, made about \$2,000 after expenses, and someone (from Georgia, no less!) is the proud owner of a brand-new Henry .22 rifle. Hats off to Deep South. They helped out with ticket sales and ownership transfer.

I was honored to participate in the Semper Fi barn ceremony as the oldest Marine present. I joined the Walkers, Len and Carol Rock and Pam Dowd for a touching ceremony. The Semper Fi barn is worth a look.

I'm bringing several members of my family to the birthday dinner this year. Join us for a nice meal and a night of fellowship at Paisano's.

It's our busy season – we can use all the volunteers we can get. I had fun selling Belk Charity Sale tickets and will do my part for TFT and other events. Please help out where you can.

Semper Fi

*Jim Koerner*  
Senior Vice Commandant

The Semper Fi hut event reminded me of a History Channel segment earlier this year on “Bloody George,” the famous withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir. George Company was a 3d Bn 1st Marine Division (The Old Breed) reserve outfit. Activated August 4, 1950, they had practically no training to prepare for what lay ahead. They were a collection of men from small town America with diverse backgrounds ranging from 6th grade education to Harvard graduate. War planners predicted the Korean War would be over by Christmas. By late November Red China's entry into the war altered that timetable. As part of Task Force Drysdale, George Co. was ordered from Koto-ri to Hagaru-ri 10 miles distant. It took 12 hours and heavy casualties to get there. Temperatures were at times 50 degrees below zero. Connecting with elements of the 5th and 7th, the 1st MARDIV began its epic 78 mile journey to Hungnam and the sea. The Navy would be there to support the withdrawal. Before leaving Hagaru-ri a Life Magazine reporter asked a George Co. survivor what he wanted for Christmas. Patrick O'Donnell with a haggard look on his face responded “give me tomorrow.” He later wrote a book titled “Give Me Tomorrow.” I've read the book — I highly recommend it.

Seventy-three years later this country finds patriotism on the decline. The armed forces are struggling to meet recruitment goals. The senior military establishment seems more focused on pronouns, DEI and climate change than making sure we have weapons, training and the right strategies to deal with future threats to our nation. Maybe I'm just getting old but it seems that we haven't learned much in those 73 years. This past year I had the opportunity to attend four recruit graduations at Parris Island, SC. It was very impressive and made me proud to see that we were still making Marines the old fashioned way. Maybe things aren't as grim as I thought.

Semper Fi.

*Len Rock*  
Junior Vice Commandant



**Don Alexander**  
Judge Advocate

Well, folks, here it is, creeping into Fall already. What that should mean to all of us is TOYS FOR TOTS. Coordinator Bob Walker and store managers Carol and Len Rock will need our help in making this another dynamite year. If any of you can volunteer some time, please let Bob and Len know.

We've discussed the three proposed Detachment Bylaw changes – email voting, filling the Past Commandant role, and adopting a “budget floor” approach to our annual fiscal budget at the September and October monthly business meetings. We intend to endorse them at our November monthly business meeting. Per our Bylaws, they are being emailed to all Detachment members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. If approved by membership, I will send them to the SC Department Judge Advocate for formal approval per the Department Bylaws. I am once again requesting all that Regular and Associate members look over our Bylaws and contact me if you have a question or note a section that needs clarification and be ready to discuss them at the meeting. If I can be of help to any of you, please ask me.

Detachment success depends on member participation. We really need help in our many November and December events. These are our face to the community so help where you can.

Semper Fi

*Don Alexander*

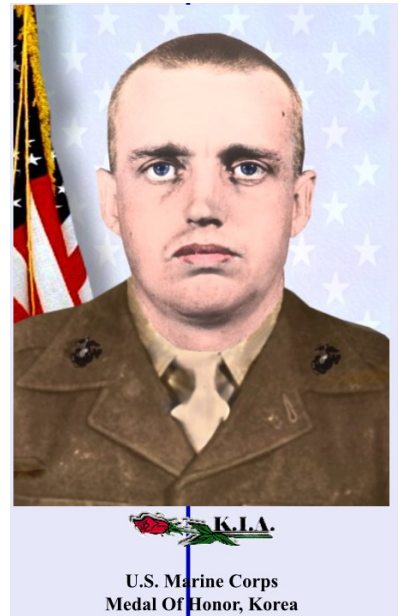
Judge Advocate



The Semper Fi Barn is in a rural setting in Pickens County. It's secluded environment offers a respite from our busy lives. Their mission is to provide a safe, secure, secluded place for veterans and their families to relax, remember, restore themselves in ways that work best for them and to inform, inspire and educate the community. It is for all branches, not just the Marines.

The facility has a board for personalized dog tags (we participated in placing 241 tags to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Marines lost in the Beruit barracks bombing). It also includes two single beds that can be reserved for overnight stays.

Check out their website at [www.semperfibarn.org](http://www.semperfibarn.org) for more information.



*This year's commemoration ceremony for SSGT Lewis G. Watkins USMC, our Detachment namesake, was a small affair. The weather was spectacular.*



*Several members of the LGW family attended a ceremony at the Semper Fi Barn in Six Mile to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Marine Barracks bombing in Beirut, Lebanon. 241 service members lost their lives on October 23, 1983, Dog tags were placed in the barn. The Honor Guard was provided by Daniel High School JROTC.*



*And the Winner Is ...*

*Lamar Fuller  
From Georgia!!*

*Thanks to Tommy Holland for coordinating ticket sales and to all that bought tickets. You all made our first raffle in awhile a huge success.*

*SC Department Commandant Helen Breen and 3rd Year Trustee Jim Breen waiting patiently for the rifle raffle drawing. The crowds got bigger as the day went on, it warmed up a bit, and food was served. The winner picked up the rifle from Deep South Defense following the drawing.*



*Len Rock striking his recruiter pose at the Keowee Key New Comers event in early October. He's always on the lookout for new Detachment members.*

*This year's Fall Belk Charity Sale was another rousing success. We raised about \$2500 despite having more tables in less visible areas in the store. Kudos to Bob Walker for coordinating the schedule and to all that helped sell tickets.*



**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 can schedule 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 one or more of the toy distribution dates. Bob has also reminded the groups that parents are not allowed to pick out toys — shopping by group representatives only.



***Off to a good start!***

*Four boxes of toys and several bicycles were collected at the Salem Car Show again this year.*

*The annual Bike Ride was also a success with more than 75 participants. (The Grinch was in a benevolent mood too — we kept all the toys!) Detachment #1131's TFT float also participates in several other Oconee County parades.*

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

**Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 5:00 pm: Detachment Trustee's Meeting** at American Legion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay Street, Seneca, SC

**Saturday, November 4, 2023 at 9:00 am: Veterans Day Flag Placement.** Detachment to place USMC flags at Marines' gravesites at Oconee Memorial Park.

**Thursday, November 10, 2023, at 6:00 pm: Marine Corps Birthday Dinner.** Paisano's Restaurant. Social begins at 6 pm, Program at 6:30 pm followed by dinner.

**Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 4:00 pm: Veterans Day Parade,** Westminster, SC. Meet at 3:30 pm near the Ingles parking lot. No candy or toys.

**Monday, November 14, 2023 at 9:00 am: Toys for Tots Golf Tournament,** Cross Creek Golf Course. Assemble at 8:30 am to assist with event execution.

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

**Holiday parades TBD.**

**Monday, December 4, 2023. Pick up TFT Boxes.** Toy Store will be open. Contact Bob Walker or Len Rock if you need to drop off toys after hours.

**Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 5:00 pm. Detachment Trustees Meeting.** American Legion Hall, 575 N. Fairplay St, Seneca.

**Tuesday— Thursday, December 12-14, 2023. TFT Shopping Days.** Blue Ridge Community Center on Holland Ave, Seneca. Bob Walker will publish the schedule. Volunteers needed.

**Saturday, December 16, 2023 at 12 noon. Wreaths Across America.** Assemble at Mount View Cemetery on N. Fairplay St. at 11:30. Program starts at 12:00 noon. Then proceed to Oak Grove Cemetery, about 2:00 pm.

**No business meeting or family breakfast in December, 2023** because of holidays and other activities.

**No further recruiting events until January 2024.**

Salem, South Carolina 29676

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Editor Jim Day

Lewis G. Watkins Detachment#11321, MCL

Postage