

# Semper Fi

## "THE SCUTTLEBUTT"

<http://www.mcltraecoheedet115.org/>

November 2012 Edition



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*SSgt Walter F. "Trae" Cohee III*

*Detachment # 115*

*Salisbury, MD*

*Original Charter Date May 10, 1970*

### DETACHMENT OFFICERS

2012 - 2013

*Commandant: Bill Marsich*

Senior Vice Commandant: Temporarily Vacant

Judge Advocate: Ed Hearthway

Paymaster: Andy Bouma

Sgt-At-Arms: Walt Cohee

Junior Vice Commandant: Ed Elder

Junior Past Commandant: Andy Bouma

Adjutant: Richard Hyson

Chaplain: Jim Siegel

Web Sergeant: Don Elseroad

### MEETING TIME & PLACE

Meetings are always held on the second Wednesday of each month. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 1900 (7:00 P.M.) at the American Legion Post 64, 1109 American Legion Road, Salisbury, MD 21801. Please make every effort to attend.

### Important Upcoming Dates & Events

<p>December 7</p> 	<p>December 22</p>  <p>First Day of Winter</p>
<p>December 25</p> 	<p>December 31</p> 

12 January 2013: The Department of Maryland Winter Staff Meeting will be hosted by the Patuxent River Detachment 1305 at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. All MCL members are encouraged to attend.

**Marine Military Expo West – 13-14 February 2013 – Camp Pendleton, CA**

For complete info go here: <http://www.marinemilitaryexpos.com/modern-day-marine.shtml>

**Marine Military Expo South – 11-12 April 2013 – Camp Lejeune, NC**

For complete info go here: <http://www.marinemilitaryexpos.com/modern-day-marine.shtml>

**April 30 to May 2, 2013:** Department of Maryland Convention to be held in Ocean City, Maryland. Complete information will be made available at a later date.

**"Sick or in Distress"**

MCL Members Bob HORTIE, Jimmy Lee HOWARD, Ralph SMITH and Jim HENDERSON are having or have recently had various health problems. Please keep these folks and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

**"Membership Happenings"**

**(Please advise the Editor of any errors or omissions)**

<b><u>DECEMBER "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS"</u></b> 7th Jeff MERRITT 18th Jim SIEGEL 19th Gloria HOWARD 24th Paul WARD	<b><u>DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES</u></b> 11th Tara & Richard CARRILLO (8 yrs)
<b><u>DECEMBER MCL ANNIVERSARIES</u></b> Don ELSEROAD (18 yrs) Richard CARRILLO (9 yrs) George MURRAY, Jr. (4 yrs) David CHERRY (2 yrS) Wayne LAWSON (Unk)	<b><u>MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE IN DECEMBER</u></b> Richard CARRILLO David CHERRY Wayne LAWSON George MURRAY, Jr.
<b><u>WELCOME ABOARD</u></b> William HOBBS (Salisbury, MD)	<b><u>MEMBERSHIP'S RENEWED</u></b> None reported to your editor

**DON'T LET YOUR MEMBERSHIP LAPSE**

Please send your \$22.00 checks made payable to "MCL Det 115" to our paymaster. Also note we have a new paymaster....

Andy Bouma, Paymaster  
32175 Bonhill Dr  
Salisbury, MD 21804-1464

Initial dues for a new member are \$27.00 for the first year, thereafter yearly renewal dues are \$22.00.



**DON'T DELAY...JOIN TODAY  
THEN CONSIDER GOING 'LIFE'  
NOW IS THE TIME TO DO IT**

**Marine Corps 237<sup>th</sup> Birthday Ball**

Thirty-two (32) Marines, Associates and guests attended the Detachment Birthday Ball Dinner that was held at American Legion Post 64 in Salisbury Saturday evening November 10<sup>th</sup>. The event was hosted by Commandant Bill Marsich.

Earlier in the day Bill, Ronnie, Sandy, Richard, Missy, Ed H., and Bob decorated the room while Fran went to pick up the cake which was donated by Fran and Ed. Several ladies made hors d'oeuvres for the cocktail hour that run from 1800 to 1900. A dinner of ham, turkey, mashed potatoes, peas and string beans was served which was all very good.

The message of the first Commandant was read by Ralph Capen followed by the current Commandant's message which was read by Dave Cherry.

Andy Bouma was presented the 2012 Marine of the Year Award by Commandant Bill Marsich.

Ed Hearthway spoke of the Toys for Tots program with a tribute to the Marine Jimmie Lee Howard who started the detachment program many years ago,.

Member Jeff Merritt gave a report on the packing party that was held earlier in the day where 460 care boxes were packed to send to the troops in Afghanistan.

A silent auction of Marine items was held that raised a little over \$100.

Finally proving that you can't keep a good Marine down, Ralph Smith, Bob Hortie, Jimmie Lee Howard and Jim Henderson who have all had health problems lately, attended and had a great time as did everyone.

### Myths & Misconceptions: Vietnam War Folklore

by Michael Kelley

July 1998

Note Editor's: Each edition of the "Sand-Flea" will now contain at least one of the 13 myths and misconceptions as written by Michael Kelley.

#### Myth #1: Most Vietnam Veterans Saw Combat

#### Fact #1? Most Vietnam Veterans Saw Combat:

Actually, the opposite is true; only a relatively small percentage was ever involved in combat. In fact, it is likely less than 30% of all who served there ever saw combat of any sort during their war.

Although the ratio of combat to support troops varied over time, as a general rule there were approximately 10 troops supporting every soldier carrying a rifle in the field. At the height of the war in 1969, there were roughly 540,000 troops in Vietnam. Of that total, only perhaps 60,000 were-rifle carrying, front-line soldiers. At any given point, perhaps less than 40,000 of that 60,000 were actually in the field, at risk and seeking contact with the enemy. Minor wounds, disease, R&R, leaves, training, administrative needs, rear assignments and legal proceedings kept perhaps 25% of an infantry company out of the line on a continual basis. During much of the war, Long Binh, regarded as the largest American facility, was staffed by over 100,000 US troops (that is roughly 20% of the entire US troop commitment at the height of our involvement!), of whom only a very small fraction (5-10%?) were assigned to a direct combat role. It was basically a self-contained city distinguished only from its stated-side counterparts by the lack of an underground sewage system and the miles of barbed wire that encircled it. And Long Binh was but one of hundreds of other permanent US military installations in Vietnam, several of which were similar in size and amenities. Tan Son Nhut Air Base, was the busiest airport in the world for much of the war; busier than either Chicago's O'Hare or New York's JFK. Other major bases of substantial size included Phu Bai, Bien Hoa, Pleiku, An Khe, Quang Tri, Cu Chi and the ports of Saigon, Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay, to name a few.

At page 259 of *Son Thang, An American War Crime*, author Gary Solis points out that: "More than 448,000 Marines served in Vietnam, although far fewer actually saw combat. One study asserts that no more than 71 percent of Vietnam veterans saw any combat at all. Combat itself may be defined on a sliding scale." Though life in the infantry was often intensely demanding both physically and emotionally, actual combat, fighting with the enemy, was actually relatively rare. In fact, on average most infantry companies made contact with the enemy no more than two or three times per month. For many, particularly those working in mountainous terrain, contact was even less frequent. Fatigue, boredom, physical discomfort and loneliness were the most common characteristics of infantry life; terror and death were only its occasional companions.

**Myth #2:** Living Conditions For the Average US Soldier Were Very Difficult & Uncomfortable

**Fact #2?** Living Conditions For the Average US Soldier Were Very Difficult & Uncomfortable:

Again, though conditions varied over time and by occupation, the opposite was typically the case for the majority of those who served in-country. As a general statement, it is fair to say that between 1965 and 1967, living conditions were quite primitive. In those early years of US involvement, base sites were being chosen and developed by engineers, so tent living and Spartan lifestyles were the rule. Once most major facilities were completed, the focus shifted to providing leisure time activities and comfort enhancements for the soldier.

For the most part, the 75-80% who never saw combat of any sort led lives comparable to, if not better than, stateside duty. In fact, it is little understood that there were a significant number of perks associated with combat zone duty not available to assignments elsewhere in the world.

A high percentage of Vietnam vets (perhaps 40%?) volunteered or even re-enlisted to remain in or return to the combat zone. Some did it over and over. Two, three and four tours were not uncommon and the author personally knows an Air Force NCO who spent six years in-country. Even a significant percentage of the infantry volunteered to extend their tours because they preferred combat life to stateside duty, though there were other reasons for extending as well, getting an "early-out" being one of them, and fear of returning being another. One added bonus was the additional \$65 per month Combat Pay to which any enlisted person serving in the combat zone was entitled. Even though the majority were at much less risk than true combat soldiers, they received the same combat pay. As a general rule, advancement in rank was also much faster and much easier than in non-combat zone duty. Rules and regulations were relaxed in the combat zone. "Boot polishing," boot licking, physical training, marching drill and other military formalities were rarely enforced or as onerous as they were elsewhere. Of no small importance is the fact virtually everyone was armed and dangerous. As a result, otherwise contentious or obnoxious officers and NCOs were generally much better behaved in the combat zone. Those who risked men's lives needlessly or abused privilege of rank often found themselves at the wrong end of an M-16 or Fragmentation grenade. In fact, some 800 such "fraggings" were reported during the war, though it is likely the number was much higher. In some rare cases, rewards were offered informally for the dispatch of an officer or NCO perceived as particularly despicable. The highest rumored offering was for the life of General Melvin Zais, the commanding general of the Army's 101st Airborne Division responsible for ordering the costly and very controversial attack of Hamburger Hill in 1969. Recreational facilities were often elaborate and prolific: snack bars; steak houses, basketball courts; swimming pools, gyms; theaters, Clubs; R&R beach center (such as China Beach, Eagle Beach; Red Beach, Vung Tau, among others); BX facilities with heavily discounted items; PACEX mail-order services for all sorts of goods at heavy discount; access to extremely low cost alcoholic beverages at clubs and BXs; showers; walk-in medical and dental facilities; comfortable and sometimes air-conditioned quarters; ubiquitous U.S.O. entertainment (mostly Korean, Australian and US lounge lizard acts) and etc., etc. & etc. For those so inclined, access to the world of sexual pleasure was effortless, cheap and far removed from the normal constraints of family and neighborly influence. At the height of the war for example, over 56,000 *registered* prostitutes were working alongside US troops in Saigon alone. That is 56,000 not including the amateurs! For those so inclined, access to high quality, extremely low cost drugs (including alcohol) was abundant and of low risk. Dealing could be a very lucrative avocation; and even when discovered, punishments were generally lighter than elsewhere. Finally, for those possessed by even more relaxed moral standards, a strong bug of free enterprise and access to US supply depots, black market trading was a very busy and rewarding sideline. Some US personnel even sold stolen weapons on the black market, weapons that eventually ended-up in the hands of the enemy.

### RAO Bulletins

Each month your editor attempted to review all RAO Bulletins and put articles deemed important to veterans into our newsletters.

However, what may be important to me may not be important to you and I may very possibly overlook something you as a veteran might like to know about, so I am providing links below that will take you to THE current bulletins so that you might look them over. The below bulletins are dated October 15<sup>th</sup> and November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

<http://sjcvets.zymichost.com/Bulletin%20121015%20PDF%20Edition.pdf>

<http://sjcvets.zymichost.com/Bulletin%20121101%20PDF%20Edition.pdf>

## EVERY DAY PRAYER REQUEST

Life in Afghanistan is very difficult to bear right now. Our troops need our prayers for strength, endurance and safety. Stop for a moment each and every day and say a prayer for our troops around the world.

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. Amen."

*The Final Roll Call*



The following Marines/Corpsman paid the ultimate sacrifice for God, Country and Corps since the last issue of 'The Scuttlebutt' was published.

**Domion, Cpl. Alex F.**  
Richfield Springs, NY

If You Are Not Willing To Stand Behind Our Troops,  
Please, Please Feel Free To Stand In Front Of Them!

*On behalf of a grateful nation.*

**FREEDOM IS NOT FREE**  
**Support Our Troops**



I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands,  
One Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

From your editor

If you are receiving this newsletter via "Snail Mail" and have email capability, please email me at [53usmc73@bvunet.net](mailto:53usmc73@bvunet.net) so that I can add you to my address book and cut down on the postage.

**Any comments or suggestion on what should be in our newsletter! Articles/information you need! Let me know!** The newsletter will go to press on or about the weekend following each meeting.

Don Elseroad, Editor

## Quotes about Marines

*The deadliest weapon in the world is a Marine and his rifle.*

Gen. John "Black Jack" Pershing, U.S. Army  
Commander of American Forces in World War I

## LINKS TO CHECK OUT

[http://video.staged.com/localshops/ww\\_iirare\\_film\\_midway\\_directed\\_by\\_john\\_ford](http://video.staged.com/localshops/ww_iirare_film_midway_directed_by_john_ford)

<http://secure.smilebox.com/ecom/openTheBox?sendevent=4d7a4d774f44677a4f5442384e7a51314d7a63774e7a453d0d0a&sb=1>

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/ZFjGbOyd2ek?rel=0>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7425136n&tag=strip>

[http://www.youtube.com/watch\\_popup?v=JVAhr4hZDJE&vq=medium#t](http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=JVAhr4hZDJE&vq=medium#t)

<http://www.godaddy.com/holiday/usmc/usmc-2012.aspx?gdx1116d>

**God Bless America**

*-- Once a Marine, Always a Marine --*

**The Federal Government was mostly shut down because of Hurricane Sandy.  
This group of federal employees still went to the office. God bless them!**

