

# LISTEN UP!

CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT

#636

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE  
OF PENNSYLVANIA, INC.

VOLUME XXI, Number 12

DECEMBER 2008

Commandant: JAMES POWELL

Editor: DON H. GEE

## JOHN RIPLEY, VIETNAM WAR HERO, DIES AT 69

ANNAPOLIS, MD--Retired Marine Col. John Ripley, who was credited with stopping a column of North Vietnamese tanks by blowing up a pair of bridges during the 1972 Easter Offensive of the Vietnam War, died Oct. 28 at home at age 69.

Ripley's son, Stephen Ripley, said his father was found at his Annapolis home Saturday, Nov. 1, after missing a speaking engagement on Friday. The son said the cause of death had not been determined but it appeared his father died in his sleep.

In a videotaped interview with the U.S. Naval Institute for its "Americans at War" program, Ripley said he and about 600 South Vietnamese were ordered to "hold and die" against 20,000 North Vietnamese soldiers with about 200 tanks.

"I'll never forget that order, 'hold and die'," Ripley said. The only way to stop the enormous force with their tiny force was to destroy the bridge, he said.

"The idea that I would be able to even finish the job before the enemy got me was ludicrous," Ripley said. "When you know you're not going to make it, a wonderful thing happens: You stop being cluttered by the feeling that you're going to save your butt."

Ripley crawled under the bridge

under heavy gunfire, rigging 500 pounds of explosives that brought the twins spans down, said John Miller, a former Marine adviser in Vietnam and the author of "The Bridge at Dong Ha," which details the battle.

Miller said the North Vietnamese advance was slowed considerably by Ripley.

"A lot of people think South Vietnam would have gone under in '72 had he not stopped them," Miller said.

Ray Madonna, president of the U.S. Naval Academy's 1962 graduating class, served in Vietnam as a Marine at the same time and said his classmate saved countless U.S. and South Vietnamese troops.

"They would have been wrecked" if the tanks had crossed, Madonna said. He said Ripley also coordinated naval gunfire that stopped the tanks from crossing at a shallower point downstream.

"He was a Marine's Marine, respected, highly respected by enlisted men, by his peers and by his seniors," Madonna said.

Miller said Ripley, who was born in Radford, VA, descended from a long line of veterans going back to the Revolutionary War. He graduated from the Naval Academy in 1962, after enlisting in the Marines out of high school and spending a year in

naval school in Newport, RI. He earned the "Quad Body" distinction for making it through four of the toughest military training programs in the world: the Army Rangers, Marine reconnaissance, Army Airborne and Britain's Royal Marines, Miller said. He was also the only Marine to be inducted in the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame.

Ripley earned the Navy Cross and Silver Star Medal for his service in Vietnam. He later served on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was regimental commander at Camp Lejeune, NC, among other postings.

After retiring from the Marines, he was president and chancellor of Southern Virginia College in Lexington, VA.

Stephen Ripley said his father had a deep and tenacious love for his country, the Marine Corps and his family.

"My Dad never quit anything and never went halfway on anything in his life," he said. "He just was a full-throttle kind of person and those people that he cared about, he really cared about."

Ripley is survived by his wife, Moline B. Ripley, 67; three sons, Stephen Ripley, 43, Thomas Ripley, 38, and John Ripley, 35; a daughter, Mary Ripley, 39; and 8 grandchildren.



# COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Hello Marines,

We have completed most of our Detachment functions for the year and we are now headed into that time of the year when things slow down.

At our next meeting **Bob Sundling** will be collecting toys for the Toys-for-Tots program and it is requested that you bring in any new unopened toys. Bob will then deliver them to the local Toys-for-

-Tots center. Also, **Will Haas** has requested that you bring in any old clothes, including footwear for the homeless in Philadelphia. He coordinates this with a local church group who takes care of these people with clothes during the winter season

On October 26, The Beirut Memorial Ceremony to honor those killed in the Marine Barracks bombing in Beirut, Lebanon in 1983 was very well attended and again the All Divisions Detachment did a fine job putting this event together on the 25th anniversary. **Anthony Verrecchio** and I formed our Color Guard to represent the Detachment at this event.

The 233rd Marine Corps Birthday and Veterans Day are in the books and I hope everyone got a chance to participate in these events in some way. I was able to attend the **MGySgt John W. Zaengle Detachment** birthday ball on November 7 and a great time was had by all.

I'd also like to congratulate **Jim McComb**, our Judge Advocate, on being selected as our Detachment Marine of the Year.

Remember our next meeting on December 10. Hope to see you there.

Semper Fi,

Jim Powell



**CENTRAL BUCKS  
DETACHMENT, Inc. #636  
P. O. Box 1372  
Doylestown, PA 18901-1372  
Meets  
7:30 p.m.  
2nd Wednesday of Month  
American Legion Post 210  
315 North Street, Doylestown, PA**

**Sr. VICE COMMANDANT  
WILLIAM L. MICKELSON**

**Jr. VICE COMMANDANT  
BEN JONES**

**ADJUTANT-PAYMASTER  
DON H. GEE, PC**

**JUDGE ADVOCATE  
JAMES McCOMB**

**QUARTERMASTER  
COREY A. FISHER**

**CHAPLAIN  
ELLIS M. (BUDD) PEARCE, PC**

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS  
BOB SUNDLING, PC**

**MESS SERGEANT  
VINCENT J. HAGAN**

**WEB SERGEANT  
JOSEPH F. DOHERTY**

## GOODIES FOR THE TROOPS

**Peggy Sundling**, who continues to send "Goodies to the Troops," has provided a sampling of items which are needed for the shipments. She cautions, "NO CHOCOLATE!" Items include Moist Wipes--with or without aloe (some people are allergic); Beef Jerky/Slim Jims--very popular; Hard Candy--no lollipops; Lotions and Moisturizers; Lip Balm; Chewing Gum; Crackers/Snacks/Granola Bars--in individual packages for easy totting; Fruit Snacks/Raisins--in individual packages; Writing Tablets/Envelopes/Pens; Crossword Puzzles; Magazines--military, automotive, hunting, etc. (used, are fine); Drink Mixes--individual envelopes.

**Thanks, Marines, for your continued support!**

## REMEMBER THE WARRIORS

When doing your Holiday cards this year, take one card and send it to this address. If we pass this on and everyone sends one card, think of how many cards these wonderful special people who have sacrificed so much would get.

When you are making out your Holi-

day card list this year, please include the following:

A Recovering American Soldier  
c/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center  
6900 Georgia Avenue, NW  
Washington D.C. 20307-5001

# NOVEMBER DETACHMENT MEETING



# M I N U T E S

The regular meeting of the Central Bucks Detachment #636, Inc., of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc., was held November 12,, 2008, at Advanced Medical Solutions, 54 E. Oakland St., Doylestown, PA.

There were 17 members present including all officers except the Senior Vice Commandant. Distinguished members in attendance included **Past Commandants Don Gee, Budd Pearce and Bob Sundling**; and **Past Commandant of the Department of New Jersey Ed Hoth**.

The **Minutes** of the October Meeting were unanimously accepted.

The **Paymaster's Report** was presented by the Adjutant/Paymaster and was unanimously accepted.

**Sick Call: Senior Vice Commandant Bill Mickelson** is in the hospital.

## OFFICER REPORTS

**Commandant Jim Powell** reported the Department Pistol Match has been scheduled for May 29-31, 2009, and the Detachment had received a letter from All Divisions Detachment for attending the ceremony in Philadelphia observing the 25th Anniversary of the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Lebanon. He noted there was a significant representation at the ceremony by Marine Crps League Detachments. He also reported on the Department Quarterly Staff Meeting. The Department was awarded a Distinguished Service Award (without medal), that nominations for Department awards must be submitted through the respective Division Vice Commandants, that the Department ByLaws are in the process of being rewritten, and that nominations for the Chapel of Four Chaplains' "Legion of Honor" must be submitted by Apr. 1. The 2009 Department Convention has been scheduled for New Cumberland, PA, June 24-27. He announced the Department is seeking mannequins for use in displaying period uniforms at the Department Headquarters. Anyone who has knowledge of a source from which to obtain mannequins should contact Commandant Powell. He also announced the latest issue of the Keystone Leatherneck is available on the Department website ([www.pamcleague.org](http://www.pamcleague.org)). He also discussed there was some confusion about where the 2010 National Reunion will be held. He will report more on this when a decision is made. He also reported about the Birthday Ball he attended at the Montgomery County Detachment

**Junior Vice Commandant Ben Jones** reminded the members if anyone needs more Department Raffle tickets they should contact him.

**The Adjutant/Paymaster** reported all veterans have been invited to attend the Groundbreaking & Dedication Ceremony for Washington Crossing National Cemetery beginning at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 16, at Washington Crossing, PA. He provided the Department's blanket Commercial Liability Insurance policy to Judge Advocate McComb.

**Judge Advocate Jim McComb** reported the Detachment had no known legal problems. He also reminded the members about the Veterans Day Breakfast at Plumstead Christian School on Saturday, Nov. 15. He invited all the members to attend the event.

**Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Sundling, PC,** reported the Color Guard had not been requested since the last meeting.

**Chaplain Budd Pearce, PC,** reported his services were available but not requested since the last meeting.

**Quartermaster Corey Fisher** reported \$18.00 in sales since the October Meeting.

**The Public Relations Officer** set Nov. 20 as the deadline for submitting material for the December issue of "Listen Up!" He also reported that Judge Advocate McComb was featured in the "Focus on Post Activities" section of the November issue Pennsylvania VFW News. Doylestown Post 175 (he's the Post Commander) gave a donation to the Bucks County Association of the Blind & Visually Impaired.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Rifle & Pistol Team Captain Budd Pearce, PC,** presented a 15th Anniversary Match Patch to Pistol Team Member Ed Hoth, PDC.

**Young Marines Liaison Bob Sundling, PC,** reported the unit was planning an rock-climbing outing.

**Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator Budd Pearce, PC,** thanked the members who participated in the Highway Clean-Up on Oct. 11. The next clean-up will be in the spring.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**National Junior Vice Commandant's Citation Membership Award**--Commandant Powell presented a Membership Streamer from the Marine Corps League for achieving 100% annual membership renewal during the past year.

**Newsletter Award**--Commandant Powell presented a Certificate of Participation to the *Listen Up!* for participating in the national newsletter competition.

**Operation Santa 2008**--A motion was made to donate \$100 to "Operation Santa" to purchase phone cards for deployed Marines. The motion was unanimously accepted.

**Auxiliary National Headquarters Project**--A motion was made to purchase \$10 worth of Marine Corps League Auxiliary Raffle tickets. The motion was unanimously accepted.

**2008 Tree of Lights**--A motion was made and unanimously accepted to donate \$100 to the Foundation for Scotland School for Veterans' Children's "2008 Tree of Lights" drive.

**Make A Wish**--A motion was made and unanimously accepted to make a \$100 donation to the *Daily Intelligencer's* annual Christmas "make A Wish" drive.

**Marine of the Year Committee**--Committee member Budd Pearce, PC, reported the committee had selected **Jim McComb** as the 2009 Marine of the Year. Budd presented the Marine of the Year plaque and Commandant Powell presented the Marine of the Year Certificate.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Toys-for-Tots--Sergeant-at-Arms Sundling** reminded the members to bring in new, unwrapped toys for the "Toys for Tots" drive at the December Meeting.

**St. John's Hospice Clothing Drive--Marine Wil Haas** reminded the members he will be collecting old clothing for the homeless at the December Meeting. The hospice is especially in need of winter coats and shoes.

**There being no further business, the meeting was closed until Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**A CELEBRATION OF THE 233rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE MARINE CORPS FOLLOWED THE MEETING.**

**CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT  
MARINES ON THE NET**

CAPRIO, Paul ..... midupe@aol.com  
 CODY, Bob ..... codyrj@att.net  
 CUPITT, Steve ..... scupitt@aol.com  
 ..... scupitt@motorola.com  
 GEE, Don ..... USMCCCA@aol.com  
 HOTH, Ed ..... Edhothusmc@aol.com  
 JONES, Ben ..... benjaminjones1@gmail.com  
 KELLER, Bruce ..... bruce@taylosbucks.com  
 McCOMB, Jim ..... jim\_mccomb@verizon.net  
 MILLER, Bill ..... billjae@verizon.net  
 MOMORELLA, Bob ..... mombo@starlinxcom  
 PARZANESE, Don, Sr. .... parzane@quigleyco.com  
 PARZANESE, Don, Jr. .... donald.parzane@us.army.mil  
 PEARCE, Budd ..... Buddpearce@comcast.net  
 POWELL, Jim ..... jim.powell@aig.com  
 ..... usmc80@comcast.net  
 SCOTT, Rich ..... richgscott@aol.com  
 SUNDLING, Bob ..... psundling@verizon.net  
 ..... sundling@tiniusolsen.com  
 WALDRON, Mike ..... waldron@quigleyco.com

**SCHEDULE  
OF EVENTS**

**THANKSGIVING  
DAY  
27 NOVEMBER**

**DETACHMENT  
MEETING  
10 DECEMBER**

**1ST DAY OF WINTER  
21 DECEMBER**

**22 DECEMBER  
CHANUKAH**

**25 DECEMBER  
CHRISTMAS DAY**

**1 JANUARY  
NEW YEAR'S DAY**

**DETACHMENT  
MEETING  
14 JANUARY**

**21 JANUARY  
MARTIN LUTHER KING  
BIRTHDAY**

**DETACHMENT  
MEETING  
11 FEBRUARY**

**LINCOLN'S  
BIRTHDAY  
12 FEBRUARY**

**VALENTINE'S DAY  
14 FEBRUARY**

**PRESIDENTS' DAY  
16 FEBRUARY**

# MARINE CORPS LEAGUE RIBBONS

SHOWN IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE



Distinguished Citizen Gold



Distinguished Citizen Silver



Distinguished Citizen Bronze



Division Marine  
Of the Year



Department Marine  
Of the Year



Detachment Marine  
Of the Year



Distinguished Service Bronze



National Recruiter Gold



National Recruiter Silver



National Recruiter Bronze



National Staff Elected Silver



National Staff  
Appointed Bronze



Department Commandant



Department Staff  
Elected Silver



Department Staff  
Appointed Bronze



Department Recruiter Silver



Detachment Commandant



Detachment Staff  
Elected Silver



Detachment Staff  
Appointed Bronze



Detachment Recruiter Bronze



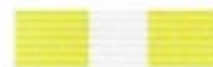
Community Service



Board of Trustees  
Commendation—V. Fisher



National Meritorious  
Unit Commendation



Department Meritorious  
Unit Commendation



Individual Meritorious  
Commendation



Kennel Dog of  
The Year



Chief Devil Dog  
Individual Commendation



Pack Dog  
Of the Year



Pack Leader  
Commendation—Individual



Pound Dog  
Of the Year



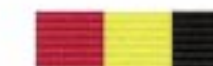
Pound Keeper  
Commendation—Individual



Past Chief Devil Dog



Pack Leader



Pound Keeper



Marine Corps  
League Membership



# Quartermaster Store

**DETACHMENT STRIP**



\$5.00

**USMC SATIN JACKET**



\$55.00

**LIFE MEMBER  
BLAZER CREST**



\$25.00

**COVER**



\$22.00

**DETACHMENT  
T-SHIRT**



\$15.00

**MCL PATCH**



\$3.50

**DETACHMENT  
LICENSE PLATE**



\$10.00

To order any of these items or any other Marine Corps League items or Marine Corps items and have them ready for pick-up at the next Detachment Meeting, contact  
**Quartermaster COREY FISHER**

at

**ph: 215-822-6898**

**e-mail: [cbquartermaster@aol.com](mailto:cbquartermaster@aol.com)**



# Application for Membership Marine Corps League

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date of Enlistment/Commissioning \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Discharge/Separation/Retirement \_\_\_\_\_ SSN \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Application -- New ( ) Renewal ( ) Associate ( ) Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for membership in the **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT**, Marine Corps League, and enclose **\$35.00** for one year's membership (which includes subscription to **MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MAGAZINE**).

I hereby certify I have served as a U.S. Marine for more than 90 days, the character of my service has been honorable and, if discharged, I am in receipt of an Honorable Discharge. By signature on this application, I hereby agree to provide proof of Honorable Discharge/service upon request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Sponsor - where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant's Signature)

Remit this form with check or money order (made payable to **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, MCL**)  
to: **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, P. O. Box 1372, Doylestown, PA 18901-1372**

**CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, Inc.**  
**P. O. Box 1372**  
**Doylestown, PA 18901-1372**

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**



**"ONCE A MARINE, ALWAYS A MARINE"**