



Westfield River Valley Detachment 141 Scuttlebutt



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Editor/Publisher: Roger Beer
November 2016

Chartered November 28, 1945

November



Marine Corps League



141 Upcoming Events

**Detachment 141 Meeting in September
November 14, 2016 @ 1900**

November 6—VAVS Marine Corps Birthday 11:30

November 10—Marine Corps Birthday

November 11—Veterans Day, Westfield parade

November 14—Detachment monthly meeting

December 15—Holyoke Soldiers Home Christmas

Saturday Breakfast

Since September 2015 the Saturday breakfast is offered on the second and fourth Saturday of the month

**Get Involved, Volunteer!!
Uniform Up!**



Elected Officers:**Commandant:**

John Rutovich
sakejack61@comcast.net
413-222-2684 (cell)

Sr. Vice:

Bob Peloquin
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413-739-7590 (H)

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Judge Advocate:

Rene Cote
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Commandant's Corner....

The Board of Trustees welcome Keith Buckhout to the Junior Vice Commandants chair. We also thank the Staff Officers for staying aboard with their assignments. The Board unanimously agreed to appoint Stan Lachtara as Assistant Chaplain and Chaplain Holbrook will lead Stan on the path of righteousness.

It is with pleasure that I take the Helm with a Platoon of coherent Members who have proven their dedication to the Westfield River Valley Detachment 141 Marine Corps League.

Westfield Mayor John Rhodes, a Marine and Life Member of our Detachment, was instrumental in gaining a 100 year lease on "This ole House" for the 141. The lease agreement states that we must maintain this building in good order. We have done so with blood, sweat & tears above and beyond the call of duty. For this I thank the members who have participated in this endeavor, especially Junior Past Commandant Dan Bishop.

The Department of Massachusetts MCL has awarded this Detachment the Meritorious Unit Commendation thrice. As we continue on this path of achievement the future looks bright for the 141.

Our Founding Brother Marines who Incorporated this Detachment in 1945 would be proud of us.

Semper Fi!

John S. Rutovich

Commandant

Detachment 141 meets monthly on the second Monday at 1900. Social hour at 1800. Detachment phone number is 413-562-4850.

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Appointed Officers:**Paymaster:**

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Sergeant-At-Arms:

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Web Sergeant:

Carrieann Dymon Bailey
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Jr. Past Commandant:

Dan Bishop
 bishopdan@aol.net
 413-237-5360 (cell)



**Happy Birthday
 to our following
 members:**

November

**(1) Marcelle Daley, (3) Marianne Kenney,
 (5) Michael Kunze, (9) Stephen Jemiolo,
 (15) Dennis Ostrander, (16) Mitchell
 Kuzdzal, (17) Jeffrey Pickett, (18) Joseph
 Snopek, (21) Bill Federman, (25) Keith
 Buckhout, (29) Daniel Walsh, (30) William
 Leventis**

From The Editor:

In addition to our first message from the returning commandant we have contributions from two members. Bill Federman is sharing one of his memories and Larry Holbrook has given us photos from the Wall That Heals ceremony.

I hope that more of you will consider making your own contribution to this newsletter.

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Marine Stories

By Bill Federman

I was fitfully dozing, dreaming — as I often do, as all Jarheads past and present do — of my salad days when I was a young Marine. Those memories are never far off and are a constant reminder that no matter how bad things get — or how good — very little can match what we have already experienced in the Corps. But life goes on and those hallowed recollections inevitably recede into the shadows of our consciousness as we grapple with the here and now.

In this case, the here was Brussels, Belgium, and the now was 1986. It was midmorning and I was thinking about dragging myself out of bed when I thought I heard the front door of the small house my wife and I rented slide open. We were editors at The Wall Street Journal/Europe and, because she had an early meeting, she had already departed for our office at the Brussels Hilton instead of driving there, as usual, with me. She must have forgotten something, I thought, as I burrowed beneath the covers for another 5 minutes before forcing myself out of bed to seize the day. I then threw back the covers, parted the curtains of our second-floor bedroom and, hoping to clear the mental fog, gazed out at the nearby Bois de la Cambre. It was raining, of course; but it was always raining in Brussels.

I needed a cup of strong coffee to kickstart me into consciousness so I descended the stairs to the kitchen, where I expected to find my wife rummaging around for whatever it was she had forgotten. But the kitchen was empty and the sliding glass door that opened onto our small courtyard was, oddly, slightly open. Although I wasn't fully awake, I knew something was amiss. I looked around the living room and then peeked into our study; nothing seemed to be missing but the sense that someone had been in our house was unshakable. And I knew it was someone other than my wife.

Suddenly, it hit me. Of course! My wallet! I whirled and raced to the shelf where I left it each night, along with my watch and other jewelry. Much to my relief, it was still there — but it had been emptied of a thousand Belgian francs (I don't remember exactly but that wasn't as much money as it may seem). On closer inspection, I found that eighty U.S. dollars that had been on the shelf were also missing and — this was the killer — my U.S. Marine Corps ring, the one I had bought at the mainside PX at Camp Pendleton in 1969.

The ring was a handsome thing, 14-carat gold with a red stone and, of course, the Eagle, Globe and Anchor. It had cost \$25 back when that was a not inconsequential sum for a young corporal. A few weeks earlier, several friends in Headquarters Company had seized upon the idea of heading into Oceanside to get Marine Corps tattoos but I had demurred, preferring to show my pride with something less gaudy and more elegant. Thus, my ring, which I had worn through a tour in Vietnam, while at college, at my wedding and throughout my budding journalistic career. It was now gone, stolen by someone who had penetrated two locked wrought-iron and glass gates and had avoided the usually all-seeing gaze of Madam Feyton, the main building's concierge, on the day our front door was uncharacteristically left unlocked. I was also puzzled that the thief had not taken my watch and credit cards. But I don't understand the criminal mind; maybe there was a good reason.

I didn't bother reporting the break-in to the police — even back then, Belgium was a barely functioning country in anything other than gastronomic matters; the bureaucratic hassle would have been maddening and, in the end, futile. I knew I'd never see my ring again and I also knew there was nothing I could do about it.

The thief — may he rot in hell — was surely disappointed when he tried to sell it. He couldn't have known that its worth was measured in memories and pride and that its true value was known only to me. He couldn't have known the depth of feeling that wearing it engendered. And he couldn't have known the reverence it symbolized as expressed in this quote attributed to an anonymous Navy admiral: The Army and Navy are run like traditional military services; the Air Force is run like a corporation. But the Marine Corps is a religion.

Amen to that. And Semper Fi.

The Wall That Heals

The Wall That Heals came to the Pioneer Valley August 17—21, 2016 and was on display at the Big E in West Springfield. Members of our detachment participated in the ceremonies.

Photos from Larry Holbrook





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