The "Ooo Rah"

Newsletter of the Central Florida Chapter
1st Marine Division Association

Volume 17 Issue 2 | March/April 2020

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(with a lot of help from Nancy)	

http://www.cfc1stmardiv.com/

Next Meeting:

Saturday,
June 6
10:30 a.m.

Fiddler's Green Irish Pub
544 West Fairbanks Ave.
Winter Park, FL 32789
Ph.407.645.2050



PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS

Marines and Friends,

This "President's Ramblings" is nothing like I had planned to write. I've been putting off getting the "Ooo Rah" out hoping the news would be a little better. We had originally planned on delaying the April meeting until May, but that does not seem practical now. Let's all keep our fingers crossed that the June meeting is still a possibility. Hopefully, our program from IDignity will still be available. We will keep you informed as to the next meeting and program.

There are some exciting new details regarding our 2020 Marine Corps Birthday "SOS Breakfast" … see details on page 4 of the "Ooo Rah."

These times have reminded me of what it must have been like during World War 2. That was the last time the whole country was involved in a unified fight against a common enemy. Everyone was affected. People would wake up to read the newspaper to check on the progress of the battles across the Pacific against the Japanese, or on the Army's progress in North Africa or Europe against the Axis powers. People could read about the units their loved ones were serving with, hoping for good news from the front. Certainly those were scary times. The only other time that even approaches this degree of nationwide involvement would be the days immediately after 9 – 11.

Today we check the morning news online or from the TV with the latest updates on the spread of the Covid-19 and how many are affected or died across the nation and in our local area. We're hoping for some good news… maybe that the tide has turned. No segment of our society is unaffected… especially economically. Just as during those days of WW2, these are also scary times. But if we stay together and trust that the health professionals are winning the battles, and protecting themselves in the process, we will come out on top and get back to our lives. Scientists are working in overdrive to find a vaccination that will prevent the virus. We will win this war… hopefully sooner rather than later.

The Spring FMDA Directors meeting scheduled for April 23—26 in D.C. is cancelled. The association reunion scheduled for August 17—23 is still planned, but obviously, the virus will determine what happens. Stay tuned!

Stay well, if you, or someone else you know, is in need of help, please let me or one of the officers know.

Semper Fidelis,
Mike

April Meeting Cancelled

Fox Company Saved the Day

by DON MOORE

Editor's Note:

Many of the "Ooo Rah" readers who have been around a while will remember Dick Bonelli from Englewood, FL, who spoke at our chapter meeting about six years ago about his return to North Korea. His trip to the Communist country was an attempt to locate the remains of the USN pilot Jesse Brown, the first African-American pilot to go through US Navy's flight training. Brown crashed while providing air support for the Marines at the Chosin Reservoir. Dick Bonelli and the SW Florida Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association were a big help when we put on the "All Florida USMC Reunion" here in May 2005.

The article that follows is taken from a longer article by Don Moore about Dick and Hector Cafferatta from Fox Company 2/7 and their heroic stand at Toktong Pass on the road to the Chosin Reservoir.

Pvt. Hector Cafferata was a 20-year-old green Marine replacement. He joined Fox Company's 2nd Platoon a few days before the first wave of Chinese troops attacked his listening post at the Toktong Pass during the early months of the Korean War that cold November night seventy years ago. Cafferata would receive the Medal of Honor from President Harry S. Truman. The young private played a key role in stopping the Chinese attack on his company's defensive position atop a hill overlooking the pass that controlled the winding dirt road leading south to the coast and freedom.

Fox Company was surrounded by at least an enemy regiment. Even so, its job was to hold Tokfong Pass and the road that wound through it.

If it didn't, parts of two Marine regiments at Yudam-ni, further to the north up the road near Manchuria and the Yalu River, could be cut off. If that happened 8,000 Marines might be annihilated by the enemy hordes flooding across the North Korean border from China.

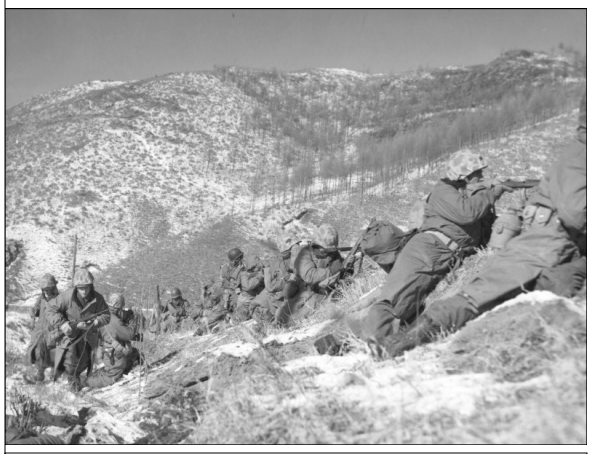


Fox Company's position along the road to the Chosin Reservoir … became known as "Fox Hill".

When the 246 men of Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Regiment arrived on what would become known as "Fox Hill," the temperature was well below zero. Despite the freezing temperatures, there was talk in the ranks of the war ending and the troops being home by Christmas 1950.

The 1st Marine Division—which included the 1st, 5th and 7th Regiments– more than 20,000 strong—was ordered by Gen. Douglas MacArthur, NATO's supreme commander in Korea, to march to the Yalu River and back. The distance from Hugnam, along the Sea of Japan, to Chosin was 76 miles. The general's idea: Run the Communist troops out of Korea and unify the entire country as a democracy.

Before the march was over, the 1st Marine Division would be confronted by 21 enemy divisions, more than 200,000 soldiers. They would kill and wound 37,000 of the enemy. An additional 30,000 Chinese soldiers suffered frostbite. The Marines would lose 6,000 killed and wounded, and 6,000 more sustained frostbite.



US Marines in contact with Chinese Forces at the Chosin/Reservoir

"It must have been around 1:30 a.m. I was zipped up in my sleeping bag lying out on the frozen ground behind some rocks and pine trees we'd cut and put up as a wind break. My buddy, Kenny Benson, was next to me in his sleeping bag. We heard some rifle fire and a machine gun open up. I realized this was for real," said Cafferata, who now lives in Venice, Fla.

"I unzipped my bag and grabbed my M-1 rifle. There were Chinese all around us. I shot five or six right in front of me immediately.

"I said to Benson, 'What are you doing?"

"'Putting on my boots,' he replied.

"'Forget the boots. Start shooting,' I said."

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(Continued from page 2)



US Marines at the Chosin Reservoir

He grabbed his Browning Automatic Rifle, but it was frozen. It was 20 degrees below zero and nothing made of steel operated well in such severe temperatures.

"There were Chinese all around us, so I knew we had to get the hell out of there. Benson and I started crawling back toward our lines. I wasn't sure where we were." All Cafferata knew for certain was that the enemy was shooting at them and they were shooting back.

"By the time we looked up, the Chinese were right there on top of us again. Since Benson couldn't see, because his glasses were broken, he loaded rifles and passed them to me," Cafferata said. "For the rest of the night I was batting hand grenades away with my entrenching tool while firing my rifle at them. I must have whacked a dozen grenades that night with my tool. And you know what? I was the world's worst baseball player. I couldn't hit a bull in the ass with a baseball bat, but I didn't miss many that night."

The first wave of Chinese troops had American-made Thompson sub-machine guns with 50-shot magazines. They charged the Marines on Fox Hill. They were followed by a second wave, shortly afterward, that threw hand grenades. Over and over they repeated that attack procedure and over and over they were repulsed by Cafferata and the Fox Company Marines.

The 3rd Platoon was on his left, and the 2nd Platoon on his right. Cafferata was holding the middle all by himself. All the other members of his squad had been shot or killed.

"The next morning, Lt. McCarthy said to me, 'There were over 125 bodies in that draw,' where I was the only man shooting in that area," he said.

Pfc. Dick Bonelli of Englewood, Fla. cut down scores of Chinamen with his 30-caliber machine gun on "Fox Hill" during the onslaught.

Dick Bonelli was a 19-year-old Marine assigned to Fox Company's 3 rd Platoon. During the first night's attack, he and a buddy spent the night throwing hand grenades at the enemy because their rifles were frozen and would not fire.

The next day Bonelli was made assistant gunner on a .30-caliber air-cooled machine gun. Just before the second day's attack, Bonelli took over for the gunner.

"All of a sudden, on the second night, they broke through our front and we had to drop back. There were 40 or 50 of them milling around inside our perimeter. I turned my machine gun on them and so did Lt. Peterson. In a few seconds we cut them down.

"Once that was all over, I turned around and there were two more Chinese standing there with their guns yakking in front of me. I solved their problem. I turned my machine gun on them," the Englewood, Fla. retiree said.

"Lt. Bob McCarthy, my platoon commander, told me to 'bring that machine gun over here.' So I brought it over and set it up in front of him. Capt. Barber, our company commander, came up to see what was going on.

"About that time, a burp gun opened up and a slug from the gun hit the captain in the leg. The bullet ricocheted and hit the lieutenant in the groin, too. They both went down."

As it started getting light, the 3 rd Platoon rushed the remaining enemy troops who had broken through their perimeter the night before and forced them to flee or die.

Despite his injuries Barber kept on fighting as he hobbled up and down the main line of resistance on a make-shift crutch. For his continuous efforts to keep his company in action, despite overwhelming odds and his own wounds, the captain would receive the second Medal of Honor at Toktong Pass.



Captani William Barber, CO of Fox Company

(Continued on page 5)

2020 Marine Corps Birthday "SOS Breakfast"

New venue selected: Sheraton Orlando North

Retired Marine Corps Maj. Gen. James S. "Hammer" Hartsell Selected as speaker

At the chapter Executive Committee meeting on March 7, the chapter officers selected the **Sheraton Orlando North** as the new venue for the "SOS Breakfast" This was necessary after the Holy Trinity Conference Center notified us of a conflict with our November 10 date. The Orlando Sheraton made a great proposal to SOS Committee co-chair Jim Weinberg, and the committee accepted their proposal.

The hotel is located at **600 N. Lake Destiny Road, Maitland, FL 32751.** The location is conveniently located only a couple of minutes off Maitland, Blvd. immediately west of the Maitland, I-4 interchange.

Barron Mills reached out to **MajGen. James G. Hartsell, USMC (ret.)** and he accepted our invitation as the speaker for the breakfast. MajGen. Hartsell is the first general officer who has been our breakfast speaker and will certainly help us attract our biggest attendance yet for the annual Marine Corps Birthday event.

General Hartsell is Deputy Executive Director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Hartsell served as an Enlisted Marine in the Reserves from 1981-83, and then was commissioned as an officer serving on Active Duty from 1983-1994. He then transitioned to the Reserves where he was mobilized for the following Operations; Iraqi Freedom I - 2003, Iraqi Freedom II - 2004, and Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan – 2009-10.

As a General Officer he served as the Commanding General of the 4th Marine Division.

Mark Your Calendars



Saturday, April 4 … CF Chapter meeting CANCELLED

April 23—26 … FMDA Directors' meeting CANCELLED

Saturday, May 2….
Chapter Exec. Comm. Meeting TBD

Saturday, June 6 … Regularly scheduled CF Chapter meeting.

August 17—23 … FMDA Reunion , Washington, DC.

Tuesday, Nov. 10 … USMC Birthday "SOS Breakfast."

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The Larry E. Smedley Detachment of the Marine Corps League— 2nd Tues, - Monthly Meeting, 7pm – 8pm at the at American Legion Florida Department bldg. 1912A Lee Road, Orlando, FL 32810
Info:mclcfl@gmail.com or Sr. Vice Cdr at 407-963-9388.

1ST MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

~IMPORTANT~

Central Florida Chapter members (whether membership is regular or associate) need to be members of the 1st Marine Division Association...contact the FMDA office or visit the website for membership information.

New website address:

https://www.firstmardivassoc.com/

Address and contact information

1st Marine Division Association
P.O. Box 9000, Box #902
Oceanside, CA 92051

Phone

(760) 763-3268

Email

Office: oldbreed@fmda.us

Association President
Jerry Johs
geronamo0122@gmail.com

Dennis J. Coady
Administrative Assistant
dennis.oldbreed@fmda.us

During these difficult times, Dennis will be in the office one day per week.

(Continued from page 3)



Dick Bonelli, left, of Englewood, Fla. received the Silver Star and Hector Caffera-ta of Venice, Fla. the Medal of Honor for their part in Fox Company's defense of a hill at the Chosin Reservoir during the early months of the Korean War.

For the next three days, Bonelli set up a machine gun position along the platoon's perimeter and took on all comers. Waves of Chinese troops were cut down in front of his gun.

"On Dec. 2 a head popped over my machine gun nest. I said, "Who the hell are you?'

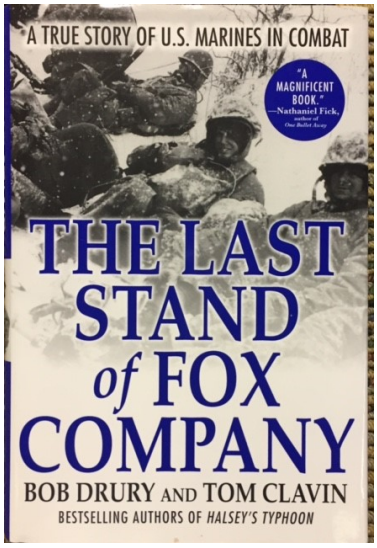
"Baker Company.' came the reply. Marine reinforcements had broken through to Fox Hill. By this time, of the 246 men of Fox Company who had marched up the hill five days early, fewer than 90 were standing. The rest had been killed or wounded.

Seeing his buddy's unit down the hill in front of his gun. Bonelli raced down to take his friend some food.

"Bullets started hitting all around me. The next thing I knew I took a round in the side and it knocked me ass over teacup," he said. "I rolled behind a rock and passed out. Thank God someone saw me and dragged me to the first-aid tent."

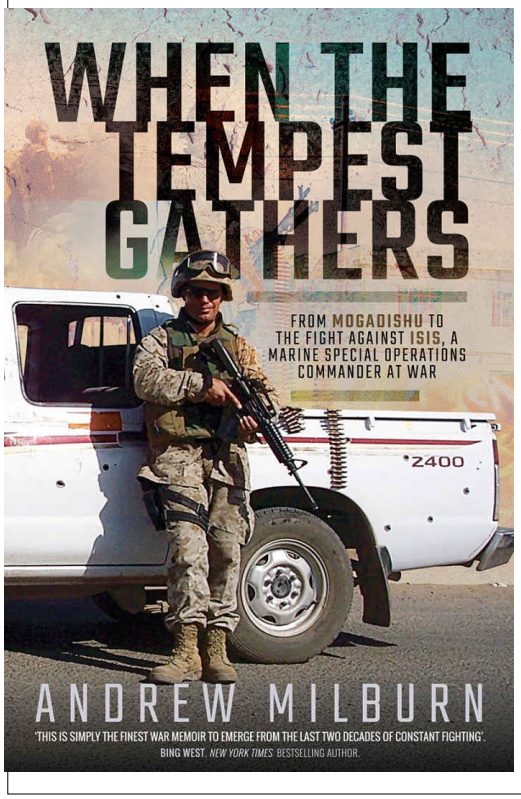
Bonelli, of Englewood, Fla. received the Silver Star and Hector Caffera-ta of Venice, Fla. the Medal of Honor for their part in Fox Company's defense of a hill at the Chosin Reservoir during the early months of the Korean War.

One thing Bonelli remembers about the battle at Fox Hill was how much he prayed before, during and after each engagement. He carried a 3-by-5-inch prayer card of the Christ child with prayers on the inside. It's worn and tattered from use, but he still has it in a scrapbook.



Editor's note: fl you would like to read a wonderful book on the whole story of this company's heroic stand and their amazing rescue by Capt. Davis and Baker Company, I recommend the book "Last Stand of Fox Company" by Bob Drury and Tom Clavin.

Book Review



<u>When the Tempest Gathers:</u> *From Mogadishu to the Fight Against ISIS, a Marine Special Operations Commander at War*

My combat experience while serving in the Marines was 50 years ago in Vietnam. It has been hard for me to wrap my head around the kind of warfare our military has been conducting in the dry desert conditions and in the built up areas of Mosul, Ramadi, Karma and dozens of other places requiring house-to-house clearing and street patrols, both mounted and on foot.

"When the Tempest Gathers" by Andrew Milburn, didn't just describe that kind of intense combat, but put me in the mind of the combatant. The challenges of leadership, frustrations of balancing mission and troop safety, the terror of small arms cracking past the ear kicking up dirt within inches, the feeling of devastation when fellow Marines and SOF comrades die, all become very real from Milburn's perspective. His style of writing and the candidness that he dealt with very personal issues results in an empathy from me that I have not experienced from other books of military memoirs.

Colonel Milburn, USMC (ret) was our chapter's guest speaker at the 2018 USMC Birthday "SOS Breakfast." He has become a good friend to our chapter and follows us on FaceBook.. His book is available on Amazon .

Mike Galyean



New Chapter Officers Sworn In for 2020-21

At the February meeting the newly elected officers for the next two years were sworn in by chapter member Chris Hoey.

Officers pictured from left to right are: Sgt-at-Arms– Jim Weinberg; Chaplain– Dick Connell; Treasurer—Greg Melnick; Secretary—Susan Finnegan; Vice President—Barron Mills; President—Mike Galyean.

Congratulations, Marines!

Ponce Inlet Printing Inc.

1726 S. Nova Road in Daytona Beach, Florida, 32119

Contact

Mary Racila—386-761-3355

ponceinletprinting@gmail.com

http://www.cfc1stmardiv.com/

Use the "PayPal" button to pay your chapter membership dues for 2020.

I would encourage you to visit the website of our Central Florida Chapter. .

N E W M E M B E R S

S/Sgt. Mark Cleaves (Life)	3rd Bn,1st Reg.; 1st MP Bn.	Iraqi Freedom
S/Sgt. Jason Greene	B Co, 4th Recon Bn.	War on Terror
Sgt. Anjurr "AJ" Henderson	L Co 3rd Bn.,4th Marines; 7 Marine Reg.	Iraqi Freedom, War on Terror
Cpl. Michael Segura	1st Bn. 12th Marines	Cold War

Welcome aboard! We are glad you are here!

The Central Florida Chapter

wishes to recognize and honor its members now serving in the Corps Eternal

Plt.Sgt. Joe Adamik (2014)
Capt. John Adamson 2015
Sgt. Ray Bauer (2015)
Cpl. Chester Bened (2012)
Joyce Bowden, assoc. (2017)
Sgt. Tim Broughton (2013
Sgt. Glenn Brown (2011)
Col. Harry Clarke (2013)
Amy Clarke, assoc. (2017)
Pfc. John Cromwell (2010)
M.Sgt. Louis Curtis
Wade Curtis (2011)
Col. Ed Danowitz (2012)
1stSgt. Richard De Vasto (2019)
Sgt. Arthur Dreves (2019)
Plt. Sgt Robert Fincher (2014)
Capt. William Harwood (2010)
Lt.Col. Dick Holt (2008)
Carolyn Immerman, assoc. (2017)
Sgt. Wade Jones (2012)
Sgt. Joe Karlberg (2019)
Cpl. John "Rick" Kennedy (2012)
Cpl. Louis Lang (2010)
Sgt. Maj. Les LeBlanc (2005)
C.W. "Bill" Marks (2014)
M.Sgt. Malcolm MacLean (2007)
Gy.Sgt. Rudy Miller (2008)
Ray Nielsen (2007)
Sgt. Donald Neiss (2009)
Col. Patrick Otoole (2018)
Pfc. Athanasse "Al" Parsons (2013)
MSgt Edward Payton (2015)
Sgt. Victor Petris (2015)
Gy.Sgt. Charles Ross (2013)
1Lt. George Schultz (2008)
Cpl Don Schyberg (2017)
Col. Bill Tate (2019)
Pfc. "Wild Bill" Taylor (2010)
Col. John Terry (2018)
Lt.Col. John Tomlinson (2014)
M.Sgt. Dale Wasson (2009)
Sgt. Carl Wenhold (2017)

Semper Fi, Ladies and Gentlemen.

You'll always be remembered.

Minutes
February 1, 2020
Fiddlers Green Irish Pub
Winter Park, FL

President Mike Galyean opened the meeting at 10:37

Chaplain Dick Connell offered the opening prayer.

Sgt. at Arms Jim Weinberg led the Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions were made by all 16 members and guests attending.

New officers for 2020-21 were installed by Chris Hoey

Secretary's Report: Susan Finnigan reported that Minutes of the October meeting were printed in Ooh Rah Newsletter. Motion to accept was passed

Treasurer's Report: Greg Melnick reported - Savings $2,171.13; Checking $3,520.78; $24 of VA Coupons. Total available funds $5,731.91. Motion to accept was passed.

Program. Barron Mills introduced the speaker– **I&I First Sergeant Liam Williams** and wife Alysia (USMC). 1st Sgt Williams was a 2-time 1st Marine Division Marine. He discussed the local Reserve Unit – Changes in USMC – What's Ahead.
Big changes (poll in attendance) – Integrated training, weapons, restructuring on fire teams
Physical fitness test for all combat arms professions – SOI administers specific fitness tests by MOS.
How to support local Marines? – Create fellowship, inclusion, opportunity to meet
I&I supports local funeral services – About one a day. Corporal and Sergeant's course – lots of drill and PT before. Course can be taken at the academy or in a seminar.

Business:
- Chapter Shirts – Order form extended a week
- Sweetheart Dinner – RSVPs are needed prior to the event. Contact Nancy Galyean
- SOS Breakfast – Chaired by Carlos Cuevas and Jim Weinberg

Membership
Emails and phone calls sent to those who have not renewed. Committee suggested a recruiting chairmen. Mike has buck slips and brochures to promote membership. Discussion on the need for a Recruiting Chairman. Discussion tabled.

Announcements:
- Barron – Wants updates on any local events
- Tommy Maldanado and Lake Nona VA put on Transition Workshop – Last week, was not well attended, needed better advertising and day of the week.
- VBC – Been a great networking and social opportunity.
- Four Block – Carlos and Barron instructors for Orlando. Lack of corporate support delayed start.
- April 3, 2020 – Central Florida Marine Corps Foundation Charity Golf Event – Shingle (Now cancelled)
- Next Chapter meeting Saturday, April 4, 2020 (Cancelled)
- Next Lake Nona CLC Bingo and Trivia – March 12. (Cancelled)

Mike Pomakis handled the lottery drawing.

Meeting was adjourned with reciting 2 verses of Navy Hymn and singing the Marine Hymn.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Finnegan

Central Florida Chapter
1st Marine Division Association
746 McIntyre Ave.
Winter Park, FL 32789



In order to belong to the Central Florida Chapter, you must...
Be a member of the 1st Marine Division Association
World War II ~ North China ~ Korea ~ Cold War ~ Vietnam ~ Gulf War ~ Iraqi Freedom ~ War on Terror

Call the 1st Marine Division Association in Oceanside, CA at (760) 763-3268 *or email* june.oldbreed@fmda.us *for information*

Central Florida Chapter

Select Membership type: ___ Regular ($20) ~ ___ Associate ($20) ~ ___ Life ($200) ~ Active Duty($10) ___
___ New ___ Renewal

PLEASE PRINT: _____
(Rank / Grade) (First Name) (Middle Initial) (Last Name)

_____ _____
Number and Street or P.O. Box #) *Spouses name*

_____
(City) (State) (Zip)

I was with: (list two units, max) _____
(Company - Battalion - Regiment/Squadron - Group)

WWII____ China____ Korea____ Cold War____ Vietnam____ Gulf War____ Iraqi Freedom____ War on Terror____

Email address: _____ Phone No. (___) _____ Recommended by _____

Please enclose $20 for Regular / Associate Membership; $200 for Life Membership; $10 for Active Duty
Make checks payable to: Cent. Fla. Chap., 1st Mar. Div. Assoc.. ~~~ Return to Mike Galyean, 746 McIntyre Ave., Winter Park, FL 32789
You can now pay on-line by using PayPal. Go to the chapter website at http://www.cfc1stmardiv.com/