



The "Ooo Rah"



Newsletter of the Central Florida Chapter
1st Marine Division Association

Volume 23 Issue 4

July-August 2026

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321.276.7515
(with a lot of help from Nancy)

<http://www.cfc1stmardiv.com/>

Next Meeting:

**Saturday, October 3
10:30 a.m.**

**Fiddlers' Green
Irish Pub**



**544 West Fairbanks Ave.
Winter Park, FL 32789**

Ph.407.645.2050

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS

Marines and Friends,

When I assumed the role as your Chapter President, I shared that our focus would be centered on three areas: **Camaraderie, Community, and Legacy**. Those three words continue to guide everything we do, because they represent why this Chapter exists in the first place - to bring Marines together.

The greatest value of our Chapter isn't found in motions, reports, or committee business. It's found in the conversations before and after the meetings. It's getting to know another Marine's story. It's learning about the experiences that shaped them, being there when someone needs a hand, and preserving the history and traditions of our Corps by passing those stories to the next generation. The fellowship we built while wearing the uniform should not end when we take that uniform off for the last time.

With that in mind, we're making a small but intentional change to our Chapter meetings. Beginning with our next meeting in October, we'll continue to gather at 10:30 am but will not conduct official business until 11 am. That 30 minute period will be used for introductions and having some conversations over coffee and donuts. We'll also conduct the raffle during that time. We'll still be aiming for a wrap up of business by noon and then for the majority of folks to remain afterward to share lunch together at Fiddler's Green. Giving business to Fiddler's Green is one way we thank them for the tremendous hospitality they've shown our Chapter over their decades of support. I encourage you to read Mike Galyean's notes elsewhere in this newsletter, where he shares the history of our special relationship with Fiddler's.

Beyond our regular meetings, I hope you'll join us for our Summer Backyard Barbecue on **8 August**, the National Reunion in San Diego later that month, our SOS Breakfast on **10 November**, the Orlando Birthday Ball on **14 November**, and over our continued meeting schedule of the first Saturdays in February, April, June, October, and December. These aren't just events - they're opportunities to strengthen the bonds that have always defined Marines.

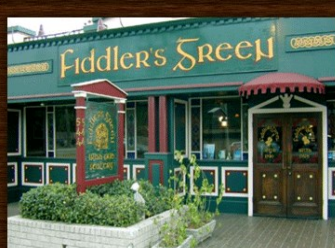
Finally, remember that your officers are here to serve you. If there's something preventing you from participating more often - whether it's our meeting location, schedule, or another obstacle - please let me know. We want this Chapter to be welcoming, valuable, and accessible to every Marine and Navy Corpsman who wishes to be part of it.

I look forward to breaking bread with you. **Semper Fidelis!**

Barron Mills
President, Central Florida Chapter
1st Marine Division Association

NO CHAPTER MEETING IN AUGUST

PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING OUR "SUMMER SOCIAL"
A BACK-YARD BARBECUE AT THE HOME OF CHAPTER PRESIDENT,
BARRON MILLS. ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 8.
LOOK FOR DETAILS ON PAGE 2 & FOR RSVP INSTRUCTIONS.



Fiddler's Green



**A Home for the C. F. Chapter of the
1st Marine Division Association**

Editor's note: I have had a long-standing personal relationship with Donal O'Brien and Fiddler's Green. I have the dubious claim of enjoying the first beer that was ever "pulled" when the pub first opened under different management as an English pub.

Some places are more than restaurants or neighborhood pubs. They become gathering places where friendships are forged, traditions are honored, and history is preserved. For the Central Florida Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association, Fiddler's Green Irish Pub in Winter Park has become exactly that—a home.

The relationship began in 2002 when chapter president Mike Galyean selected Fiddler's Green as the new meeting place for the Central Florida Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association. From the beginning, it was clear this was no ordinary business relationship. It was built on mutual respect, patriotism, and genuine friendship.

Much of that welcoming spirit comes from Fiddler's Green owner Donal O'Brien. Proud of his family's connection to the Corps—his son, Mark, served as a United States Marine Corps Harrier pilot and later became a trainer for Marine Corps fixed-wing pilots—Donal has always had a special place in his heart for Marines. His philosophy has been simple and unwavering. He instructed his staff to "give the Marines anything they want." Those words have never been forgotten by the members of the chapter, and more importantly, they have been reflected in the way every Marine has been treated whenever they walk through the doors.

As the chapter continued to grow, attendance eventually exceeded the available meeting space. With regret, the Marines were forced to find a larger venue. Over the following years, meetings were held at several locations throughout Central Florida, including local restaurants and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). While each location served its purpose, none quite captured the sense of belonging the chapter had experienced at Fiddler's Green.

In January 2014, the chapter returned home.



Donal O'Brien with son, Mark

(Continued on page 3)



IN LIEU OF AN AUGUST MEETING, WE WILL HAVE A

CF FMDA SUMMER BBQ

AUGUST 8, 2026 • 6PM ONWARDS
ORLANDO, FL

Please send your RSVPs to cfc.1stmardiv@gmail.com
and address will be shared

(Continued from page 2)

Since that day, Fiddler's Green has once again been the permanent gathering place for the Central Florida Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association. Every meeting reinforces the special bond between the pub and the Marines who gather there. In addition to the bi-monthly meetings members, their significant others, and guests have enjoyed many Valentine "Sweetheart" Dinners in the comfortable surroundings of Fiddlers Green. The staff has played an enormous role in creating that atmosphere. They have never simply served meals and drinks—they have embraced the chapter as family.



Pictured above : Julie Seamon with Jim Weinberg, Dick Connell, Elmer "Hawk" Hawkins and his son Stephen Hawkins

Among those remembered with tremendous affection is Julie Seamon. Julie loved waiting on the Marines and became much more than a server. She attended chapter events outside the pub and was always happy to spend time with the veterans she had come to know and love. Her passing was deeply felt by every member of the chapter, and she remains warmly remembered as part of the Fiddler's Green family.

One of the most meaningful traditions at Fiddler's Green is the placement of the chapter's colors. The flags of the Central Florida Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association stand proudly in front of the pub's fireplace, serving as a visible reminder that this is more than a meeting room—it is the chapter's home. They represent not only the proud history of the First Marine



Division but also the enduring friendship between Marines and the people who have welcomed them for more than two decades.

The Central Florida Chapter of the 1st Marine Division Association has always believed that Marines never truly leave one another behind. At Fiddler's Green, that belief extends beyond the veterans themselves. It includes the owner, the staff, and everyone who has helped make each monthly gathering feel like a reunion among old friends.

Over the years, countless stories have been shared around the tables at Fiddler's Green—stories of combat and sacrifice, of lifelong friendships, of laughter, remembrance, and service. New Marines have found mentors, Gold Star families have found support, and veterans have found a place where they are understood.

It is where traditions live.

It is where memories are honored.

It is where Marines continue to gather as brothers.

And thanks to Donal O'Brien and the remarkable staff who have welcomed them for so many years, it will always be a place where every Marine feels at home...

"Sláinte!"



This plaque hangs in a prominent place near the entrance of Fiddlers Green

A VISIT WITH A LONG-TIME CHAPTER MEMBER



Don and Mike

On Thursday, July 16, my wife, Nancy, and I made the 3-hour drive from our home in Winter Park to Boynton Beach to visit my good friend and a long-time member of the Central Florida Chapter, Don Bauman.

Don is a veteran of the Korean War and was above the Chosin Reservoir when the 1st Marine Division was surrounded by 10 Chinese divisions. There have been several articles in the "Ooo Rah" of Don's exploits during that freezing and terrifying battle. Don was honored at a recent SOS Breakfast with other Korean War veterans. During our visit we talked about another veteran of that battle at the Chosin, Jim Hostetler of Fox 2/7 who recently passed away. Jim's company held the road open from the reservoir.



Daughter Chris, Nancy, daughter Jean, wife Marge, Mike

251st Marine Corps Birthday SOS Breakfast

Plans are still in the developmental stage for this year's SOS Breakfast.

However there are some things that you can put in your calendar and look forward to.



WHEN: Tuesday, November 10

TIME: 0830—1000 hrs.

LOCATION: Maitland Civic Center ("Venue on Lake Lily")

COST: \$40— funds will go to local veterans and Marine Scholarships.

This popular USMC event has become a local tradition with inspiring speakers, a video message from the commandant, bagpipes and off-key singing!

If you know a good local caterer that you'd like to recommend, contact chapter president Barron Mills.

Central Florida Marine Corps Foundation

"Marine Weekend"

Location: Rosen Shingle Creek
9939 Universal Blvd, Orlando, FL 32819

Golf Tournament—Nov. 13
Casino Night and Silent Auction—Nov. 13
251st Marine Corps Birthday Ball—Nov. 14



More information may be found and tickets purchased on the Foundation's web site:

www.centralfloridamarines.org/



Mark Your Calendars

Saturday, August 8... Summer Social—backyard barbecue.

August 24—30 ... 1st Marine Division Assoc. annual reunion, San Diego, CA

Saturday, Oct. 3... regular chapter meeting at "Fidds"

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

Saturday, Nov. 13—14 ... CFMCF Marine Weekend and Birthday Ball, Rosen Shingle Creek

The Larry E. Smedley Detachment of the Marine Corps League—

Monthly Meeting, 2nd Tues, -
7pm – 8pm

American Legion Post 243

Or call Luis Cambal

(407)405-1961

"Heart of Florida" Women Marines Assoc. Chapter

Meets Second Saturday -10am .

West Osceola Branch Library

305 Campus St,

Kissimmee, FL 34747

Contact: Susan Finnigan

susan@lynnamorris.com

Central Florida Marine Corps Foundation:

CFMCF1775@gmail.com

Central Florida Chapter

<http://www.cfc1stmardiv.com/>

Thank you, Rick Dreves!

Visit the "In Their Own Words" page for anecdotal articles by members.



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***

give it a look!

<https://1stmdiv.org/>

Address and contact information

1st Marine Division Association

3784 Mission Ave Suite 148/608

Oceanside CA 92058

Call Us : [1 \(760\) 763 3268](tel:17607633268)

Open from Monday to Friday

08.00 AM - 16.00 PM PDT

Association President:

Ralph Witkin

Email: ReconBn70@gmail.com

Staff

Dennis J. Coady

dennis.oldbreed@fmda.us

June Cormier

June.OldBreed@FMDA.us

THE RULES OF COMBAT

(YOU WERE NEVER TAUGHT)

These are responses I received after the last issue of the "Ooo Rah."

Replies

"The incoming alarm doesn't always go off before the first rounds hit!"

Semper Fi

LtCol Bryan "Red" Lucas

Senior Marine Instructor

Edgewater HS

>

"Always have a Plan B, and when using Plan B have plan C ready"

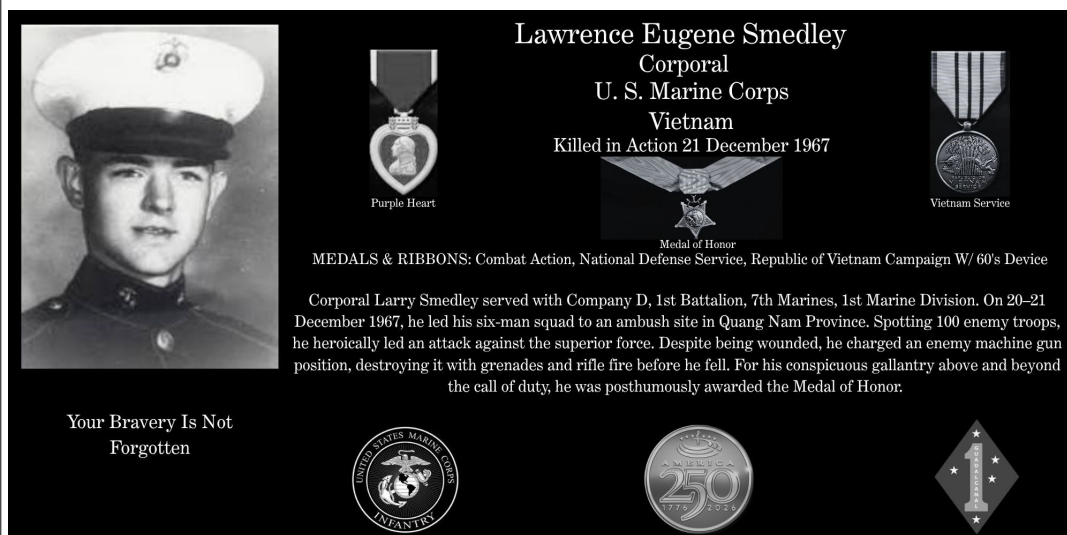
Michael O. Fallon

Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.)

"The enemy gets a vote! And... No plan survives first contact!"

Col. Mike Livingston

Plaque to Honor Corporal Larry Eugene Smedley, USMC, kia, MoH

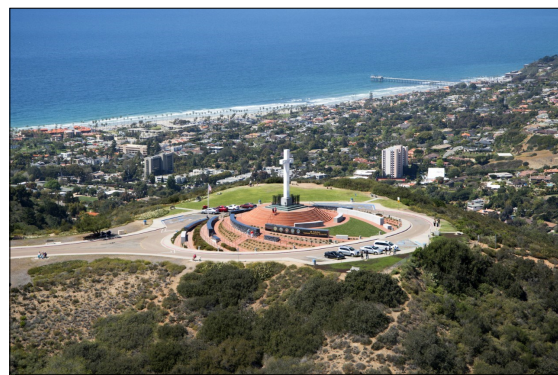


This engraved marble 16" x 8" plaque will be installed at Mt. Soledad National Memorial in San Diego on Wednesday, August 26, at 1700 hr. All attendees at the reunion of the 1st Marine Division Assoc. are invited to attend the dedication.

Cpl. Smedley was a resident of Central Florida and attended Colonial HS where the library is named in his honor. A section of I-4 is also dedicated to his memory.

16' x 8' engraved marble "plaque" honoring the service and sacrifice of Cpl. Larry E. Smedley, squad leader, Delta Company 1st Bn., 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division

Smedley was 17 years old in 1966 when he left high school to join the USMC. He became a squad leader in Delta 1/7 when, on Dec. 20-21, his courageous actions earned him (posthumously) the Medal of Honor. His platoon cmdr that night was 2nd Lt. Mike Neil, who retired as a BGen. He earned the Navy Cross for his actions that night and has helped bring this project to fruition. BGen. Neil, who states that Cpl. Smedley was, "Not your typical Marine," will be present for the dedication.



Aerial view of Mt. Soledad National Veteran Memorial

PLANS ARE FINALIZED... 2026 REUNION IN SAN DIEGO Scheduled from August 24 through August 30

The DoubleTree by Hilton San Diego Bayside will host the overnight accommodations for 2025 annual reunion.

Our group code is **91J** and our group rates are valid for booking through **08/03/26**. **Please use the group code... we need the rooms to meet our number.**

Click here [First Marine Division 79th Annual Reunion](#) to proceed directly to your reservation desk.

The group rate of \$172 per night (includes a 2.2% resort tax) is available for three days pre and post event based on room availability via the provided link or contact Hilton Global reservations directly at (888) 446-6677.



ACTIVITIES:

Monday, August 24 — Tuesday, August 25, Arrival – Registration begins at 0900 until 1700

Wednesday, August 26, 2026 – USS Midway Museum. Dedication of the Cpl Larry Smedley Mt. Soledad memorial plaque.

Thursday, August 27, 2026 - Day at Camp Pendleton (**You must be registered at least 3-weeks before the visit to Camp Pendleton in order to meet the security clearance for Camp Pendleton.)

Friday, August 28, 2026 – MCRD San Diego Boot Camp Graduation and Memorial Service. - Committee Meetings from 1400 to 1600. - Memorial Service at 1700-1800.— Committee Meetings from 1900-2100 . (Executive Committee, Board of Directors, Chapter Delegates, Scholarship Selection Committee, Membership Committee, Historian Committee)

Saturday, August 29, 2026 – General Membership from 1000 to 1200, Ladies Luncheon, and Farewell Dinner



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)
Col. Richard A Connell (2022)
Pfc. John Cromwell (2010)
M.Sgt. Louis Curtis
Wade Curtis (2011)
Col. Ed Danowitz (2012)
1stSgt. Richard DeVasto (2019)
Sgt. Arthur Dreves (2019)
Plt. Sgt Robert Fincher (2014)
Olga Fincher, assoc. (2022)

Capt. David Fowkes (2021)
Capt. William Harwood (2010)
Sgt. Elmer Hawkins, Jr (2025)
Lt.Col. Dick Holt (2008)
Carolyn Immerman, assoc. (2017)
Sgt. Wade Jones (2012)
Sgt. Joe Karlberg (2019)
1stSgt. Russell Kauffman (2023)
Cpl. John "Rick" Kennedy (2012)
Cpl. Louis Lang (2010)
Sgt. Maj. Les LeBlanc (2005)
Capt. Art Littlefield (2024)
C.W. "Bill" Marks (2014)
M.Sgt. Malcolm MacLean (2007)
GySgt. Rudy Miller (2008)
Capt. Ray Nielsen (2008)
Sgt. Donald Neiss (2009)
Col. Patrick Otoole (2018)

Pfc. Athanasse "Al" Parsons (2013)
Capt. Jack Paxton (2018)
MSgt Edward Payton (2015)
Sgt. Victor Petris (2015)
1Lt. Steve Reich (2021)
GySgt. Charles Ross (2013)
1Lt. George Schultz (2008)
Cpl Don Schyberg (2017)
Col. Bill Tate (2019)
Pfc. "Wild Bill" Taylor (2010)
Col. John Terry (2018)
LtCol. John Tomlinson (2014)
M.Sgt. Dale Wasson (2009)
Cpl. James Weinberg (2022)
Sgt. Carl Wenhold (2017)
LtCol. Erich H. Wieler (2022)
Col. Paul Wilson (2019)

Semper Fi, Ladies and Gentlemen.
You'll always be remembered.



MINUTES
Central Florida Chapter, 1st Marine Division Association
Saturday, 6 June 2026
Fiddler's Green Irish Pub
Winter Park, FL

- I. Call to Order, Opening comments..... Barron Mills
- II. Opening Prayer Carlos Cuevas
- III. Pledge to the Flag ... Ron DeVasto
- IV. Welcome to Guests..... Member Introductions
- V. Secretary's Report Susan Finnigan
 - A. Motion to approve Ron DeVasto, Second Mike Pomakis, Approved as printed
- VI. Treasurer's Report Carlos Cuevas
- VII. **PROGRAM: Habitat for Humanity – David Seilkop and Mandy Shrader**
- VIII. **Business**
 - A. **Recap of recent activities**..... Barron Mills
 1. JROTC Award Presentations
 - B. **Upcoming Activities** Barron Mills
 1. August Gathering: 8 August, 6 pm. Barron's home. RSVP at cfc.1stmardiv@gmail.com
 2. Annual Reunion (more information below)
 3. S.O.S. Breakfast: 10 November at the Maitland Civic Center in Maitland.
 4. Wreaths Across America: 19 December
 5. Russ Kauffman Memorial Stocking Stuffing: TBD in December
 - C. **1st Marine Division Assoc. report**..... Mike Galyean, Susan Finnigan
 1. 2026 (79th Annual) Reunion- Susan Finnigan, Reunion Chair
 - a. 24-30 August, DoubleTree San Diego Bayside, 4875 N. Harbor Dr, San Diego
 - b. Book your room before 24 August, Hotel phone +1 619-224-3621, Group Code 91J
 - c. Use this link to book your hotel room:
<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/1stmardiv79threunion/>
 - d. Register Online: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/79th-annual-reunion>
 2. FMDA website: <https://1stmardiv.org/> Check it out.
 3. Cpl Larry Smedley Mount Soladad Plaque update
 4. Motions to be made:
 - a. Chapter donation at the Reunion in the amount of \$1,017.75.
 - b. Chris Hoey to serve as Chapter Representative at the Reunion.
 - D. **Volunteers/Donations Needed (update)**..... Barron Mills
 1. Chapter Chaplain – Tom Love has volunteered, needs to join the Chapter too
 2. Raffle Manager – Chris Via assuming duties from Mike Pomakis
 3. JROTC Awards – Thank you to Hector Fernandez for taking on the duties
 4. S.O.S. Breakfast committee members (still asking for volunteers)
- IX. **Announcements**..... Barron Mills
 - A. Merchandise Available: 1st Marine Division challenge coin - \$10; Chapter tumbler - \$20
 - B. Social media support on Facebook and LinkedIn – follow us, invite others, like our posts!
 - C. Newsletter content always welcome
 - D. Local programs and events to share
 1. 17 June – Monthly Marine Corps PME and networking social hosted by the CFMCF
 2. 17 June – Salute to Sisters hosted by FAVOB, Dubsdread.
 3. 18 June – FAVOB Orlando Coffee & Connections, Citrus Club. Visit www.FAVOB.org .
 4. 25 June – Camaraderie Foundation's PTSD Awareness Fundraising Breakfast, www.camaraderiefoundation.org
 5. 25 June – Veterans Beer Club Orlando, Tactical Brewing in Baldwin Park, 6-9 pm
 - E. Any other business
 - F. Next Executive Committee meeting – 11 July. Location TBD.
 - G. Next Chapter meeting – 3 October. Program TBD.
 - H. Raffle drawing Mike Pomakis/Chris Via
- X. **Call to Adjourn**
 - A. Navy Hymn
 - B. Marines' Hymn
- XI. Lunch to follow... Members and guests are encouraged to remain in dining room for lunch and camaraderie.

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.ldbreed@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/>