



Gold Country Det. #885
Grass Valley, California

2013-2014 Officers & Staff:

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*All numbers are 530 area code



Commandants Message

It's been a busy month and November is almost upon us. The weather's changing, the leaves are falling and rain is also starting to fall. I promised the webmistress (wife) a new pellet stove last year but that never happened so I'm still feeding the old wood stove. At least we're warm and life is good.



On October 18th we gathered at the Vets Hall in Grass Valley for a viewing of a documentary film "Forgotten Flag Raisers" about the first flag-raising at Iwo Jima. It was a great movie, well attended and was followed by a question and answer session. Many thanks to Dustin Spence for his diligent research in the making of this film. I also wish to thank General Steele who was the MC for this event.

Not to be outdone, the next day Sunday, October 19th we hosted our first toy collection and fundraiser for Toys For Tots at the Vets Hall. We sponsored members of Kuk Sool Won who showed up in force

with many of them bringing a toy. When I say they showed up in force I am not

exaggerating, they numbered somewhere between 300 to 400 and stayed all day doing training and Korean martial arts demonstrations. They flew people in from Korea, England and even that southern country of Texas! At the end of the day we came out with three full boxes of toys and several hundred dollars in donations. Those of us that showed up sat at a table we set up to promote donations with rose-pens. We also had TFT



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Happy Birthday!!!

November:

- Jim Brodeur (59)
- Art Leitherer (?)

From the Adjutant's Desk

Fellow Marines,

I wish to thank all of you who showed up for the "Forgotten Flag Raisers" movie at the Vets Hall this past October 18th. Everything worked as planned and we had a great crowd.

The following day (Sunday) we had a Toys for Tots fundraiser with Kuk Sool Won. They celebrated their 20th year in business and we raked in the toys and donations. Many thanks to all involved, it was worth the effort. Our



regular meeting is this Monday, Nov 3rd. We have a lot to talk about and we need your attendance. We also kick off Toys for Tots on Wednesday, Nov. 5th and need your participation. See our other events on the schedule below for details.

Semper Fi Marines,

Gary

Adjutant/Paymaster Detachment #885

(Commandants Message continued from page 1)

boxes stationed at the entrance and other key areas. Their group was well disciplined and easy to work with and their etiquette was outstanding! I think we should invite them back!

I also wish to thank Marines Larson, Baldwin and Bynes for helping me with the color guard at this event.

I think the point on doing a fund-raiser is that if we just reach out to some of these organizations in our town we can have some fun and be very successful. Let's keep up this effort and help our community!

We have events coming up in November, mostly related to the kickoff of Toys For Tots. See the "Upcoming Events" list below.

I'd like to see more of you at our meetings with a minimum uniform of a red cover and a name badge (mine went through the dryer and didn't survive so I need a new one). Until we meet again, Semper Fidelis.

Jim Brodeur
Commandant

By the time you receive the next edition of the Pulitzer Prize winning edition of the Boondocker, the Toys for Tots program is gearing up for this coming Christmas Season. Toy boxes will be manning their positions throughout Nevada County and Auburn beginning this coming week.



Our "Kick-off" meeting will be this coming Wednesday, Nov. 5th at the Grass Valley Veterans Building. We will be covering strategy and execution for the upcoming season. The patterns over the last several years indicate the number of families and children served will increase this year from previous years.

With collection boxes going out this coming week till December 16th, the need for volunteers is crucial. The need for drivers collecting toys throughout the community is the backbone of the Toys for Tots program. Your assistance is invaluable.

Toy sorting for the children will be held on Dec. 17th, along with our infamous Bicycle Build. Absolutely a night you don't want to miss!

To peak off the season on Dec. 18th, will be the Distribution Day. Always leaves me with a lump in my throat, knowing we made a child's wish come true. For that feeling alone, is the reason I continue supporting this program

Plan on joining us this Christmas.

John Bynes

Sr. Vice commandant

Toys For Tots Coordinator

For Sale Items

I've reserved space here for sale items you may have and want to part with. I doubt I'll get more than one or two at a time so for now it's free! Send me your items to sell with pictures.



Our QuarterMaster

Please send interesting articles to Jim Brodeur
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Do check out our updated 885 Detachment Web page:
"http://www.mcl885.org"

Last Marines leave Helmand province (*reprinted from the Wall St. Journal*)

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—The air-traffic controllers had to stay until the very end.

After several busy days and hundreds of flights out of Helmand province, the last of the U.S. Marines filed into helicopters around midday Monday, leaving behind a sprawling compound that for years served as a crucial base of the fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan.

“I don’t think we’ve had time to digest it, we’ve been so busy,” said Marine Corps Capt. Benjamin Kiley, an air-control officer, who said he had slept just four hours over the past four days.

Minutes before leaving, air tower workers destroyed sensitive gear and made sure no classified papers were lying around.

For years, Helmand was the focus of Marine Corps operations in Afghanistan. Camps Leatherneck and Bastion—shared by U.S. and British forces before being formally handed over Sunday—comprised the logistical hub and headquarters. The base once housed some 40,000 U.S. and allied troops.



The compound is now in the hands of Afghan forces, who began trickling in to secure the perimeter Monday morning.

“It’s kind of surreal. When you’ve been here for so long it’s incredible to think that we are finally leaving,” said Marine Corps Lt. Nicole Kreis, an air-traffic controller who was on one of the last helicopters out of Camp Leatherneck.

The province saw some of the bloodiest fighting of the 13-year war. The Marines lost 378 men and women in the Afghanistan war, with the majority of them killed in Helmand. The British lost around 450 people, most of them in this province, too.

The last British combat troops left at the same time as the Marines, a departure that effectively marks the end of their role in the war. While a handful of Marines remain as advisers, Leatherneck was the last operational base the Marines oversaw in Afghanistan.

Afghan soldiers and police will now be largely alone in their fight against the Taliban in Helmand.

“I am cautiously optimistic that they will be able to sustain themselves,” said Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Daniel Yoo, the last commander of allied forces in Helmand and in the neighboring province of Nimroz.

The departure is part of the withdrawal of most foreign combat troops by Dec. 31, when the current mission ends. Around 12,500 troops, most of them American, [will remain in Afghanistan](#) after that to focus on counterterrorism and on training Afghan police and soldiers, before gradually pulling out altogether by the end of 2016.

The Taliban remain a force in Helmand, and insurgents have pressed hard to control territory in a province that was once their stronghold—and where much of the country’s opium, a vital source of income for them, is grown.

“There is no doubt that the NATO mission played an important role against terrorist groups,” said Mohammad Gulab Mangal, a former governor of Helmand. “But the security situation has worsened; there is no doubt on it.”

Afghan Army Gen. Murad Ali Murad, the commander of Afghan ground troops, said in a recent interview that two sparsely populated districts in Helmand are effectively under Taliban control: Desho and Washir.

Some of the [most intense fighting in recent months was in the province’s north](#), where the Taliban tried, and failed, to recapture Sangin, a strategic district that has seen some of the worst violence of the war.

“Taliban efforts here in the southwest fuel the insurgency across the rest of the country,” said U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, the day-to-day chief of allied operations in Afghanistan. “Despite the very real threat that exists, we are lifting off Helmand confident that the [Afghan] army is capable of securing the region.”

Maj. Gen. Sayed Malook, the Afghan army commander who is taking over the base, on Monday morning bid farewell to the last Marines at the passenger terminal as they prepared to fly to Kandahar Airfield, a large coalition base where they will stop for a few days before starting their journey home.

“Now that we have this base, we’ll take good care of it,” said Maj. Gen. Malook. “It is a lot of space but we’ll make good use of it.”

The Afghan army says it will use the base, which stretches over some 6,500 acres, as a training center, but it is unclear whether they will keep it at its current size or reduce its perimeter, making it easier to secure.

“It’s a funny thing to envision what it will look like once we are gone, who will take over, how they will use the spaces, how they will use what we left behind,” said Marine Corps Lt. Diana Stabers, who on Sunday night helped manage the pullout.

The flow of people and goods out of Leatherneck and Bastion sped up in recent days. Over 48 hours, some 250 flights departed the base, carrying cargo and around 1,050 people out of Helmand.

Troops had pared back to basics in recent weeks. Where rows of army barracks once stood, there are now dusty lots fenced with blast walls and barbed wire. With the food canteens closed, troops were eating ration packs and cereal bars.

The camp's surgical hospital, for instance, last month relocated to the departures lounge of the airport terminal, and by Sunday evening it had shrunk into a basic first-aid clinic. The electronic equipment was packed in 24 boxes, ready to be flown home.

"If it plugs into the wall, we are taking it home," said U.S. Navy Lt. Timothy Rutherford, the hospital's administrator. "If it is consumable, we are leaving it to the Afghans."

The Marines didn't leave any military hardware for the Afghans, and made sure that no sensitive material was left behind. The night before the withdrawal, the sky was specked with ash from an incinerator that was burning classified documents.

The Afghan army is inheriting infrastructure worth hundreds of millions of dollars, plus office supplies including chairs and coffee machines. A row of cars were parked in a lot next to the airstrip with their keys in the engine, ready to be driven by Afghan soldiers.

"I really hope that the blood, sweat and tears that we invested in this place get used properly," said Marine Corps Lt. Curtis Smith, who also flew out on the last helicopters. "And I wish them luck."

Upcoming Events

Nov 3—Regular Meeting

1800 at the Grass Valley Vet's Hall. Be on time and bring a friend!

• Nov 5—Toys For Tots Kickoff Meeting

1400 at the Grass Valley Vet's Hall with the Salvation Army.

Nov 10 — USMC Birthday Bash— 1800

Being held at the National Hotel Tavern -

• Dec 16, 2014 — TFT Final Box Pickup

• Dec 17, 2014 — Bicycle Build

• Dec 18, 2014—Distribution Day

• Dec 25, 2014 — Christmas

Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!



Gold Country Detachment #885

Marine Corps League

578 Sutton Way, PMB #375

