

# The Gravel Cruncher

Marine Corps League Greater Greensboro Detachment 260

Chartered 1972

PO Box 10227, Greensboro, NC 27404



Editor: Trish Winsett

June 2010

## MAY 2010 DET MEETING MINUTES

*Ben Craven, Adjutant*

Meeting was called to order by Commandant Bracken at 1935. Proper protocol was followed.

Three potential new members were called forward: Jerry McClough, Ronald Stoll and Clyde Hunt. By Motion and Second and unanimous vote they were accepted and welcomed to The Fighting 260.

The Minutes of the April 12, 2010 meeting were presented and by Motion and Second and unanimous vote were accepted as written.

The Paymaster reported a cash balance of \$12,187 and that Financial Statements were available for review.

Old business: None

New Business:

Sergeant at Arms, Bill Wood announced that he would be stepping down as of the June 14, 2010 meeting and requested that all Marines interested in taking his position come forward. He has served with distinction for twenty years or longer and thought that it was time for another Marine to take charge.

Commandant Bracken gave a tremendous word of thanks for Bill Wood's loyal, long service to the League.

Commandant Bracken then gave a report on the upcoming National Convention, very positive for the most part, but with some problems explained that have occurred with a National official. These are being dealt with, however, in true Marine fashion.

Commandant Bracken then called for a show of force on how many members planned to attend the opening ceremonies. Substantially all members stood.

He then asked for a show of force on how many planned to attend the banquet. Substantially all members responded as well.

He reported that Commandant James Conway will be in Afghanistan the week of the National Convention in Greensboro, but that General Amos has accepted the invitation to be here. Unfortunately, the Battle Colors will not be present.

It was also announced that our regular August, 2010 dinner meeting will be one week later, August 16<sup>th</sup>, due to the National Convention that month.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of Officers for the coming year.

Those elected: Commandant Scott Matthews  
Senior Vice Commandant Ronald Medder  
Junior Vice Commandant Ralph Farthing  
Judge Advocate James Stinson

All elected by unanimous vote. All other positions are appointed. It was announced that Department of North Carolina League Commandant, Dennis Brockland, has been invited to do the Installation at the next meeting, June 14, 2010.

Ron Medder then reported on a possible fund raiser by working the Wyndham Golf Tournament, August 16 through August 22, 2010. By Motion and Second and unanimous vote, the members elected to pursue the opportunity.

Alan Martin from the Winston Salem Detachment reported on their upcoming 5k Pinnacle Mud Run scheduled for June 12, 2010, and invited all 260 members to participate.

A report was made about the Young Marines' Golf Tournament, August 11, 2010.

Robert O'Hanlon then reported on the Boy Scout Council and the Eagle Program, suggesting that the 260 reengage with them and that our members volunteer to present new Eagle awards.

He then reported that Bob Marino, a Viet Nam Marine veteran, has offered us the use of the Triad Bowling Lanes as a fund raiser for the Convention. He asked for a volunteer to lead this program.

Good of the League:

The Hawaii trip tickets and fund raiser was reported on, also, the coming Honor Flight, Tuesday May 11, 2010. Our own Bill Wood and Thomas Gibbs are being Honored on this trip to Washington, DC and Archie Barrow will also be on board, serving as a Guardian on the Flight.

Danny Bracken, having served the maximum three terms as Commandant of League 260, reported his last time at the podium as Commandant and was given standing ovation of Thanks by all members for a Job Well Done.

There being no further business, the Sergeant at Arms, Bill Wood, retired the Colors and the meeting adjourned at 2045.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: BILL KIRKMAN

*Harry Thetford*



Bill Kirkman lives on the same land he left to join the Marine Corps, the same rural Guilford County land his family has owned for generations. Bill dropped out of Alamance High School in the tenth grade, "We had a war going on, I couldn't stand being on the sidelines."

Recruit training didn't deter Kirkman. An admonishing Parris Island officer told Bill Kirkman, "Private, you'll never make it off this island!" To which a confident Kirkman replied, "If any XXX makes it off this island, I will!"

At six foot, three inches and 135 pounds, only a handful of meal tickets supplied by a doting recruiting sergeant -- and a three-day eating binge -- had gotten Kirkman to Parris Island in the first place. He would not be denied.

After Boot Camp, Kirkman saw Guard Detachment duty at Charleston Navy Yards, and later moved to Camp Lejeune. "Another corporal and I ran the Ropes Course."

"We were supposed to jury-rig the ropes ever so often to make sure a few fell in the muddy quagmire. We should not have jury-rigged a major who was in charge of filling replacement drafts for Saipan!"

"After dunking the major, we were on the next train to Camp Pendleton and overseas-bound."

Bill and other members of his replacement draft filled in as needed with A Company, 1<sup>ST</sup> battalion, 6<sup>TH</sup> regiment, 2<sup>ND</sup> Marine Division, and sailed for Saipan. Tinian and Okinawa were next.

After Okinawa, Kirkman's outfit returned to Saipan. "While boarding a troopship to attack Japan, we were briefed, "Your division will probably be annihilated, but the division coming in behind you may be able to gain a foothold."

"While I was the happiest guy in the world when the atomic bomb dropped, my attitude changed a bit when I went in as part of a twelve-man advance party to Nagasaki to gauge resistance – it was the biggest mess I ever saw!"

"Moving across Japan, we passed a Ford factory in Moji. While bomb craters and burned out hulks of businesses were all around, the huge Ford logo was left unscathed – we figured our bombers missed it intentionally."

Kirkman shared another oddity. "While deactivating and dumping Japanese ammunition and depth charges into the ocean, an explosive went off unexpectedly, killing twelve Japanese workers and one of our Marines. Two other Marines were injured."

"Indications were that an American spy had set a booby-trap. Unfortunately, we lost a good Marine who had survived the bloodiest battles of the war."

Post-war, Kirkman married Virginia Oliver, a young beauty he had known from his Alamance High School days.

Sixty-two years later the Kirkmans have four children, ten grand-children, six great-grands, and one on the way. They also own 100 head of registered Horned Herfords, but they are another story.

Semper Fi, Bill Kirkman – thank you for your service.

### MARINES HELPING MARINES

Long standing member of the 260, Marine **Elliot Pegram**, has been at the Clapps Nursing Center for the past two weeks. Let's give him some Marine cheer!

Clapp's Nursing Center, 4558 Pleasant Garden Rd., Pleasant Garden, NC 27313; Phone: (336) 674-3047 (his direct line), Room 610. By the time the Cruncher is published, he might be released and at home; 6159 Quaker Drive, Pleasant Garden, NC 27315; 336-685-0056.

1st Wave Guadalcanal Marine member **Speedy Spach** had a heart attack last week and was in the hospital for the month prior. Alice, his wife, says that he is recuperating well, but not as fast as he would like. 336-945-2824; 908 Cotinus Circle, Lewisville, NC 27023; cspach@triad.rr.com

Marine Bill Bradshaw, a former postman in the Irving Park area of Greensboro, fell ill about 8 years ago and has been in a rehab/nursing center for about 5 years. He sits in his wheelchair wearing his USMC ball cap. He says Marines used to come see him, but hasn't seen a fellow Marine in a long time. Although not a member of our Detachment, no Marine is left behind. Bradshaw is at the Adams Farm Nursing Home at 5100 Mackey Rd, just off High Point Rd.

Let these Marines know we're thinking of them. Send a card, give them a call, go see them or email them.

#### Anniversaires

Congratulations to **Charlie and Diamando Monnett** who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 3rd.

## Detachment 260 Calendar of Events

### June 2010

Mon 14th Monthly Meeting: Social Hour 6:30pm, Meeting 7:30pm

### July 2010

Sat 3rd Fundraiser: Harris Teeter: 401 Pisgah Church Rd; 10am-6pm  
Fundraiser: Harris Teeter: 3330 W Friendly Ave; 10am-6pm

Sun 4th Flag Raising: 7:30am; Friendly Center  
Fundraiser: Harris Teeter: 4010 Battleground Ave; 10am-6pm

Mon 14th Monthly Meeting: Social Hour 6:30pm, Meeting 7:30pm

### Calendar of Events Contact Information

<b>Flag Raisings:</b>	Clyde Dungee	336-965-9372
<b>Fundraisers:</b>	Ron Medder	336-674-6597
<b>Pistol &amp; Rifle Team:</b>	Keith Zimbardo	336-993-6824 or 336-312-1739

### Marine Corps League Greater Greensboro Detachment # 260 Officer Contact Information

**Commandant: Scott Matthews**  
336-210-4090; scott@filtrationtechnology.com

**Sr. Vice Commandant: Ron Medder**  
336-674-6597; kachadarms@aol.com

**Jr. Vice Commandant: Ralph Farthing**  
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**Judge Advocate: Jim Stinson**  
336-294-2113 ; Email: none

**Paymaster: Karen Ellis**  
336-312-3885 ; karen.ellis@cx2000.com

**Adjutant: Ben Craven**  
336-292-3417 ; bfc260@gmail.com

**Chaplain: Ken Cobleigh**  
336-643-9584 ; Email: none

**Sergeant at Arms: Bill Wood**  
336-275-5493 ; Email: none

**Historian: Mike Sankewitsch**  
336-307-3411 ; nfm997@gmail.com

**Supply Officers:**  
Al Johnson; 336-855-7633  
ajohnson5202@hotmail.com  
George Dotson; 336-855-3990

**Special Advisory Staff: Bill Moss**  
336-708-1988 ; bradymoss@bellsouth.net

**Aide de Camp: Steve Winsett**  
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## LIFE MEMBERSHIP CORRECTION

You know the old saying, "if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." This is the case with LIFE MEMBERSHIPS at National. We'll spare you the details and suffice it to say that prices HAVE NOT been reduced.

### Membership Fees

Type	Age	Fee
Life	Up to 35	\$400
Life	36-50	\$350
Life	51-60	\$250
Life	61 & up	\$125
New	N/A	\$31
Renewal	N/A	\$26