



Women Marines Liaison Officer Department of Pennsylvania

September 30, 2008

This past quarter has been an extremely busy one for the Women Marines Association. We have been actively supporting many of our Marine Corps League Detachments with their scheduled activities, as well as taking care of our own Chapters' scheduled plans and activities.

We have been visiting our hospitalized Veterans at the Scranton area VA Hospital joining with the League for Bingo and birthday celebrations, and planning our Christmas visits and gifts. At the Lebanon VA Facility, we hosted a bingo and laid plans for activities to involve the Veterans in some interactive projects for Christmas, as well as exploring ideas of how to bring other projects to promote active participation between the Veterans and visitors to the facility. Coatesville and Spring City facilities have also been the subject of volunteer efforts by the Women Marines in these areas, supporting Bingo, Friend of a Veteran and other projects.

In July, we donated to the Veteran's Museum in Media, PA, a complete Woman Marine's Winter Green uniform from a MGSgt from WWII, along with photos of her on the steps of a building in Philadelphia with the platoon she was training with (one of the only women in the photo) along with a complete Woman Marine's Summer Green & White uniform for a MSgt from WWII who served in Korea as well along with artifacts to support her service record. In addition to these uniforms, now on display at the museum, we donated a crank type battery operated WWII Field Radio Telephone, Canteen and Saber Knife. PA-2 was rewarded with a private tour of the Museum. We also spent a week at Quantico supporting the MCL and the Modern Day Marine Expo. Our booth, courtesy of the MCL, displayed a sample of photos and documents that can be found at our WMA History Museum in Denver, CO. We met a lot of great Marines, recruiting a few for the WMA from our booth, and being very impressed with the displays of new and innovative technology for supporting and protecting our troops. While the recruitment activity would primarily benefit areas other than PA, the contacts and networking with vendors will be of considerable value in potential fund raising efforts to support programs of the League and the WMA.

On the National level, we attended our Biennial WMA Convention and Leadership Conference in Houston over the Labor Day Weekend, and laid plans for the next two years activities. It appeared that close to 30% of the conference attendees were active duty Marines, spanning the globe from Okinawa to Iraq. The Commandant from Camp Pendleton, General Salinas, was a guest speaker, as was General Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps. [Yours truly managed to get photographed with him to add to my collection of (one other) photo op with the previous Commandant, General Hagee.] One of the speakers was Vernice Armour, the first African American Female Cobra Fighter Pilot in the Marine Corps. She told of an incident in Iraq when she had been returning to base after completing one of her missions when she was contacted by a ground unit who was pinned down in a cemetery by a sniper. They had run out of ammunition and had nothing to signal their location with except a mirror. When she located them, they directed her to a nearby building with a blue roof where the snipers were holed up, and requested an attack on that target. Having only one rocket left and running very low on fuel, she agreed to give it a go, and with the first pass, the rocket failed to release. Hoping she had enough fuel for one more pass, she took one more run at the target and the rocket released on schedule, destroying the target. Several months later, she was at the VA Hospital in San Diego for a routine checkup and fell into conversation with a young Marine waiting in line with her. He related how he had received his injuries in Iraq and how they had made contact with a pilot flying over their position, who took out a nest of snipers that had his platoon pinned down in a cemetery. When they both recovered from the shock of meeting each other, the young Marine, surprised that she was not a male Marine, thanked her for saving all of their lives that day. How often do you think that kind of chance encounter would happen?

We are looking forward to supporting various Detachments at their planned Marine Corps Birthday Balls, and have been invited to participate in various Veterans Day parades and ceremonies around the state. We have successfully recruited several new members to the MCL from our ranks of Women Marines, and continue to work toward greater integration of recruitment activities between the League and WMA.

SEMPER FI,
Kathy Van Gorder
WMA Liaison Officer to the MCL
WMA Area 2 Director

☺ All Divisions ☺ Bethlehem ☺ Central Bucks ☺ Chester County ☺ Delaware County ☺ Dutch Helwig ☺
☺ Gen. Smedley D. Butler ☺ George Pron – Paul Seton ☺ Hannings – Linderman ☺ Hidden Bell ☺
☺ Hugh B. Eastburn III ☺ Lehigh Valley ☺ Montgomery County ☺ Northampton County ☺ Penndelphia ☺
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