

USMC

Once a Marine, Always a Marine

JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2022

Vote



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE BETT-TOOMEY DETACHMENT #216

1794 ELECTRIC AVENUE, LACKAWANNA, NY 14218 ★ 716.823.0998

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 311, LACKAWANNA, NY 14218

PLEASE JOIN OUR MEETINGS ON THE SECOND TUESDAY MONTHLY AT 1900 HOURS



NEWSLETTER

<https://www.bett-toomey.org>

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 OFFICERS

COMMANDANT	KENNETH D. BLACHURA
SR. VICE	JAMES TAYLOR
JR. VICE.....	RICK CHMIELOWIEC
ADJUTANT	DENNIS CHAPMAN
JUDGE ADVOCATE	JOHN KAITANOWSKI
SGT.-AT-ARMS.....	RONALD GULCZEWSKI
CHAPLAIN	EUGENE HESS
PAYMASTER.....	RANDY HARPER





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DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK WEBSITE

<https://www.mclnewyork.net>

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE NATIONAL WEBSITE

<https://www.mclnational.org>

Award Winning!

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK
GROUND POUNDER NEWSLETTER

<https://www.mclnewyork.net/index.php/newsletter>





Kenneth D. Blachura

Commandant
716.471.1002
kennyplesant@aol.com

A message from the Commandant

In 2021 we still realized trials and tribulations. 2022 brings us a new beginning & drive. I have experienced the best of my officers, Marine Corps League Associates, and friends and wish this to continue. We can beat this Covid experience and look to our future.

We can take an extended deep breath from our daily routines and appreciate family, friends and acquaintances.

Help us to reach out to everyone. Renew our friendships. Help our Marine Corps League grow and prosper. Retention and Brotherhood continue to grow. We can beat anything or anyone that stands in our way.

Semper Fidelis - 2022
Commandant Ken



Awards

THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD IS PRESENTED TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO SHOW A COMMITMENT TO THE LONGEVITY OF OUR BETT-TOOMEY DETACHMENT.

ON AWARDS NIGHT OF 10 NOVEMBER, AWARDS WERE PRESENTED TO JIM TAYLOR, RICK CHMIELOWIEC, RANDY HARPER, AND GENE HESS.

THE REMAINING AWARDS WERE PRESENTED AT THE 14 DECEMBER DETACHMENT MEETING TO DENNIS CHAPMAN, RON GULCZIEWSKI AND JOHN KAITANOWSKI.

THE DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN AWARD WAS PRESENTED TO EDITOR OF THE NEWSLETTER, DONNA HILDEBRANDT.



COMMANDANT BLACHURA
RON GULCZIEWSKI



COMMANDANT BLACHURA
RANDY HARPER

COMMANDANT BLACHURA
DENNIS CHAPMAN
Dennis is also accepting
on behalf of
JOHN KAITANOWSKI



COMMANDANT
BLACHURA (DAD)
DONNA
HILDEBRANDT



BETT-TOOMEY ELECTION



- ✓ ANNOUNCE THE ELECTION NOV/DEC 2021 NEWSLETTER
- NOMINATIONS 11 JANUARY 2022
- VOTE** **8 FEBRUARY 2022**
- INSTALLMENT..... 8 MARCH 2022

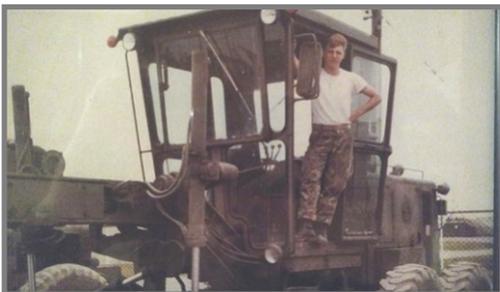
TO VOTE YOU MUST BE A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING.

“OLD CORPS”

This is a new section created at the suggestion of Randy Harper. This is an area where we can share our older photos of people, events, the building, etc. Look through your old photo books and share them. Send to 1315borden@gmail.com

Identify as much as you can. We all look forward to your contributions.

RICK CHMIELOWIEC
*in 1983, with his
Caterpillar 130G Road Grader.*



**LACKAWANNA MARINE
CLUB FROM THE PAST**
*DOES ANYONE KNOW
THE YEAR THAT THIS
WAS TAKEN?*





MISSION 22 TO ZERO

CREATING HOPE—SAVING LIVES WORKING TOGETHER—WORKING IN HARMONY

These events are called “Mission 22 to Zero” because there are 22 service people who take their own lives each day. Marine Hazzard is determined to do what he can to make that statistic nonexistent, in other words **ZERO**. Every presentation has something related to the number 22.



Buz Hazzard

On 16 October 2021, The Samuel Cimino VFW Post 6479, hosted an event to bring awareness to “Mission 22 to Zero” in Silver Creek, NY. On this day, the number 22 referred to the 22 rainy minutes of walking around the quaint village. Representing Bett-Toomey were Commandant Ken and editor Donna Hildebrandt.

Those participating in the walk were Veterans from Post 6472, members of the Silver Creek American Legion, Forestville American Legion, Bett-Toomey, Town Board Members, Tri-county Service Unit 201 (Girl Scouts from Fredonia, South Dayton, Forestville), and 4-H members (Forestville & Silver Creek), and more.

Marine Hazzard lead the discussion about an otherwise taboo topic. The team of Hazzard, Merrill and Schank spend countless hours of their own time to encourage that the conversation of suicide becomes less forbidden. They provide education about the warning signs and ways to respond to the threat. At the same time they open hearts and minds to create an atmosphere where the discussion is approachable. These gatherings are to educate the public of the prevalence of PTSD among veterans, active duty service people and first responders.



Aren Schank



Al Merrill

Learn to recognize the warning signs and offer assistance.

The Crisis Line number is **1-800-273-8255**. For veterans, use option 1. Some of the signs are more obvious than others. So, the obvious ones will be omitted

- ◆ Self-destructive behavior like drug abuse, weapons
- ◆ Hopelessness, feeling like there’s no way out
- ◆ Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings
- ◆ Rage or anger ◆ Engaging in risky activities
- ◆ Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- ◆ Withdrawing from family emotional response of deciding to take the next step.
- ◆ Giving away all your possessions
- ◆ An unusual elevation in mood

Offer more than one crisis card to those you meet, because if they may it need one now, it is very possible that you may know someone else who does.



Karen Seeley

Thank you to the Girl Scouts who assisted by passing out the Crisis Cards. Marine Hazzard insisted that everyone and friends.

Additional thanks to Karen Seeley, Auxiliary member of the Department, and also a member of the Samuel Cimino Auxiliary Post 6472, who initiated the coordination of this event. Other Auxiliary members who made this event possible were Deanna Borrello, Natalie Pomichter, Terri Anderson, Joan Lisa, Melissa Shaw and Jan Tofina.

Food and beverage was graciously donated by Veterans Health Equipment and Matthew Shaw & Justin Miller.



Happy Walker



Walkers of all ages

FEATURE

STEPHEN CAPIRCI

Steve has the unique distinction of having served 2 years in the USMC after having served 8 years between the Air Force and Air National Guard with an honorable discharge rank of Sergeant. He is proud to have served his country in multiple capacities, and is especially proud to be a Marine.

Steve joined Bett-Toomey a few months ago at the request of Commandant Blachura. They met at a Veteran's event in downtown Buffalo. The Commandant took an immediate liking to Capirci and was happy to invite him to join the Marine Corps League at Bett-Toomey. Steve brings a wealth of enthusiasm to the detachment and he is eager to assist any way that he can. He has some fresh ideas to share with the detachment.

In his own words he states that, "I was very proud to have served as a U.S. Marine. My prior service in the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard prepared me mentally for the challenges that the Marines had to offer."



Steve has an uncle who served in the Marines and he was overjoyed when he learned that Steve had chosen to extend his military career and join the Marines for his next venture. His uncle was so proud that he arranged to be at San Diego

while Steve was going through boot camp there for training. Both Steve and his uncle were pleased to have each other there. Steve says, "What an inspiration that was for me. I know I made him proud....The Marines gave me a better understanding of what courage, honor and valor meant. Discipline is the number one factor to become a Marine. Without that, your value as a Marine is cut in half. Semper Fi to my uncle and all U.S. Marines."

After boot camp, Steve spent April 1988—January 1990 at Camp Lejeune in the 2nd Marine Division at Headquarters Platoon with the rank of Corporal at the time of his discharge.

Every job makes the USMC work to it's finest capacity.





A SOMBER ANNIVERSARY

23 October 2021 marked the 38th anniversary of the terrorist bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, which, sadly, claimed the lives of 241 Americans. 23 October was the anniversary of the single deadliest day for the Marine Corps since Iwo Jima in World War II.

The chain of events that led up to this tragic event began more than a year prior.

The Israeli Defense Forces invaded southern Lebanon in response to an assassination attempt on Israel's ambassador to the UK by Palestinian terrorists. After two and a half months of fighting, a 2000 member multinational peacekeeping force, including 800 Marines were deployed to oversee the withdrawal of PLO guerillas. Shortly thereafter, President Reagan ordered the Marines to withdraw from Beirut. However, due to dynamic political and religious unrest, the United States and the multinational Peacekeeping Forces were deployed. The force totaled approximately 2200 members. The deployed were there to prevent further assassinations and massacres of civilians.

By the time October of 1983 arrived, there were roughly 1800 Marines stationed in Beirut, 300 of which were living in a four-story building at the Beirut Airport. On the morning of October 23, American and French forces were near simultaneously hit by bombings.

That morning the Marines were expecting a delivery from a water truck, so a large yellow Mercedes-Benz truck circling the parking lot caused no alarm. Large trucks were commonplace at the airport. Today, however, would prove to be history-making. After the driver accelerated and crashed through multiple barriers, gates and sentry posts, it was evident that this yellow truck was not the water truck. Crashing through obstacles like concertina wire, 18" sewer pipe, and 4 layers of sandbags, the truck came to a stop in the open-air atrium of the Marine barracks building and detonated causing an explosion equivalent to 10 tons of TNT. The force of the Marine barracks explosion literally lifted the entire four-story building off the ground and ultimately imploding.

The Drakker building, which housed French

paratroopers, was attacked with a similar explosion, less than 10 minutes after that of the Marine barracks. The explosion was estimated to be about half the intensity of the Marine barracks. Although the explosion there was not as powerful as that of the Marine barracks, it was still powerful enough to bring down the nine-story. This bomb was suspected to be detonated by remote control.

The damages done by these two bombings were staggering! The explosions killed, 241 American service members, of which were 220 Marines, 18 sailors, and 3 soldiers. Other losses include 58 French paratroopers, and a small number of Lebanese civilians. Furthermore, the wounded included an additional 128 American and 15 French forces.

For the American military, this was the single deadliest day since the first day of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam.

For the French, it was the deadliest since the end of the Algerian War, approximately two decades earlier.

The 23 October 1983 bombings were the first major event by a group that would later become known as Hezbollah. This act set the stage for decades of ongoing violence committed in this fashion and tearing apart an already unstable region.

LEST WE NEVER FORGET!

The Marine Corps values and embraces all of its history. Beginning in boot camp, every Marine is educated on the Corps past and what it means to be part of such a prestigious organization.

Primary Reference
<https://marineparents.com/marinecorps/beirut-bombing.asp>
Written by: Collin Hoeferlin, 22 October 2013
MarineParents.com, Inc.

Other references from the world wide web.



18 NOVEMBER 2021

VIRTUAL COMMANDANT'S CORNER

HOSTED BY VICTORIA McCOY PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

Like the national site, www.national.org

Zoom meeting speakers

Angela Maness

Honor/Color Guard Committee Chair

Craig Reeling, Uniform Committee Chair

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/>

[UChavULGSFiSonNtn6VpldEQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChavULGSFiSonNtn6VpldEQ)

8 DECEMBER 2021

VIRTUAL COMMANDANT'S CORNER

HOSTED BY VICTORIA McCOY PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

Speakers

Jim Powell

Hosted group discussion about Awards

Jim Ransom

Hosted group discussion about conventions
and conferences

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2diPdx_DiyQ

Monthly, Marine Victoria McCoy, Public Relations Chair, hosts a virtual casual meeting to address different subjects. The Zoom meeting is open to all. Look for Commandant's Corner email to join. This month's topic was proper attire and uniformity. November's guests were Marines Mannes and Reeling.

Regulations for dress has changed over the years and members may not have been aware. Both Marines Mannes and Reeling addressed some unintentional uniform misconceptions.

At the virtual meeting, Angela addressed particular concerns with the attire for honor guard, color guard and the firing squad so that ceremonies are more in accordance with regulation. She also hit on some of the finer details of the squads. For example flag staffs must be made of wood and have a spear-head on top instead of alternatives. She clarified that regarding the firing squad, the only one to have a sword is the one giving the commands. Angela offers her assistance to detachments to form a detail.

Craig discussed proper attire in general. Presently, he is creating visual examples, in the form of a National Uniform Guidebook, which will be



Continued on next page

JIM POWELL *Group discussion about Awards*

The only awards that technically have to come from the National Commandant are the awards for Heroism, Distinguished Citizen—Gold and National Meritorious Unit Commendation. Other awards can come from National, Department or Detachment level.

Forms for these awards are online and will be updated soon.

If your detachment or Department need specific unique awards, contact the Awards Committee to describe exactly what you require. Powell offers himself for questions or guidance.

Powell discussed creating rubrics to determine which level of an award a member is eligible for. This rubric will standardize the criteria across the board.

So much more was discussed that it is recommended to listen to the replay on YouTube.

JIM RANSOM

Discussion about Conferences & Conventions

At this time the Midwinter Conference on Feb. 25-27, will occur as planned. At the time of this publication there are no Covid restrictions.

The Committee is exploring additional speakers and activities to add convenience and interest, such as the addition of singer, Dave Bray, and a trivia night. Also, adding activities for spouses.

Continued on next page



NOVEMBER VIRTUAL MEETING

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

released at a date to be announced in the future. Because uniforms are expensive, this guide will also publish sources to buy, sell, trade or barter for MCL uniforms & accessories. The transactions are only for Marines. Refer to the website <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mcluniforms>

Reeling stated that sadly, many photos submitted to “Semper Fi Magazine” must be discarded due to noncompliance to uniform details.

Marines Maness, Reeling and McCoy contact information can all be found on the national roster in the member library and are password protected, so contact your commandant for the password.

The “regular” library does not require a password.



DECEMBER VIRTUAL MEETING

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Please be aware that there will be no MODD store at this event.

As a money-saving tool, thoughts of utilizing skills, talent and expertise from our members was discussed. This type of donation could save the organization exponentially. Victoria is a retired DJ and is willing to donate her skills and welcomes others to do the same. Jim is welcomes suggestions.

Another noteworthy point is the conflict of MODD meetings with business meetings. Many suggestions arose from the discussion.

Please add your voice to the next meeting. The topic for January 2022 has not been set yet, but will likely be Toys for Tots — how to start a program, what to expect and other details.

Please refer to the recording for complete content.

Also remember that if you are unable to attend, the meetings will be recorded. For comments contact publicrelations@mcleague.org

DAYS
of
IMPORTANCE

2022

4-5 FEBRUARY 2022 _____

DEPARTMENT MID-WINTER MEETING

Comfort Suites Cicero—Syracuse North
5875 Carmenica Drive, I-81 exit 30
Cicero, NY 13039 315-752-0150
Mention MCL for group rate \$74/night

24-26 FEBRUARY 2022 _____

NATIONAL MID-WINTER CONFERENCES

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel
77 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510

MAY 2022 _____

MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

Bett-Toomey needs volunteers
#216 is hosts the event in 2022

15-19 AUGUST 2022 _____

99TH NATIONAL MEETING

Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Hotel
100 North Atlantic Avenue
Daytona Beach, Florida 32118
Use code MCL22





BETT-TOOMEY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



It was so pleasant to socialize with Conrad Kania Detachment, members of the former auxiliary, and meet each other's family members. The celebration was deemed a success.



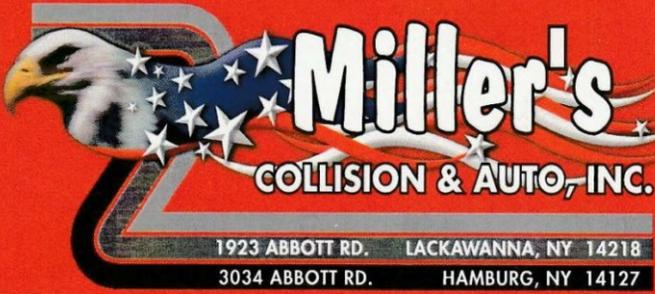
DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS PARTY



Seated: Dennis Chapman. *Standing:* Commandant Blachura, Rick Chmielowiec, Steve Capirci, Donna Hildebrandt, Randy Harper



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DEPEW
716-865-4721

Buddy Knaus

James Taylor
Bett-Toomey, Sr. Vice
AmVets, Trustee

Ads remain for a year
Business cards \$40  *Liners \$10*

Help us sell them



501(c)3

FRIENDS FEEDING FRIENDS

When I was hungry, you fed me.

Matt 25:35

Proudly serving the homeless and underserved communities
& GRATEFULLY ACCEPTING DONATIONS

5/22

Regina Weise ♥ 716.335.4233

317 Tacoma Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14216

To donate, visit
friendsfeedingfriends1@yahoo.com



Supporters



Semper Fidelis

Richard Juda, Sr. family

3/23

*With gratitude
to our veterans
past and present
and future*

Donna & Air Force Gary

1/23

*Ads publish for a year
Business card size \$40
Liners \$10*

Help us sell them

Thank You

Michael Targon!

He writes

“...although I am a member of Conrad Kania detachment me and my girlfriend, have always thought of Bett-Toomey as a second home...”

3/22

Commandant Ken Blachura and his wife Joan, want to thank the membership for their ongoing commitment and camaraderie



1/23

JAMES TAYLOR, Det. 216, Sr. Vice Commandant ♦ 716-768-2522	<small>5/22</small>
LIFE MEMBER MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, MIKE	<small>7/22</small>
PROUD LIFE MEMBER of the MCL, DONNA HILDEBRANDT	<small>10/22</small>
COMMANDANT KEN BLACHURA, PROUD DEVIL DOG	<small>1/23</small>