

Division Reports

and responsibility that exists for all—from red covers to the white cover. Remember you will never solve your problems if you use the same approach that created them.

Now to the brighter side. A new Detachment will stand up in Swansboro, NC, on 6 April 2013. Congratulations to Department Commandant Bruce Rakfeldt. Take care of yourselves and each other.

Semper Fi,
Bud Raines
NVC, MidEast Division

Midwest Division

This *Semper Fi* article is going to share with you my experiences with Focus Marines Foundation (FMF) in February 2013 in the St. Louis area. FMF is a 501(c)3 organization whose mission statement is “to develop and administer programs for wounded warriors, which will assist them in their transition from military to civilian lives.”

In March 2011, the Focus Marines Foundation introduced an effective program called FOCUS. The current six-day course starts by addressing the core issues of combat stress, interpersonal relationships and self-awareness. The next step helps participants visualize their goals and objectives, and gives them the tools to begin to achieve their dreams.

The final step helps them build a résumé and then, with coaching and by conducting mock job interviews, gives them insight, confidence and a new, positive attitude.

Each class is limited to approximately 36 participants, who are assigned to teams consisting of three participants and a team leader who mentors the team throughout the program.

Members of the FMF Board of Directors presented their program during my 2012 Midwest Division Conference

when our National Commandant and Executive Director attended. At this meeting, the FMF asked me to attend the first class of 2013.

The participants arrived on Saturday for orientation. This included an adjustment period to prepare for professional instructors presenting tools to perform a tough self-assessment on their current status and how they would use the newly learned skills, including how that application impacts their situation.

Team Leaders mentor the participants and use the resources of other professionals at the workshop or off-site. Also onboard are Combat Casualty Visiting Nurses from the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society to assist as required. We also had two Gold Star Mothers and a Gold Star Wife in attendance.

As part of their training and interaction, the participants network with all those attending the workshop. The interaction was phenomenal as the week progressed.

It was inspiring to witness their first-day apprehension vanish by Wednesday as interaction and confidence were instilled in them, and to see how they reacted to the staff with openness, trust and confidence.

My Detachment, St. Charles County 725, provides manpower assistance and monetary support. As a Marine for Life (M4L) Mentor, the FMF provides me with additional resources for troubled Marine referrals. The FMF holds four classes a year, and I will be supporting this program by expanding my M4L and MCL sphere of influence.

After completing this first class of 2013, a member of the Board of Directors contacted me about Marine-on-Marine support for one of the participants. I contacted my Marine Corps League Family and they responded 130 percent.

What a humbling experience attending this program. We need to be more active in the future.

Remember the stewardship of the traditions of the Corps and League is on our shoulders.

Semper Fi,
Wendell Webb
NVC, Midwest Division

New England Division

With the National Convention just a few short weeks away, it's time to prepare your reports and forward them through the proper channels. The only way to get the credit your Detachment deserves is to report it. Take a few minutes and recognize your Marines and all the work that they do in your Detachments and in the communities where you live.

Membership still remains a problem. We have added a new Detachment to Massachusetts (Greater New Bedford), and we have another well on its way up in Maine. But when the smoke clears and the dust settles, we still come up short because Marines are falling off our rolls.

We all know that times are tough, and most of the time, it's hard to ask for any help. There is a lot of pride in this organization and in our members, so please remember we have programs in place to take care of the needy. We take care of our own; it's always been that way, and it will always be that way.

I'm hoping to get a lot of traveling in this summer. The winter weather made it difficult to get very far north, so I feel like I have some catching up to do.

I miss my old friends and am looking forward to reconnecting with them once again. There is no place prettier than New England in the summer.

Be safe and take care of each other.

Semper Fi,
Rich Harrington
NVC, New England Division

Northeast Division

Thanks to all my staff on a job well done at our Division Conference, and our three Departments for their outstanding attendance. Thanks to our guest of honor, Chief Devil Dog Mike English. Also attending were National Sr. Vice John Kovalcik and National Judge Advocate Ben Cero. We had a great weekend, accomplished a lot of Division business, and had a great growl put on by the Pennsylvania Pack.