



# SEMPER FI

December 2025 — January 2026

Newsletter of The Department of Connecticut Marine Corps League

## Department of Connecticut Commandant's Corner



The United States Marine Corps is now in its 251st year of dedicated and honorable service. And we, as Marine Corps League members, have been upholding the Corps' traditions for over 101 years. Take pride in your status as regular and associate members.

Many of us participated in celebrations of the Marine Corps' 250th birthday – from Boston to multiple cities in Connecticut. The Department was honored to host a ceremonial cake-cutting event in the rotunda of the state capitol building, part of the 50-state celebration coordinated by the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. Departments all over the country held similar celebratory gatherings in their state capitals, mostly in their state capitol buildings.

Kudos to our organizational committee of Walt Benson, Peter DePaola, Skip Hamel, and Adele Hodges for putting on this wonderful event. Thank you all.

Attendance was sparse due to the federal shutdown, but those who attended were energetic. Present were representatives from:

- Brass City Detachment
- Greater Bridgeport Detachment
- Hardware City Detachment
- Housatonic Detachment
- Peter P Monaco Jr Detachment
- Thames River Detachment
- Valley Detachment

and one Member-at-Large.

Our emcee was Adele Hodges, Colonel, USMC (retired & Commandant, Greater Bridgeport Detachment) who introduced Renee Harvey, USMC veteran, who sang a rousing

rendition of our National Anthem. Thank you, Renee.

We had several guest speakers:

- Ron Welch, BGen, US Army (retired), Commissioner of the CT Department of Veterans Affairs
- Jaime Foster, CT General Assembly, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee Co-chair
- State Senator Cathy Osten, Member of the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee
- and Guest-of-Honor State Senator Paul Honig, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee Co-chair

Thank you to Marines Ulysses Carr and Jack Dougherty, in their dress blues, who escorted the cake.

Special thanks to Andres Lazo, 1stSgt USMC, I&I, F Company, 2/25 from Plainville, who took leave from his duties to participate. He narrated the cutting of the cake and spoke about the significance of the ceremony. Our oldest Marine was 101-year-old Iwo Jima survivor Joe Caminiti, the youngest was 40-year-old 1stSgt Lazo.

Extra-special thanks to the first Connecticut State Troubadour, Marine Tom Callinan, dressed in colonial Marine garb, who led us in the Marines' Hymn, *all three verses*, to close the event.

Cake was then served under the Capitol Rotunda by Jamie DePaola, SgtMaj, USMC (retired). Thanks, Jamie.

I sincerely appreciate everyone who attended and participated in this very special event.

**COMMANDANTS**, if you haven't submitted your Paid Life Member audit, the absolute is fast-approaching. The audit must be submitted absolutely, positively no later than 31 December 2025. Better git 'er done or your Detachment will forfeit any chance for reimbursement from the PLM fund in 2026.

*Semper Fidelis.*

*Rich Daigle*  
Commandant

# IMPORTANT DATES

## Department of Connecticut Officers 2025-2026

### Detachment Meetings

Brass City Detachment 31-	First Tuesday 17:00
Peter P. Monaco Jr. 40-	First Monday 19:00
Northwest Detachment 42-	First Tuesday 19:00
Ridgefield Detachment 44-	Third Wednesday 19:00
Silver City Detachment 45	Third Tuesday 19:00
Southington Memorial 46-	Third Tuesday 19:00
Valley Detachment 48-	Second Sunday 19:00
Bridgeport Detachment-654	First Tuesday 19:00
Paul C. Houghton—681	Third Tuesday 19:00
Hardware City Detachment—781	First Wednesday 19:00
Housatonic Detachment-1129	Second Monday 19:30
Thames River Detachment-1334	Second Tuesday 19:00

### GLAWACUS Pound & PACK GROWLS

~~Sept 8 Pound 11:00 Pack 13:00 Peter Monaco~~

~~Nov 2 Pound 11:00 Pack 13:00 Rocky Hill~~

Jan 4 Pound 11:00 Pack 13:00 Rocky Hill

Mar 1 Pound 11:00 Pack 13:00 Valley Det.

May 3 Pound 11:00 Pack 13:00 Rocky Hill

June Grand Growl TBD

### Department Meetings 2025-2026

DATE	LOCATION	FOOD
<del>AUGUST 24</del>	<del>Rocky Hill</del>	<del>HOUSATONIC</del>
<del>OCTOBER 5</del>	<del>Rocky Hill</del>	<del>HRDWARE CITY</del>
DECEMBER 14	Rocky Hill	BRASS CITY
FEBRUARY 1	Rocky Hill	BRIDGEPORT
APRIL 12	Rocky Hill	NVCDD
JUNE	TBD	



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# CONNECTICUT



## MARINE CORPS 250TH BIRTHDAY CAKE CUTTING AT THE CAPITAL

On November 10th Marines of The Department of Connecticut gathered at the State Capital to celebrate our 250th Birthday. Twenty five Marines plus families and friends gathered to celebrate this great event. Three representatives from the Veterans affair committee spoke and invited Marines to contact them with the needs of Veterans in the State. Speakers included Guest of Honor, Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, Brigadier



Photo by Ben Jordan



Photo by Ben Jordan



Photo by Ben Jordan

dier  
General  
Ron





# CONNECTICUT



## MARINE CORPS 250TH BIRTHDAY CAKE CUTTING AT THE CAPITAL



Photo by Ben Jordan



Photo by Ben Jordan



Photo by Ben Jordan

Col Adele Hodges USMC Ret., Brigadier gen Ron Welch US Army Ret. Commissioner CT Veterans Affairs,

Col Adele Hodges USMC Ret.,

Brigadier gen Ron Welch US Army Ret. Commissioner CT Veterans Affairs, Adele Hodges USMC



Photo by Ben Jordan

Rich Daigle Commandant State of CT MCL



Photo by Ben Jordan

Tom Callinan CT Troubadour, plays the Marine Corps Hymn with Skip Hamel, Col Adele Hodges USMC Ret, Commandant Bridgeport Detachment And Rich Daigle Dept of CT Commandant





# CONNECTICUT



## MARINE CORPS 250TH BIRTHDAY CAKE CUTTING AT THE CAPITAL



Photo by Ben Jordan

State Senator Cathy Osten, Member of the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee



Photo by Ben Jordan

State Representative Jamie Foster, CT General Assembly Co-Chair of the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee and Co=Chair State Senator, Paul Honig.



Photo by Ben Jordan

Renee Harvey Sang The National Anthem.







# CONNECTICUT



## MARINE CORPS 250TH BIRTHDAY CAKE CUTTING AT THE CAPITAL



Photo by Ben Jordan

1st Sgt Andres Lazo, Reads Gen John Lejeune's Message for the Birthday



Photo by Ben Jordan

Marines from Brass City, Housatonic, Bridgeport, Peter P Monaco Jr., Valley, Hardware City, Thames River and one at Large Member attend the ceremony



Photo by Ben Jordan

The Birthday Cake, just as it has for 249 years before will be presented to the Marines present for this ceremony. The Mameluke Sword before the cake, Marine Corps history states that a Mameluke sword was presented to Marine First Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon by the Ottoman Empire viceroy, Prince Hamet, on December 8, 1805, during the First Barbary War, in Libya, as a gesture of respect and praise for the Marines' actions at the Battle of Derna (1805).



# CONNECTICUT



## MARINE CORPS 250TH BIRTHDAY CAKE CUTTING AT THE CAPITAL



Photo by Ben Jordan

CPL. Jack Dougherty and GNYSgt Ulysses Carr, Present the 250th Birthday Cake For The Official



Photo by Ben Jordan

Cutting The Cake CT State Commandant Rich Daigle, State Senator, Paul Honig. CPL. Jack Dougherty and GNYSgt Ulysses Carr.



Photo by Ben Jordan

The Guest of Honor not present, Rich Daigle Commandant CT MCL. Gives the first piece of cake to the oldest Marine, Joe Caminiti. In the background Tom Callinan, Peter DePaola, Renee Harvey.



Photo by Ben Jordan

The Oldest Marine Youngest Marine, Joe Caminiti. Passes the cake to the youngest Marine 1st Sgt Andres Lazo, As is our custom, thereby transferring the knowledge forward background Rich Daigle, Tom Callinan, Peter DePaola, Renee Harvey, Walt Benson





# CONNECTICUT



## BRASS CITY MEMORIAL 250TH BIRTHDAY BALL



Welcome To Our Ball Skip Hamel



250 Years of Sweet Success



Commandant and MC of Our Ball  
Jim Lauber



Steve & Ashley Bozzuto, Karl Crum NW Detachment, Robert Bozzuto, Joan Bozzuto, Sara, Chris Bozzuto



Joe O'Neill, Peg O'Neill, Joe O'Neill Jr., Pat & Sissy Musco





# CONNECTICUT



## BRASS CITY MEMORIAL 250TH BIRTHDAY BALL



Connie Lauber,



Rich Daigle,

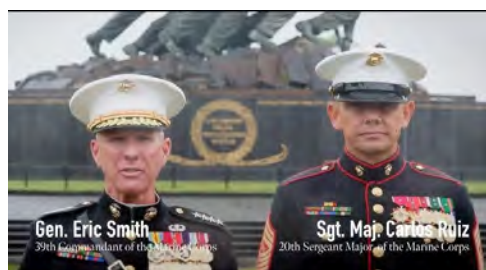


Gracie Parker, Renee Harvey, Family and friends



Gunny Ulysses Carr, Joe O'Neill, Dom Falcone, Pat Musco, Dancing to the music.

Since our first amphibious landing at Nasua to the black sands of Iwo Jima, to urban combat in Fallujah, our Corps has come a long way since Samuel Nichols took command of two battalions at Ton Taver-



We will be called to fight again, and we will be ready, and we will win.





# CONNECTICUT



## BRASS CITY MEMORIAL 250TH BIRTHDAY BALL



Guest Speaker Peter DePaola,  
Dept. of CT Chaplain



Detachment Commandant Jim Lauber ; Presents Memento to Peter.



Our second Speaker,  
Spoke and presented exam-  
ples of items from The Colonial  
Marines



Traditional Cake Cutting Ceremony, First piece to  
our guest of Honor, Peter DePaola, Then to the old-  
est Marine Dom Falcone, Brass City Detachment,  
The youngest Marine Jake Phillips Silver City De-  
tachment, Jack Dougherty, and Rose Taylor, Cake  
Escorts



Karl Crump NW Detachment, with the display of  
items from the colonial Marines. The table in front of  
his display is the space we reserved for you.





# CONNECTICUT



## BRASS CITY MEMORIAL 250TH BIRTHDAY BALL



Walt Benson, Jack Dougherty



Jamie DePaola, Walt Benson



Jake Phillips Silver City Detachment & youngest Marine



We did not have a Kissing Cam but we did have a Dancing Cam That caught Jack and Jane Dougherty, trying some new moves.



We also had a hugging Cam where Antonio and Leatha Lipusz





# CONNECTICUT



## BRASS CITY MEMORIAL 250TH BIRTHDAY BALL



Left: Raffles for Brass City Detachment  
Right: Sissy and Pat Musco, Joe & Peg O'Neill, Joe O'Neill Jr., Walt Benson



Gunny Ulysses Carr, Jack Dougherty, Pat Musco, Joe O'Neill, Rich Daigle, Adele Hodges, Rose Taylor, Tony Pina & Skip Hamel Jr.





# CONNECTICUT



## BRIDGEPORT & HOUSATONIC CAKE CUTTING CEREMONY



Guest of Honor and Speaker Col Stephen Forand  
USMC Ret. Receiving a Quilt of Valor. Bottom left a  
full view of the Quilt held by Greater Bridgeport Com-  
mandant Col Adele Hodges USMC Ret.  
Top left table of Poolies, soon to be departing for PI





# CONNECTICUT



## BRIDGEPORT & HOUSATONIC CAKE CUTTING CEREMONY



Marine Corps Recruiters from Bridgeport



Marines from Brass City, Greater Bridgeport, and Housatonic Detachments, Marine Recruiters from Bridgeport, and Marines who just finished Boot Camp at PI at their First Birthday Celebration.





# CONNECTICUT



## GREATER BRIDGEPORT VETERANS DAY ROSE EVENT



Members of the Greater Bridgeport Detachment Collect funds for the Rose Program for Veterans Day at Bass Pro Shop In Bridgeport





# CONNECTICUT



## 10 TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CT VETERANS DAY RACE

On November 8 th , they celebrated their 10 th anniversary of honoring and saluting our CT veterans and the Veteran Service Organizations who support our veterans. The event was a huge success on a per-



fect autumn day in Coventry, the hometown of veteran Captain Nathan Hale! Nearly 600 patriotic friends filled Patriots Park and 358 registered to participate in either the 4-mile race, 3-mile walk, or 3-mile ruck ei-

ther live or virtual. The oldest runner was 82 years old and the youngest was 7! One CT participant, who is active duty and currently deployed overseas, ran the 4-mile race virtually.

From the proceeds of this year's race event, a total of \$33,000 was distributed to eight different Veteran Service Organizations who provide support for the underserved veteran community throughout Connecticut. Since they began in 2016, they have distributed over \$139,000 to 21 different veteran service organizations thanks to our sponsors and participants.

The race committee has pledged to continue to salute the brave men and women who hav served our great country and to remind them how grateful Connecticut is for their service and sacrifice. They are honored to continue this great event to bring awareness to the needs of those veterans less fortunate. This is not just a race, it's an event to raise funds, raise friends and raise awareness of the services for our brave military men and women. Marine Corps League member, Peter DePaola, of the Peter P. Monaco Jr. Detachment in Glastonbury, CT, is the founder and organizer of the CT Veterans Day Race.



Jamie DePaola USMC Ret.





# CONNECTICUT



## HARDWARE CITY DETACHMENT MISSION: TURKEY DROP

**Mission:** Pick up 12 frozen turkeys from Gnazzo's Supermarket in Plainville, CT and deliver to Veterans Inc. in New Britain, CT. This is a tradition originated by

John Lynch and Manafort Brothers many years ago, Manafort Brothers donates the turkeys and Marine Corps League, Hardware City Detachment 781 delivers them. This is our 2nd year delivering to Veterans Inc. Veterans Inc.

**Veterans Inc. is** the largest provider of support services to Veterans



**Scott & Mia Veterans Inc., Al Urso, Commandant Hardware City Detachment, Rivers McCalop, Fred McGoldrick**

and their families in New England. Since 1990, we have helped more than 100,000 Veterans . We delivered to 232 Arch St. New Britain, CT.

**Mission accomplished:** Friday, November 21st, 2025. See photos attached: Photo one left to right Al Urso, Mia, Veterans Inc, a Marine we met in the lobby (David), Rivers McCalop, and Fred McGoldrick.



**Scott & Mia Veterans Inc., Al Urso, David (a Marine met in the lobby) Rivers McCalop, Fred McGoldrick**

**Al Urso**





# CONNECTICUT



Council of Italian-American Societies of Greater Bridgeport Presents

## FREE HOLIDAY CONCERTS

with a *dash* of Italian Flair

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Aircraft Wing Band

Monday, December 15

Tuesday, December 16

Klein Memorial Auditorium  
910 Fairfield Ave, Bridgeport

7:00 PM • doors open 6:00 PM

#### TICKETS REQUIRED

FREE  
Tickets  
ONLINE



#### FREE Tickets IN PERSON

In Bridgeport: Nick's Diner • Port 5  
Klein Memorial • North End Library

#### Musical Favorites

Holiday Hits • Patriotic • Traditional  
Classical • Contemporary  
Jazz • Radio Music • Instrumental

[CIASGBPT.COM](http://CIASGBPT.COM)



Media Sponsor

Please bring non-perishable food items to benefit  
City of Bridgeport Veterans Food Pantry (not required)





# CONNECTICUT



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2025

December

2025



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	 24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			







2026

January

2026



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

				1 	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31





# FEBRUARY 2026



Regardless of the situation, the Marine Corps has an answer for almost everything.

## A Marines Prayer

Almighty Father, whose command is over all and whose love never fails, make me aware of Thy presence and obedient to Thy will. Keep me true to my best self, guarding me against dishonesty in purpose and deed and helping me to live so that I can face my fellow Marines, my loved ones, and Thee without shame or fear. Protect my family.

Give me the will to do the work of a Marine and to accept my share of responsibilities with vigor and enthusiasm. Grant me the courage to be proficient in my daily performance. Keep me loyal and faithful to my superiors and to the duties my Country and the Marine Corps have entrusted to me. Help me to wear my uniform with dignity, and let it remind me daily of the traditions which I must uphold.

If I am inclined to doubt, steady my faith; if I am tempted, make me strong to resist; if I should miss the mark, give me courage to try again.

Guide me with the light of truth and grant me wisdom by which I may understand the answer to my prayer.

Amen

## SHERATON PENTAGON CITY HOTEL

- 900 South Orme Street Arlington, Virginia, USA, 22204

Hotel rate is \$131 per night plus tax

- Parking: On-site garage parking is \$10 per day
- Any cancellations after February 10, 2026, will forfeit the one-night deposit
- Free shuttle to/from Reagan Airport (DCA)

The hotel overlooks Arlington National Cemetery and is right near Henderson Hall and the Fort Myer Exchange.

## NOW RECRUITING

Become active in the Marine Corps League and you can make a difference.



## Attention To Orders

The Next Department of Connecticut Meeting

December 14th

Rocky Hill Veterans Hospital

287 West St., Rocky Hill CT 06067

Building 50



What Started Here.....

Continues Here.....

