



2nd Battalion, 9th Marines

The Battalion Runner

2021 – Number 1 – April 2021



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General

First and foremost I want to apologize for this first newsletter of the year being so late in getting published. I'll try to do a better job in the future.

As we move through early 2021 the best news I can give everyone is that our 2021 reunion is on. With the virus affecting just about everyone in some negative way our biggest hit last year was having to cancel our 2020 reunion. We held out as long as we could before that cancellation but in the end I think it was the right decision. As you read the information being provided below for our 28th reunion keep in mind just about everything is dependent on that return to normalcy.

28TH REUNION

08-12 NOVEMBER 2021

**MARRIOTT RESIDENCE INN ROSSLYN
1651 NORTH OAK STREET
ARLINGTON, VA 22209**

One of my excuses for this newsletter being late is because I was hoping to give everyone final details on all aspects of this year's reunion. Unfortunately that is not the case. The virus has prevented that from happening. While we DO have definite plans in place not much has been finalized but our contract with the reunion hotel – The Marriott Residence Inn Rosslyn. We have four things on our agenda this year.

- 1. 2/9 Jam Session with the Gallatin Canyon Band on Tuesday, 09 November.**
- 2. Marine Corps Birthday Dinner on Wednesday, 10 November.**
- 3. Attend USMC Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Memorial), the morning of 10 November.**
- 4. For Vietnam members and any others who wish to participate, our trip to The Wall to visit our brothers following completion of our Birthday Dinner.**

Our problems lie with the Jam Session and Birthday Dinner. We have been unable to obtain venues for either. Virginia still has a maximum number of 50 people at group gatherings in effect due to the virus. That means the venues will NOT book groups at this time, and we cannot even obtain an estimate of cost. The Marriott Key Bridge, the hotel that has hosted our Birthday Dinner for several years, has an additional issue with ongoing renovations. Our negotiator-in-chief, Debbie Crist, is working hard to

overcome these issues. As soon as we have final details I'll get word out via a group email or the next Battalion Runner Newsletter. The good news is we hope to be able to cover all expenses so the only out of pocket costs for attendees will be the room charge and parking at the Residence Inn. I cannot tell you that is a guarantee since we don't know how much this will all cost us but am fairly confident that is what will happen.

Our 2/9 Jam Session, with the Gallatin Canyon Band, will hopefully be held late afternoon on 09 November, probably from 15-1800 or 16-1900 hours, depending on the venue. Light food and a cash bar will be available. Ben Hernandez, son of 2/9 Network's own Dan Hernandez, is bringing Gallatin Canyon from Charlottesville in honor of his Dad. They are primarily a Blue Grass band but play other music and specialize in jam session type appearances. Plan on a great afternoon of relaxation, entertainment and mixing with 2/9 members, family and friends. The jam session will be open to ANY 2/9 member and family/friends. You do NOT have to be officially attending the reunion. If you are in the D.C. area come on out and join us Tuesday afternoon on 09 November. Once we know where I'll let everyone know.



Our Birthday Dinner on 10 November normally runs from 1800 to approximately 2200 hours. The dinner includes the meal, a cash bar, youngest/oldest Marine ceremony, special guest speaker(s), and results of our reunion raffle and 50/50 raffle.

Since it is still early in the year the Marine Corps has not yet decided on what they will be doing for the official Marine Corps Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Iwo Jima Memorial. If, as I expect, HQMC returns to the traditional ceremony it will include the Commandant, a special guest speaker, the President's Own and Commandant's own performing, 8th & I marching in review and the laying of the wreath. After the ceremonies the Commandant normally joins us for a group photo in front of the Memorial. Start time is always 1000 hours on The Birthday.

After completion of our Birthday Dinner we all return to the Residence Inn before leaving for our annual visit to the Vietnam Wall to see our brothers. As many of you already know we lost Keith Fay after our 2019 reunion. Keith was one of our four members who took on the task of fund raising for our 2/9 Memorial Plaque currently on display in the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park on the grounds of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA. John Klem has let me know that we will be honoring Keith's life with a special ceremony on the evening we take this trip to The Wall. This will be a somber but fitting tribute to an outstanding Marine brother who is gone too soon.

Transportation will be provided for all of the above.

ROOM RESERVATIONS AND PRICE

Room rates at the Residence Inn this year are \$135/night plus tax (around 13-14%). Parking for those who drive is \$11.00 per night. Normal parking is \$22 but we have a half priced deal in our contract with the hotel. The hotel has constructed a special web page for us to book your room. The link is provided below. If the link does NOT work please go to the original message I sent that this newsletter is attached to. I placed the link at the end of that email and that should work. You can also call to make your reservation (Dial 1-800-331-3131), or copy and paste the link below into your browser. Tell them you are booking a room under the "2/9 Reunion Room Block". You must reserve your room no later than end of the day 08 October 2021. After that date rooms revert back to the hotel and are only available on a space available basis and you may have to pay the "going rate", around \$250/night. At the moment we have 50 rooms set aside for us. We almost always exceed that number and the hotel increases the number for us. If you call and rooms are NOT available under our group rate please notify me ASAP so I can contact them to expand the number of rooms. Officially the reunion runs from 08-12 November but our special rate is available from 07-13 November if you wish to come early and/or leave late. You can cancel your reservation at no charge up to 48 hours

before your scheduled arrival and also must guarantee your reservation with a credit card. **MAKE SURE YOU GET A CONFIRMATION NUMBER!**

We have our hospitality room all booked from 08-12 November. It is on the 1st floor of the hotel and will be open continuously with free snacks and beverages, including beer, water and soft drinks, available. We'll be displaying our raffle items, selling 50/50 raffle tickets and 2/9 gear in that room.

One last reunion note. This reunion is for everyone. We don't care if you are a WWII, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan veteran or a peacetime member. We are all 2/9, and that's all that matters. If you are one of those Vietnam Veterans who has always said I'd really like to go to a reunion but end up putting it off until "next year" I'd ask that you consider something. I'm really getting tired and saddened of hearing from family members that John, Harry, Pete, or Ed always wanted to go to a reunion but kept putting it off. He passed away last year. If you can do it please consider our reunion. We want this to be the biggest and best ever! I don't think you'd regret attending.

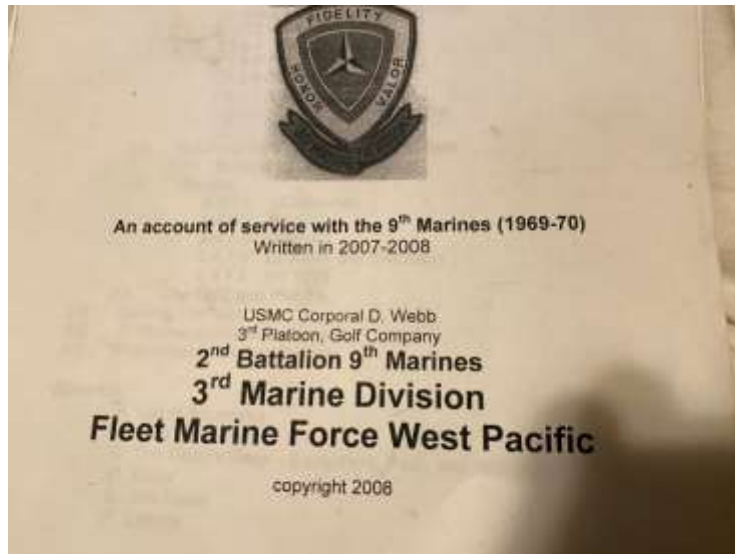
Reservation Link:

<https://www.marriott.com/events/start.mi?id=1615915205783&key=GRP>

FROM THE MAILBOX

Attention Golf Company members! I received a note from Rick Bristol of Lemon Grove, CA, telling me he has a draft of a manuscript written by Corporal D. Webb. Webb was a member of the 3rd Platoon of Golf in the 1969-70 timeframe. I have no record of Webb in our databases and he is not on "Our Men on the Wall" page. Please read the note below from Rick.

I have a first draft of a written manuscript from USMC Corporal D. Webb, 3rd Platoon, Golf Company, 2nd Battalion 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division. I do not know if he is alive or his family knows about this manuscript. I received it from a former friend (Marine) that passed away. The name of the manuscript is "Under a Helmet in the A Shau Valley" and is a first draft. I would like to make contact with him if he is still alive or give it to his family if they do not have it. It was never published and I really want to give it to him/his family as he wrote this as he was going through the war in Vietnam. Thanks, Rick



Here is Rick's contact information:

Richard A Bristol

EMAIL: rickabristol@gmail.com

PHONE: 619-962-6969

Bill "Murph the Surf" Murphy, East Lansing, MI, Golf Company

1968/69. Bill has written a book on the history of the Vietnam War, including a chapter on his time with Golf Company. I have advised Bill, as I have others with similar questions, that I cannot advertise things on our website but will place their request in our newsletter. Please see his note below.

*Bill Murphy, G Company, 1968/1969 here. Greetings brothers. I have a question about protocol. I have written a book about the Vietnam War - its history from 1945 through the war and the post-war period. I of course have a chapter on my time with 2/9 in Khe Sanh and the A Shau Valley area, and operation Dewey Canyon. The book is titled: **Not For God and Country**. Am I permitted to mention the book on this site? If so, how would I do that? Some sites of course don't want 'commercial' advertising of things. This book is about mostly Marines, and a definitive history of the war. Thank you. Semper Fi. And Stay Well.*

Anyone with interest in his book can contact him at the email and/or phone number listed below.

Bill (Murph the Surf) Murphy

EMAIL: billmurphyg29@gmail.com

PHONE: 517-256-0387

Becca Benton, daughter of 2/9 member John Martin of Garfield Heights, OH, who served with 2/9 in 1967/68, has asked if anyone

remembers her Dad and could contact her. Unfortunately Becca does not know what Company John served with.

Hey there Danny. I know this is a total long shot. I was desperately hoping to get some info about my father and his time served in Vietnam with Hell in a Helmet. I can still vividly remember his black hell in a helmet jacket with the hand stitching from my childhood. Next week will be 4 years since he has passed and I am struggling with him being gone more than in the past few years. He was a very proud marine and talked often about his war stories which I do not take for granted at all. I would love to hear more about him or even just what was going on in his time in Vietnam. Wish he was here so I could ask him. I know he made it to DC for a reunion early on, but couldn't say for sure on the years. I am not sure of his company. Hoping you could maybe point me in the right direction. Thanks in advance for any help you may have.

John Martin (Garfield heights, OH) 1967- February 28, 1968 we still celebrate the day he came home because we know not all were that lucky. 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division

Becca

Becca can be contacted via email at beccabenton@gmail.com or by phone at 901-606-4888.

Note: I have made minor edits to the original emails from the folks above for clarity.

Other Network Notes

If you have a short story to tell send it to me! I'll review it and unless it is really out of bounds I'll include it in a future newsletter. I have no doubt our members love reading about other members who have a story to tell.

Henry Ostaszewski, myself, and Dave Garner attended Colonel Bill Coti's interment in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors on 12 January 2021. The Marine Major to our right served in Afghanistan with Bill's grandson, Niall, who served as our youngest Marine at our reunion and was KIA just a few months after that Birthday Dinner. To my detriment I cannot remember his name. He was there to pay his respects to Bill, whom he got to know after Niall's death. Semper Fidelis Bill!



In the last three months we have lost two of the finest ladies I've had the pleasure of knowing since I began attending our reunions in 2000. Karen Carpenter, wife of 2/9 Marine Bill Carpenter, passed away as did Sharon Kasparian, wife of 2/9 Marine John Kasparian. Both were great ladies, Marine wives, and tremendous supporters of the 2/9 Network. They will be greatly missed.

I am certain we have lost others, as age is catching up, especially to almost all our Vietnam Veteran members. Unfortunately I am receiving few notices of anyone's passing. The one time I now expect to receive death notices is when I send these newsletters out. I don't like it but want to give those men the respect they deserve and place them in our Last Patrol with fellow Marines. If you are a family member or friend of one of our lost brothers please don't hesitate to contact me with that information.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any information, questions, change of address/email addresses, etc. I will do my best to fully respond to anything I receive. You can email me any time at twoninencoic@aol.com.

DONATIONS

Here I am again begging for money. If you can afford it I would greatly appreciate it if you can help out. I know people are tired of hearing it but we run completely on voluntary donations from our members. Any amount is plenty and you can send a check, made out to Danny Schuster, 21 Moseley Street, Billerica, MA 01821.

ATTENTION VIETNAM VETS!

This is a repeat from our last Newsletter. I have free Vietnam logo decals available. All you need to do is send me a self-addressed stamped envelope and I'll ship one to you. This is thanks to retired Master Sergeant Ken Rooker and his son-in-law Brian McGuire. Brian is a graphic artist by profession and created the decals at no charge.



The photo really does not do the decal justice. They are much nicer than this and are cut to form.

As always, if you have questions or issues please do not hesitate to contact me at twoninencoic@aol.com or call me at 978-667-4762.

SEMPER FIDELIS

DANNY SCHUSTER

2/9 NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR AND REUNION COORDINATOR

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