



# OORAH NEWSLETTER

*Granite State Detachment #542  
Marine Corps League*

June 30, 2023 Quarterly Issue: 2023-002

## COMMANDANT'S CORNER



BJ Byers

Dear Detachment Members, Friends and Supporters,

**Editor's Note:** Effective June 1, 2023, BJ announced to the GSD #542 membership of his retirement from his professional Financial Advisor position at Edward Jones. BJ also informed the group that he and his wife Karen have sold their home in Mont Vernon and they are in the process of building a new home in Hernando, Florida.

BJ will be missed as Commandant and as a valued member of the GSD #542 team.

Please join me in wishing BJ and Karen all the best in the next chapter of their lives in the sunny land of Florida.

Semper fi, BJ!

## SR. VICE COMMANDANT



Gary Gahan

Importantly, on July 22, I completed my 78 ½ birthday and sixty years ago I was enjoying the warmth and camaraderie of Platoon 351 on Parris Island SC.....a memory of that time and place that will never leave me.... something that I have always promised myself in a heartbeat I would repeat if I was ever called. I took the solemn oath of enlistment as others, before me and since, as follows: (state name of enlistee), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the **Constitution of the United States** against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. (So help me God). When I completed my contracted term of enlistment and separated from the Marine Corps I was never called into an officers quarters to retract my oath of enlistment to be "reissued or sworn to" by another new respective recruit to continue to serve in my absence. I continue to essentially serve my

country willingly under this oath the same way that I take the oath of membership in the Marine Corps League that I did many years ago.

Sadly, we have lost several members to attend to eternal guard duty. Please keep your eyes and ears open to prospective members.....they do not need to necessarily be prior service Marines, Corpsman or Chaplains. We have some fine associate members in our detachment and would welcome more to join us.

Saeplus Exertus, Semper Fidelis, Fratres et Sorores in Aeternum!

Often Tested, Always Faithful, Brothers and Sisters Forever

## CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE



Chaplain Joe Duquette

## FIREWORKS

I am inspired when I hear and/or see fireworks. I imagine colorful streamers of independence and sparks of gratitude to the men and women who have made this country what it is. Their sacrifice for us reminds me to enjoy life and appreciate the freedoms we all have in this wonderful country.

On this joyous Fourth of July holiday may the Lord be praised throughout our country.

God Bless the USA!

## NH STATE VETERANS CEMETERY



*"The mission of the NH State Veterans Cemetery is to provide and maintain a dignified final-resting place to honor all Veterans and eligible dependents which expresses the State's gratitude for their service to the country."*

## Spring Event Recap - 2023

A beautiful day on May 27<sup>th</sup> and a great turnout of volunteers helped to place the flags at Veterans gravesites in preparation for the Memorial Day Ceremony on May 30<sup>th</sup>.



The NH State Veterans Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony was held at the **Circle of Flags** on **May 30<sup>th</sup>-original Memorial Day--**at 11:00 AM to honor fallen service men and women who gave their lives for our country. Governor Chris Sununu, along with other dignitaries, veterans, their families and friends attended the ceremony.

As a reminder, from May 30<sup>th</sup> through September 11<sup>th</sup> the **"100 Nights of Remembrance"** will play Taps nightly at 7:00 PM.

MCL GSD #542 member, David "Doc" Freschi, served together with Marines as a Navy Corpsman during the Vietnam Conflict.

## Doc's First Ambulance Drive

By David "Doc" Freschi

First duty station after HM school at Great Lakes. Nice duty station at a subbase close to hometown. A great hospital with lots to learn sits overlooking the water where subs are moored and the training tower for submariners' looms. Can't imagine going into that thing and slowly swimming to the top. Nam has started to heat up, so put my name in for FMF duty and promptly got turned down.

Sunny morning and the chief hands out the day's duty roster. I've got the ambulance schedule and top of the list for the day. First cup of coffee barely down and the chief Hollers, "You and Bronx go. Emergency call in dependents housing. Get going lights and siren." Awesome get to charge through town and move traffic over. Two of us on the bus, both about 150 pounds.

We pull up in front of the apartments. It's a U-shaped building and what appears to be a nice flat lawn in front. "That look good to You?" "Looks good to me, go for it" Should have known better, what would a kid from the Bronx know about lawns. We start backing across the lawn and hallway there- Bang, Bang, Bang. A flight of stairs. Push the thought of the chief's coming chew out aside and back up to the door. Neighbor lady stands there holding the door open. "She's on the third floor." "OK, Where's the elevator?" "Broken, Stairs to your right." Oh boy this is starting to look a little challenging.

We hump the stretcher to the third-floor apartment and announce ourselves. Head through the door, neighbor lady following. Following the moaning and we come to our patient who just happens to outweigh the both of us. Bronx and I make eye contact, keeping the "Oh crap," to ourselves. I lean over to Bronx, "Go get every extender we have."

Finally, the stretcher is loaded to an accompaniment of moans and groans. Hit the stairs and raise the stretcher to the vertical and we start with "1-2-3 Lift" about a thousand times. (Well maybe fifty) and head back to the hospital. Unload to the smirking looks of the duty crew and park the bus. "Did you hear any

noise from the ambulance?" "Nah, maybe, nah not a thing." "Don't need to bother the chief with it.

Three days later, Morning inspection before work. Whispers among the group. "Chiefs on a real tear

today." Chief comes out to the assembly area and his face is a little red and tight. "What happened to my ambulance, my new ambulance? It's leaking all over the lot." Every one of you guys drove it in the past three days. I want answers." "Dunno chief." "I have no idea chief." "Felt great to me." "Maybe chief, it's a warranty issue." The air gets blue for a bit, and he finally storms off. Everybody back to duty.

Two weeks pass. Morning role call again. All the ritual done, and the chief says, "Stop by my office." We need to talk." Hmm. "What's up chief?" I notice there's a glint in his eye. "Son, you know that FM request I turned down. Well, it's approved and I sent it up the chain." "Wow chief, why'd you change your mind?" His glint in the eye turns to a full grin. "You won't need an ambulance in FMF, you'll be the ambulance!" Best transfer I ever got and even the chief was happy.

Oh, the patient? She had severe indigestion.

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## Cigars for a Double

By David "Doc" Freschi

I grew up in CT (It was a free state then). In the early fifties I became interested in shooting and hunting. Dad was not a shooter, but he jumped right in to support me. We took our courses and got our licenses. We took to the field with bolt action twenty gauges which fit the budget in those days. We did alright too.

We would make regular trips to the gun store to pick up a little ammo and look at the wares. (I would drool) I fell in love with side by side doubles. They were well beyond reach though.

Dad's only real vice was his cigars. They were little dark twisted numbers that had all kinds of politically incorrect nicknames. I vaguely remember him cutting back for a period of time but, as a kid, paid it little heed. One day in '59 I came home, and Mom said Dad had gone for a ride with a friend. When he got home, he mentioned a box in the car and sent me out to get it. It looked way too short to be anything I wanted but he told me to open it. Inside in two pieces, a beautiful J.P.Sauer and Sohn side by side with a lovely case-hardened receiver and two deep blue barrels with very

tight chokes. Over the years that gun has taken lots of game. Dad held it for me when I did my Southeast Asia adventure and kept it gleaming.

That gun is still with me. Some of the case hardening is worn and there are a few honor scars in the stock. It locks up as tight as ever, springs to the shoulder, and does its job. I take it to the sporting clays range a couple of times a year now. The rest of the time it resides in honor with the other guns.

Every time that I pick it up, I can relive hundreds of hunts and shots with Dad. I also remember his wisdom and the lessons he taught and the model of selflessness he displayed. The gun is a possession cemented to life. Someday I will pass it on but for now, its still got a few more shots to take.

**Editor's Note:** I have family, friends and acquaintances who have a guide or service dog and found this information helpful -- I hope that the reader may also.

## ETIQUETTE FOR GUIDE AND SERVICE DOGS

**Guide dogs** are the guiding eyes for people who are blind or visually impaired.

**Service dogs** are assistance dogs for people with disabilities other than blindness.

**These dogs are specially bred and trained for this most important job.**

**There are several guidelines people should follow when in the presence of a guide or service dog to allow for the safety of the dog and its handler.** Disregarding these guidelines can distract the dog, which can create a dangerous situation for the dog and its handler.

It's also important to know, that under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), people with disabilities are allowed to be accompanied by their guide or service dog in all places the public is permitted.

- Please don't touch, talk, feed or otherwise distract the dog while he is wearing his harness or vest. You should allow the dog to concentrate and perform for the safety of his handler.

- Don't treat the dog as a pet; give him the respect of a working dog.
- **Speak to the handler, not the dog.** Some handlers will allow petting, but be sure to ask before doing so. If allowed, don't pat the dog on the head; stroke the dog on the shoulder area.
- **If the handler says no when you ask to pet the dog, don't be offended.** The dog (or handler) might be having a bad day, or he might be in a hurry. **Remember, a service dog is as vital to a disabled person as a wheelchair or cane. You wouldn't ask to pet their wheelchair or get mad if they wouldn't let you pet their cane.**
- You should not give the dog commands; allow the handler to do so
- **Guide and service dog teams have the right of way.**
- Don't try to take control in situations unfamiliar to the dog or handler, **but please assist the handler upon their request.**
- When walking with a guide or service dog team, **you should not walk on the dog's left side, as it may become distracted or confused.** Ask the handler where you should walk. Depending on the situation, they may ask you to walk ahead of them on their right side, or behind them by their right shoulder.
- Never attempt to grab or steer the person while the dog is guiding or attempt to hold the dog's harness. You should ask if the handler needs your assistance and, if so, offer your left arm.
- Try not to be overprotective or overbearing when the graduate first arrives home with the new dog. Be thoughtful, patient, and try to inspire confidence in the handler. In time, you will admire the expertise of the team.
- Don't expect too much too soon, remember, the dog is young and that complete harmony and confidence takes patience, perseverance and time.
- Never give the dog table scraps. You should respect the handler's need to give the dog a

balanced diet, and to maintain its good habits.

- Don't allow anyone to tease or abuse the dog, allow it to rest undisturbed.
- Make sure not to allow your pets to challenge or intimidate a guide dog. You should allow them to meet on neutral ground when all parties can be carefully supervised.
- A guide and service dog should not jump on furniture or go in areas of a home not mutually agreed upon by the family or handler. You can ask the handler to correct any errant behavior or trespassing.
- Never let the dog out of the house unsupervised, and be sure that all doors and/or gates are closed to prevent the dog from exiting your property.

For more information contact:

#### Guide Dog Foundation

[www.GuideDog.org](http://www.GuideDog.org)

800-548-4337

#### America's VetDogs

[www.VetDogs.org](http://www.VetDogs.org)

866-838-3647

### WHAT TO DO IF A SERVICE DOG APPROACHES YOU WITHOUT THEIR OWNER

Nowadays, most people know general guidelines when it comes to service dog etiquette. Refraining from petting a service dog while they're working is an important rule, along with knowing that [legitimate service dogs](#) are allowed to accompany their owners nearly everywhere.

However, one topic that's rarely discussed is the very real possibility that one of these animals may approach you without their owner. Knowing what this means and how to respond appropriately may mean the difference between life and death for a service dog handler.

#### SERVICE DOG SAFETY PROCEDURE

Service dogs are specifically trained to [assist people](#) with disabilities, including visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility impairments, and mental disorders (such as post

traumatic stress disorder). Besides assisting their owners with daily activities or alerting them to an impending medical crisis, a service dog fulfills another vital role – to seek assistance from an adult if their handler experiences a fall or medical emergency.

#### Know the Signs

**A service dog that's seeking assistance from a stranger may use their nose to nudge your leg, arm, or hand. As tempting as it may be to give a quick scratch behind the ears and be on your way, stop and think. Cue the dog to help you locate their owner by asking "what?" or "where?" or simply begin following the dog. If you ever see a service dog wandering without their owner, stop what you're doing and follow them.**

**Situations that may cause a service dog to abandon their handler in search of help include:**

- A fall (out of a wheelchair or otherwise)
- Seizure
- A diabetic episode
- Injury
- Other medical emergency

#### A Friend in Need

Besides being a loving and devoted companion, service dogs make it possible for their owners to live as independently as possible. That includes going for help if and when their owner is in need of more assistance than the dog can provide. Do you have any questions or concerns about your pet? Source: West Park Animal Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio

### INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

**"What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals."**

—Zig Ziglar

**"Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it."**

—Maya Angelou

### FUNDRAISER VOLUNTEERS

**MAY, 2023**

**BASS PRO SHOP, HOOKSETT, NH**



*Dennis Mitchell and his Service dog Miss Fiona,  
Father and son team, Joe and Joey Duquette*



*Gary Gahan, Paul Coutu, Kevin Brown*

**JUNE, 2023**

**BASS PRO SHOP, HOOKSETT, NH**



*Jim Ambrose, Marge Romano  
With a proud dad and his flag waving little daughter*



*John Nye*

**MARKET BASKET, BEDFORD, NH**



*Mary Ann Diekmann, Pauly Labbe, Eric and Pat Anthony*

**ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS NOT PICTURED ARE:**

- ❖ BJ and Karen Byers
- ❖ Teresa Hamlin
- ❖ Ron Jones

### FAMOUS QUOTES

*"Your Marines having been under my command for nearly six months, I feel that I can give you a discriminating report as to their excellent standing with their brothers of the army and their general good conduct."*

*(General John J. Pershing, USA, in a letter to Major General Commandant George Barnett, USMC, 10 November 1917.)*

**Winner of the  
2023 Spring Raffle Fundraiser  
Joe Chowhkowski**



*Woodcrafter artist, Dennis Mitchell, presents his wooden flag creation to Joe Chowhkowski winner of the spring raffle fundraiser*



*Debra (neighbor), Dennis Mitchell, Gary Gahan, Joe Chowhkowski, and his wife Kim.*

After shopping at the Bedford, NH Market Basket Joe and Kim stopped by the GSD #542 fundraiser table and made a donation of \$20 which automatically entered Joe into the American wooden flag fundraiser raffle. He and Kim were elated that he was the lucky winner! Joe served 14 years of military service as a Tech Sergeant in the Air Force.

The beautiful wooden American flag will have dedicated wall space in Joe's "man cave."

**EAGLE SCOUT ACHIEVEMENT  
HONORED BY THE GSD #542 MCL**

At the Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony held on May 13, 2023, at the Bedford Presbyterian Church, GSD #542 Scouting and Honors liaison, Dan Fedor, presented the Detachment's Achievement Award Certificate to Liam MacDonald in recognition of his significant accomplishment of **earning Scouting's highest rank of Eagle Scout. Liam is Troop 414's 131<sup>st</sup> Eagle Scout.**

**EAGLE SCOUT LIAM MACDONALD**

Liam is a recent graduate of Bedford High School. He was a member of the high school's choir, and he also practices the base flute in two ensembles. He has also earned his black belt in American Kenpo Karate. **In the fall of 2023, Liam will study Business at the University of Ottawa in Canada.**



*Liam with his Eagle Project*

**"For my Eagle Project, I created a museum exhibit for the Bedford Historical Society.** The main part of the exhibit was a mower that was found in the Pulpit Rock Conservation area. For my project, I led a group of people in transporting the mower from the trail where it was found to the Bedford Historical Society. I also led a group to conduct research on the mower for the creation of two posters, one to go in the exhibit for people to read, and another out on the trail so that people could still read about it while walking or hiking."



*Liam, GSD #542 Dan Fedor, Award presenter and Ceremony attendees Eric Anthony and Gary Gahan*

**CONGRATULATIONS, LIAM!!**

## 2023 RECIPIENTS OF THE FRANK A. DIEKMANN GSD #542 MCL SCHOLARSHIP

By Marge Romano

As the 2023 Scholarship Chairman of the **Marine Corps League Granite State Detachment #542**, I am pleased to announce the recipients of the **2023 Frank A. Diekmann Scholarship**:

**Lily X. Byers**

and

**Julia T. Gordon**

These two young women are local area students who not only demonstrate strong academics but also show a commitment to community service and volunteerism.



**LILY X. BYERS**

Lily will attend the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY in the fall of 2023. Lily is enrolled in the Physician's Assistant Program.



On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, at the beginning of the 2023 Souhegan HS graduation ceremony, Salutatorian Lily Byers greets and addresses her fellow classmates.



A very happy 2023 Souhegan HS graduate!

At the June 13<sup>th</sup> membership meeting, Gary Gahan and Mary Ann Diekmann presented a Frank A. Diekmann 2023 Scholarship Award check in the amount of \$ 4,032 to Lily Byers towards her 2023-24 academic year at RIT.



Gary Gahan, Mary Ann Diekmann; proud Mom, Karen Byers; Lily Byers and proud dad Commandant BJ Byers.





## JULIA T. GORDON

In the fall of 2023, Julia will attend Merrimack College in Merrimac, MA. Julia is enrolled in the Business Program.



A smiling Bedford HS graduate

At the June 8, 2023, Bedford HS Scholarship Award Ceremony, Gary Gahan and Mary Ann Diekmann, representing the GSD #542 membership, presented a Frank A. Diekmann 2023 Scholarship Award to recipient Julia Gordon in the amount of \$2,032 to be applied to her 2023-24 academic year at Merrimack College.



Gary Gahan, proud mom Stacie Gordon, Julia Gordon; proud dad Thomas Gordon and Mary Ann Diekmann.

**CONGRATUALATIONS!!**

**LILY AND JULIA**

## BREAKFAST AND COMARADERIE AT THE AIRPORT DINER!



### COFFEE AND MORE!

**REMINDER:** At 8 am, on the last Saturday of each month, at the Airport Diner in Manchester, is a time to gather with fellow Marines, families and guests for a great meal and interesting conversation. Plus the infamous and popular monthly social raffle is available for folks that are interested. See you there!



*Camaraderie is a feeling of good friendship among the people in a group.*

Source: merriam-webster.com  
<https://www.merriam-webster.com>

**GRANITE STATE  
DETACHMENT #542  
OFFICERS 2023**

**Commandant**  
BJ Byers

**Sr. Vice Commandant**  
Gary Gahan

**Jr. Vice Commandant**  
Dennis Mitchel

**Judge Advocate**  
TBD

**Adjutant**  
Eric Anthony

**Paymaster**  
Gary Gahan

**Chaplain**  
Joe Duquette

**Quartermaster**  
John Petralito

**Sergeant at Arms**  
Paul Coutu

**Marine 4 Life**  
Shawn Carboni

**Web Master**  
Jo Zurwell

**Officers Meeting**  
1800 – 1830  
followed by the  
**Membership Meeting**  
1830 – 2000  
on the  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month**

at the  
**Elks Lodge #146**  
290 Granite Street  
Manchester, NH

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 3857

Manchester, NH 03105

**Website:**

[www.granitestatemarines.com](http://www.granitestatemarines.com)

**Marine Corps Social Breakfast**

**08:00 Last Saturday of the Month**

**Airport Diner, Brown Avenue**

**Manchester, NH**



**Did you know ...?**

- Marines have their favorite words** – “Outstanding” is by far any Marine’s favorite adjective. It’s often used to describe the type of day a Marine is having, but the limits of its usage are tested daily by Marines everywhere looking to add a little motivation into their diction.
- CHAOS is more than a theory** – Defense Secretary James Mattis’ nickname CHAOS is actually an acronym that stands for “Colonel Has An(Another) Outstanding Solution.” The tongue-in-cheek [nickname was first given to Mattis](#) while he was a colonel at Twentynine Palms, California.
- Marines don’t use their pockets** – Whether in cammies or [dress blues](#), Marines definitely have lots of pockets in their uniforms, but they don’t dare use them. Items in their pockets create a bulky, sloppy appearance, so Marines will go to any length to not use their pockets, even to the point of carrying things in their socks.
- Nicknames are kind of a thing** – If your name is too long or difficult to pronounce, it’s likely that drill instructors will rename you “Alphabet.” If you wear glasses, it’s likely drill instructors may rename you “portholes.” Luckily, nicknames assigned in boot camp aren’t likely to stay with a Marine into the Fleet.
- The Fleet** – The FMF (Fleet Marine Force) is the name Marines give to the “real life” Marine Corps beyond the “pipeline” that includes Marine Corps Recruit Training and MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) school.
- Marines are tough as nails** – In 1959, [Marine Lt. Col. William Rankin](#) is the only known person to survive a fall from the top of a cumulonimbus thunderstorm cloud. He ejected from his plane at 47,000 feet and fell 40 minutes through the middle of the storm and survived

Source: USO article by Joseph Andrew Lee (served years in the USMC)





## Attention Veterans, Veterans' Families, Caregivers and Survivors.

### VA News

#### SUMMER TRAVEL: Manage Appointments and Medication

If you're preparing for summer travel, you may have a routine or checklist that helps you prepare. But does your preparation include managing your healthcare? It's important to make sure you have your medications and won't miss appointments. With a [My HealtheVet Premium account](#), it's easier to manage your care before you travel.

#### Manage your medications

[Refill your prescriptions](#) with My HealtheVet online. **Request refills at least 15 days before running out of medications** to make sure they arrive before your trip. [Track your delivery](#) and sign up for [notifications](#) to see when your medications will arrive. Talk with your doctor if you'll need refills while traveling domestically. Contact your VA pharmacy to provide the travel dates and address you'll use for mail. Your [Medication List](#) can double as a packing checklist. Use the list to make sure you don't forget your VA prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines or supplements that you've [self-entered](#) on My HealtheVet.

**Check your appointment schedule** It's normal to book certain appointments months in advance. It can be easy to forget those dates when you schedule trips. Before you travel, **check to make sure you're not going to miss a visit**. View your VA appointments on [Health Calendar](#). You can see the date, time, and type of VA appointments with [VA Appointments tool](#). If you have appointments during your travels, you can re-schedule or cancel some online with [VA.gov](#). **Get your questions answered**

**Planning a trip can bring up questions about your health.** For example, you might need to know how to take medication if you're changing time zones. Or maybe you want to ask about precautions to avoid getting sick. Your VA health care team has answers that can help you travel more safely. Send your doctor a [Secure Message](#) to ask your questions. Use their answers to ensure you're prepared for your trip.

## HAVE A WONDERFUL 2023 SUMMER MARINES!



**“SEMPER FI”**

*Editor-in-Chief, Marge Romano*