



Boots Across Texas

FORGED BY THE CORPS! HARDENED BY TEXAS!

**Tun
Tavern**

**Member
Spotlight**

**Memorial
9/11
Climb**

Issue #2

October 2025

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

GERMAN GARZA

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

TINA HARVEY

EDITORIALS

RANDY THOMAS

COMMUNICATIONS

JOHNNIE LOPEZ

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

TINA HARVEY

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

ROLANDO HERNANDEZ

RANDY THOMAS



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From the Editor

BMarines, Families, and Friends,

This year isn't just another milestone—it's a once-in-a-lifetime celebration. Our beloved Corps turns 250 years strong! Across the state, Marines past and present will gather for ceremonies, birthday balls, and events that remind us why our legacy of honor, courage, and commitment continues to stand the test of time.

But the celebration doesn't stop there. Come October, we'll shift gears into one of the most rewarding missions of the year—Toys for Tots. Together, we'll bring smiles and holiday cheer to children across our communities, proving once again that the Marine spirit doesn't just shine on the battlefield, but in every act of service.

It's a season of pride, purpose, and giving back. So mark your calendars, stay connected, and get ready to be part of history in the making.



Semper Fidelis,
German C. Garza
Boots Across Texas
Editor-in-Chief

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With the successful 2025 National Convention completed, I turn to department business, recruiting, retention, and other programs. Some departments are losing members as Texas sustains slight growth. Thank you for all your effort.

Numerous times, I stated “every activity must have a recruiting component to increase membership.” Beginning Oct 1, we are preparing to support numerous fall activities, Veteran’s Day, celebrating the 250th USMC Birthday, Thanksgiving support, Toys For Tots, and other events. These are prime opportunities to recruit. Think outside the box and use social media and reach out. Host social events once a quarter at various veteran friendly establishments. Reach out to your local theater and seek out Public Service Announcements pertaining to your Detachment to run before the movie. Remember, recruiting provides growth but retention ensures the sustainment of the Detachment membership.

As we prepare and celebrate our 250th USMC Birthday come Nov 10th, reflect on our time in the Corps, its history and traditions. Translate those experiences as we move forward to accomplish our mission by supporting our communities throughout Texas.

Tony

Commandant's Corner

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The Dept of Texas had the privilege of hosting the 2025 National Convention. TJ Morgan, Johnny Baker, Jim Ransom, and Tom Hazlett were my mentors who opened my eyes to visualize the possibilities.

I want to say thank you to the Tarrant County Detachment with special accolades to Det Commandant/Texas Ship Store: Steven Sherman; Det PM and Texas Ship Store: Patrick Murray; and Members Joey Cook and Denna Otts-Whitfield: Transportation. The National Convention Committee Team, Rose Conkwright: Dept Director of Convention/Detachment Convention Chair; Sean Downey: Marketing and Communication; Paula Land: Activities and Events; Tina Harvey: Dept PR and History; James Harvey: History and Cake Cutting; William Ney: Sons of the Revolution and History; Diaman Tina R. McEwan: Photographer; AJ Cox: Pod Cast; Scott Egan: Merchandise Vendor; Kevin Enlow, Audrea Killalea and Cory Dressler: Pack Liaisons; Roy Cuevas: Color Guard and Young Marines; Russ Miller: Sunday Church Service.

Finally, to David Hull, East Texas Detachment, Paula Land, and the countless individuals/vendors that provided information and opinions that made this event even more successful.

Commandant - Tony Poletti

Hello all,

I hope everyone has had a chance to recover from convention and conference season! I'm still digging out myself from all the work we put into the national convention. Thank you to everyone who helped and attended — your support made a huge difference.

By the time you read this, the fall conference should be behind us, so I'd like to give you a glimpse into what's ahead for the rest of the fiscal year. My focus is on fine-tuning the activity report master so that I can create a detachment version for you to run your own reports with ease.

In addition, I'm working with the Web Sergeant (also me) to build an online learning platform on the department website. If you've ever taken an online course, the setup will feel familiar — structured lessons with quizzes to help strengthen your Marine Corps League knowledge, particularly for each role.



Senior Vice Commandant & Web Sergeant — Sean Downey



The Department of Texas has recently relocated the Teufelhunden Detachment to Haslet, TX. Our fire team in Anna is making strong progress, and another new fire team is beginning to take shape in Killeen. Texas is on the move and growing forward!

We know that maintaining and gaining new members is always a challenge for detachments. Some detachments seem to have that “magic wand” to bring in new members, while most of us feel like we're tossing coins into a silent wishing well. That's why it's so important for us to share ideas and strategies with one another.

This October, join the Department in Waco to learn, connect, and collaborate on ways to keep our current members engaged while also building our strength for the future. After all—what's better than a squad of Marines? A platoon... or even a company of Marines!

Hope to see you in Waco in October.

Junior Vice Commandant — Paula Land

Meet Your Texas Officers

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The success of any project is built on comprehensive planning, effective communication, and teamwork. I want to sincerely thank all those who contributed to the success of the 2025 Department Convention and the 2025 National Convention. Many members from the Norwood Detachment and District 4 dedicated countless hours to planning, coordinating, and executing the Department Convention—and their hard work paid off. The National MCL Convention began as a vision and was carried through to a very accomplished and successful event.

Now, let's look forward.

The Department Fall Conference will be held October 16–18 in Waco. Registration is open, so be sure to reserve your spot early. The mission of the Fall Conference is training. Topics such as “How do I recruit new members?” will be explored, with those who have been successful sharing their knowledge and best practices. It's an opportunity to both share your experience and ask your questions.

Looking ahead, planning is already underway for the 2026 Department Convention—and the work continues.

Mark your calendars, make your plans, and we'll see you in:

- October 2025 – Department Fall Conference, Waco
- June 2026 – Department Convention
- October 2026 – Department Fall Conference

Judge Advocate & Director of Conventions — Rose Conkwright



Greg Sumner, of the Rio Grande Valley Detachment (1456), serves as Adjutant Paymaster. He manages the Department's finances and membership records, ensuring all dues, reports, and fiscal oversight are maintained with transparency and accuracy.

Adjutant Paymaster — Greg Sumner

Patrick Murray, from Detachment 731 (Tarrant County), holds the billet of Jr. Past Commandant. He brings past leadership experience to bear, supporting current officers and helping with continuity between administrations.

Jr. Past Commandant — Patrick Murray



Message From Our Officers

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William Sterling serves as Chaplain, representing Detachment 1249 (Louis Wayne Qualls). He provides spiritual guidance, leads memorial and ceremonial observances, and supports members and their families in times of need.

Chaplain — William Sterling

Roy Cuevas is the Sergeant-at-Arms. His duties include maintaining order at meetings, ensuring protocol and decorum, and assisting in ceremonial functions. He is from Detachment 862 – North Texas.

Sergeant-at-Arms — Roy Cuevas



The strength of the Marine Corps League, Department of Texas, lies in the dedication of its leadership team. From Commandant Col. Tony Poletti's vision and guidance, to the support of Senior Vice Commandant Sean Downey, Junior Vice Commandant Paula Land, Judge Advocate Rose Conkwright, Adjutant Paymaster Greg Sumner, Jr. Past Commandant Patrick Murray, Chaplain William Sterling, and Sergeant-at-Arms Roy Cuevas, each officer plays a vital role in advancing the League's mission.

Together, they ensure that Marines, FMF Corpsmen, and their families across Texas are supported, connected, and reminded of the values we all hold dear—honor, courage, and commitment. Their combined leadership preserves the proud traditions of our Corps while building a stronger future for the Marine Corps League in the Lone Star State.



Happy 250th Birthday United States Marine Corps

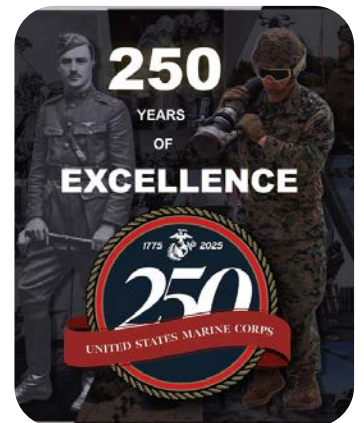
On November 10, 2025, Marines around the world will join together to celebrate a historic milestone — the 250th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps. From the halls of Tun Tavern in 1775 to the modern-day battlefields across the globe, the Marine Corps has carried forward a legacy of honor, courage, and commitment for two and a half centuries.

This year's celebration is unlike any other. For 250 years, Marines have stood the watch, defended freedom, and embodied the fighting spirit of our nation. The traditions that bind us — the cake-cutting ceremony, the reading of General Lejeune's message, and the Commandant's Birthday message — remain a powerful reminder of who we are and what we represent.

Here in Texas, the Department of Texas, Marine Corps League, is proud to honor this landmark birthday alongside detachments across the state. Together, we carry forward the motto "Forged by the Corps, Hardened by Texas" as we remember the sacrifices of those who came before us and inspire the generations yet to come.

As Marines gather this November, whether in dress blues or with family and friends, one thing remains the same — the bond of brotherhood and sisterhood that unites us. The 250th Marine Corps Birthday is not just a celebration of history, but a call to continue the mission with the same determination that has defined the Corps since 1775.

Happy 250th Birthday, Marines. Semper Fidelis!

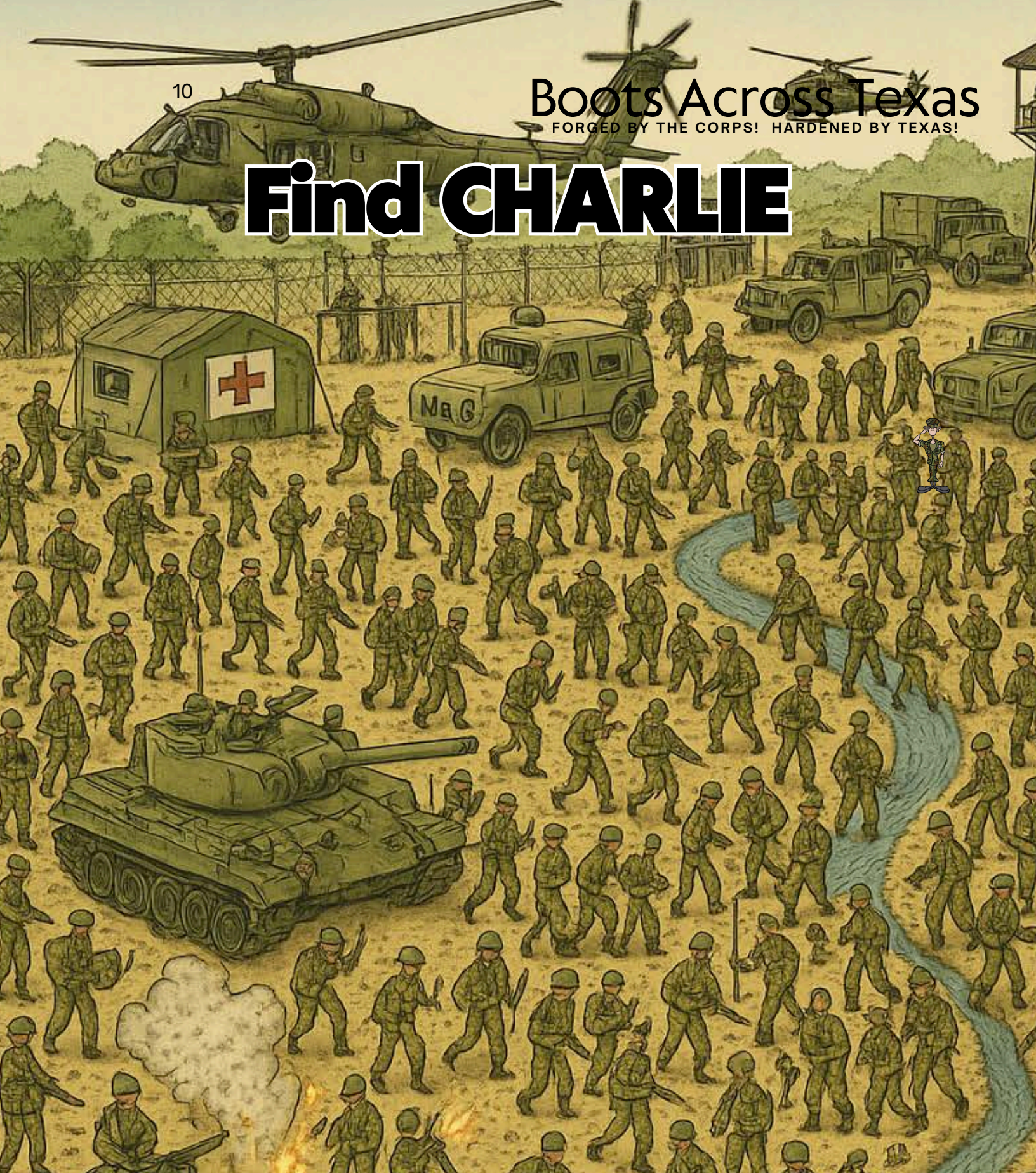


SCAN ME



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Find CHARLIE



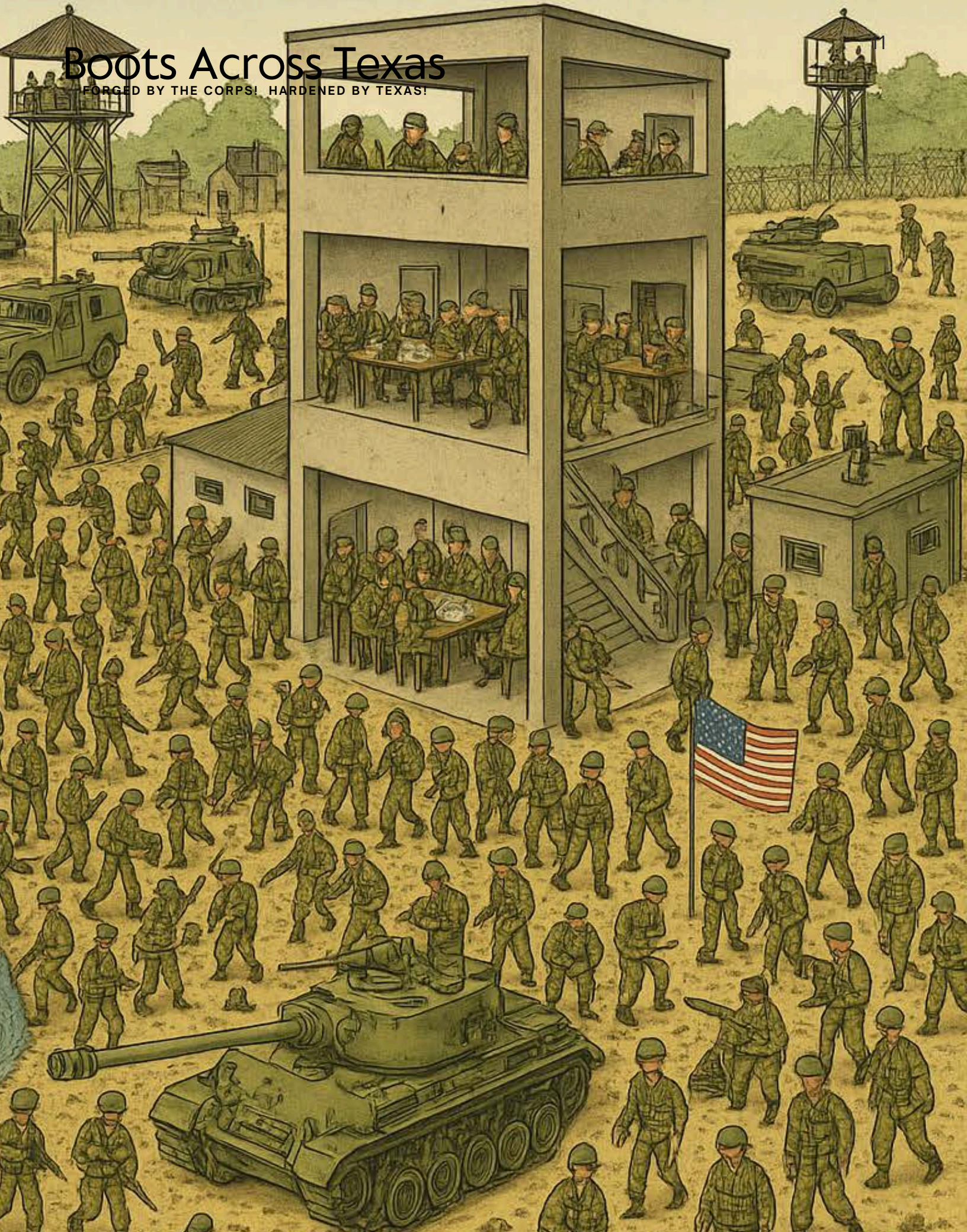
Our latest “Find Charlie” challenge is here! Hidden somewhere in the busy military base scene, Charlie is waiting to be discovered—can you spot him?



Meet Charlie!

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Detachment Spotlight



Detachment Spotlight

Sgt. M.J. “Marty” Gonzalez Detachment #1485

The Sgt. M.J. “Marty” Gonzalez Detachment #1485 of the Marine Corps League, based in Cypress, Texas, is a living tribute to the legacy of Sgt. Marty Gonzalez—Marine, veteran, hero, and advocate. Named in his honor, Detachment 1485 carries forward his spirit of valor, sacrifice, and service to fellow veterans and Marines.

WHO WAS SGT. MARTY GONZALEZ

- Marty enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps at age 19, serving as a Squad Leader with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.
- Throughout his service, he was awarded two Bronze Stars for Valor, three Purple Hearts, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, among other honors.
- Sgt. Gonzalez was severely injured in Fallujah during the Second Battle of Fallujah, sustaining multiple wounds—including burns, head trauma, a gunshot to his elbow—and a back injury. He underwent more than 15 surgeries between 2004 and 2013, and eventually was medically discharged.
- Always outspoken about his struggles—physical, mental, emotional—Sgt. Gonzalez used his own story to advocate for veterans’ reform and support systems, especially in Texas.

THE DETACHMENT HONORS SGT. GONZALEZ BY CONTINUING HIS WORK IN MULTIPLE WAYS:

- Support for veterans & deployed service members — through outreach, programs, and fundraising.
- Monthly meetings to organize activities, maintain community engagement, plan events, and ensure transparency among members.
- Public, community-facing events such as recruitment drives, raffles, and awareness drives. One example: a recruitment drive held at Mancuso Crossroads Harley-Davidson in Cypress.
- Raffles and fundraising efforts — proceeds go toward veteran support, Detachment operations, and community outreach.





WHY THEY STAND OUT

- Name and mission aligned: Unlike many detachment groups formed just to serve, Detachment 1485 is deeply rooted in the life and legacy of Sgt. Gonzalez—his heroism, his struggles, and his unyielding commitment to others. That gives the Detachment not just symbolic meaning, but concrete direction.
- Visible impact: Through their advocacy and support, the Detachment helps veterans navigate the often complex VA system, raise awareness of PTSD and the challenges of reintegration, and inform the public about the real costs of war, both seen and unseen.
- Community integration: Whether through public meetings, local events, or fundraising, they keep close to the people—veterans and civilians alike—ensuring that the Detachment is not just inward-facing but part of the fabric of Cypress and greater Houston area.



MEMORABLE QUOTE / TRIBUTE

“SGT. MARTY GONZALEZ WAS A DECORATED MARINE WHO SPOKE HONESTLY AND OPENLY OF HIS OWN STRUGGLES WITH INJURIES BOTH PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IN THE HOPES OF INSPIRING OTHERS.”



7th Annual Waco Memorial 9/11 Stair Climb

ROLANDO HERNANDEZ

Each September, the nation pauses to reflect on the events of September 11, 2001—a day of tragedy, sacrifice, and resilience that forever changed our country. In Waco, Texas, the Heart of Texas Marine Corps League Detachment 975 has created a powerful local tradition to honor the first responders who gave their lives that day: the Annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb at Jacob’s Ladder in Cameron Park.

The stair climb, now in its sixth year, was first envisioned by Rolando Hernandez, Commandant of Detachment 975. After hearing about stair climbs held in Dallas and across the country, Hernandez knew Waco needed its own tribute—a place where Marines, veterans, first responders, families, and citizens could come together in remembrance.

“We go up the stairs a combined total of 2,000 times which represents the 2,000 steps that were taken as first responders responded,” Hernandez explained. The challenge is grueling: Jacob’s Ladder is an 88-step staircase carved into the hillside, requiring participants to climb it 24 times to equal the climb of the World Trade Center towers. The physical strain mirrors, in a small way, the weight and determination carried by firefighters, police officers, and emergency personnel as they rushed toward danger 23 years ago.

For Hernandez, the climb is not only about remembering the lives lost, but also about capturing the unity that followed.

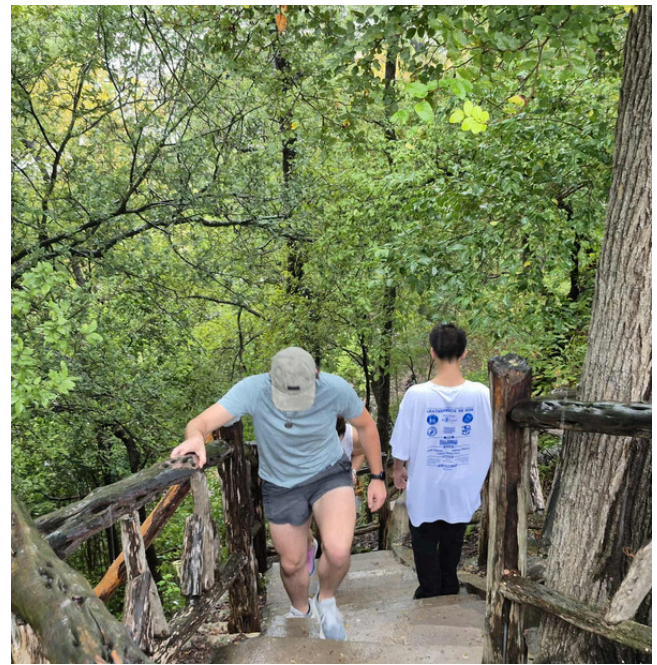
“Not only was that a tragic day, but the day after... That was when our country got together. We prayed for each other. We helped each other to move on,” Hernandez reflected. “That’s what I want people to understand about this stair climb.” Participants of all ages take part each year. Marines in red covers climb alongside firefighters in turnout gear, local police officers, and families with children eager to learn the meaning of sacrifice and service. Some carry American flags. Others climb with photos of fallen heroes pinned to their shirts. The atmosphere is solemn but uplifting—heavy with memory, yet filled with the spirit of camaraderie and perseverance.



One firefighter shared, “It’s humbling to do this. The steps hurt, but it’s nothing compared to what those men and women went through that day. We climb so they’ll never be forgotten.”

Another participant, a high school student climbing for the first time, said, “I wasn’t born yet when 9/11 happened, but hearing the stories and doing this climb makes it real. It makes me proud to be an American.”

These voices echo the very mission of the event: remembrance, education, and unity.



The climb has grown each year, drawing in not only Marines and veterans, but churches, civic organizations, and schools. Families come out to cheer, hand out water, and take part in the moment of silence held before the first climb begins. Bagpipes have played, prayers have been shared, and the names of the fallen have been spoken. Each layer adds depth to the tribute, ensuring that the memory of those lost lives on in the community.

Hernandez emphasizes that the event is not just about looking back, but also about instilling values in the next generation. “We want to bring back Americanism,” he said in an interview. “We want our youth to understand why this day matters, and how important it is to stand together as a country.”

For those who climb, the experience is both physical and spiritual. Step by step, breath by breath, they ascend in honor of the 343 firefighters, 72 law enforcement officers, and thousands of civilians who perished. The climb is a living memorial—one that reminds us of the resilience of the human spirit and the responsibility we all share to remember.

As the Heart of Texas Marine Corps League continues this tradition year after year, the message remains clear: we climb so they will never be forgotten.



Tun Tavern

Every Marine worth their salt knows about The Tun—the birthplace of history and tradition. From its second-floor meeting room came the founding of organizations that still thrive today, including the Society of St. George (1729), the Pennsylvania Freemasons (1731), the St. Andrew's Society (1741), the Friendly Sons and Daughters of St. Patrick (1771), the United States Navy (1775), and, of course, the United States Marine Corps (1775).

Though no one has seen The Tun in over 240 years, its legacy endures. First opened in 1693 as one of Philadelphia's earliest taverns—what we would now call a microbrewery—its address, Water Street and Tun Alley, remains etched in history.

Today, The Tun Legacy Foundation, Inc., a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed by members of these historic organizations, is working to rebuild this legendary site. While the original location is now occupied by a freeway, the new Tun will rise just a block and a half away, keeping its spirit alive for future generations.

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To reach the \$12 million needed to begin construction, supporters can contribute in three ways:

Shop the online store.

Become a Plank Owner (major donor).

Join the 1775 Club.

The 1775 Club offers a way for anyone to be part of history. For just \$17.75 per month for 12 months, you'll help bring The Tun back to life. Membership perks include:

- After your first month: an official 1775 Club T-shirt and your name on the Foundation's website.
- After three months: an official member certificate.
- After twelve months: the Official 1775 Club Coin.

And when The Tun opens its doors again, present your coin between 1700 and 1800 (5–6 PM) to enjoy a 12oz Tun Ale (or nonalcoholic beverage) for just 75 cents.

This is your chance to help rebuild the birthplace of the United States Marine Corps and other historic American institutions. Learn more and join the cause at thetun.org.

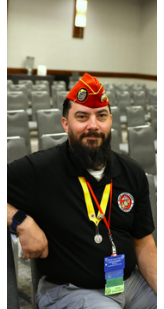
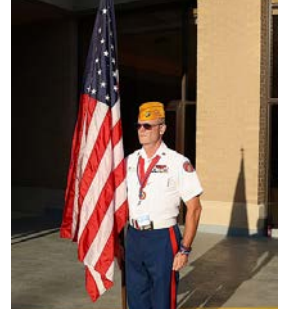


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say cheese!



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say cheese!



Meet the Texas Pack

Marines, Associates, Devil Dogs, Auxiliary, and Fleas,

This August, the eyes of our Organizations were on Grapevine, Texas, as the Department of Texas and the Texas Pack proudly hosted the National Convention and the Supreme Growl. By every measure, it was a resounding success. None of it would have been possible without the hard work, dedication, and tireless commitment of Marines, Devil Dogs, and volunteers across our great state. You demonstrated the true spirit of the League and the Order - working together, welcoming our guests, and making this gathering one to remember.

On behalf of the Texas Pack, I extend my deepest thanks to every Marine who attended, supported, and shared in the fellowship. We were honored to host our brothers and sisters from across the country and to showcase the hospitality of Texas. Your efforts ensured that the Supreme Growl was not only successful, but a celebration of all we stand for.

Semper Woofing,
PDD C.J. Dressler

Worthy Pack Leader, Texas Pack



**Worthy Pack Leader
PDD Cory Dressler**



**Worthy Senior Vice
Pack Leader
DD Roy Cuevas**



**Worthy Junior Vice
Pack Leader
PDD Robert Hurtado**



**Worthy Smart Dog
DD Belinda Sumner**



**Worthy Mad Dog
PDD Audrea Killalea**



**Worthy Dog Robber
PDD Jennifer Rooth**

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Worthy Dog Trainer
DD William Sterling



Worthy Barking Dog
PDD Sal Cenicacelaya



Worthy Watch Dog
DD Angie Maness



Worthy Police Dog
DD Charles Rooth



Worthy Compliance Dog
PDD Steve Bridgewater



Worthy Deputy Dog Robber
PDD Bernie O'Dell



Deputy Mad Dog
PDD Denise Bourassa



Member Spotlight

William Rosicato

Sgt. M.J. Marty Gonzalez Detachment 1485 – Commandant

My journey in service began as a young boy in the Sea Cadets, and later as a Civil Air Patrol cadet, flying on weekends with WWII pilots who taught us discipline, leadership, and patriotism. Those early years gave me lifelong friendships and a deep love for serving my country.

At 17 years old, with my parents' blessing and a promise to attend college, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. I proudly served during the Cold War era, following in the footsteps of my father, a fellow Marine.

Today, I'm honored to serve as Commandant of Detachment 1485, leading 47 dedicated members in preserving our Marine Corps traditions and serving our community. I'm also a founding member of the Space City Young Marines Unit and a Staff Sergeant with the Delta Composite Squadron in the Civil Air Patrol, where I serve as Recruiting & Retention NCO and Squadron Historian.

I'm passionate about mentoring youth to live with integrity, respect, and a healthy, drug-free lifestyle, while also serving veterans and their families with pride and gratitude.

I'm blessed to share this journey with my wife and best friend, Patty, who supports me every step of the way as an Associate Member of the Marine Corps League.

Together, we're committed to honoring the legacy of the Marine Corps for the next 250 years!



Member Spotlight

William Rosicato

Sgt. M.J. Marty Gonzalez Detachment 1485 – Commandant



Sallisaw, OK — The Lost Art Project: Veterans' Voices, hosted by retired Master Gunnery Sergeant Andrew "AJ" Cox, is expanding with a monthly podcast series called Jarhead Jabber, the official podcast episode of the Marine Corps League (MCL).

Jarhead Jabber airs every third Monday and spotlights the League's work while giving veterans a place to share stories. The latest installment, Episode 2, co-hosted by Carlos Garcia, featured a lively lineup of MCL members covering everything from uniforms and department highlights to the Military Order of Devil Dogs, Veteran Service Officers, and a message from the MCL National Commandant. Humor and camaraderie ran throughout the episode, reflecting the bonds Marines continue to share long after service.

Cox created The Lost Art Project to preserve the "sea stories" and lessons of veterans, ensuring their voices are not lost to time. "This gives our veterans a platform to be seen, heard, and honored," Cox said.

He is now calling on veterans to take part. Those interested in recording their stories can visit thelostart.podbean.com and click Schedule Your Recording to become a guest. The podcast also highlights veteran-owned businesses, offering entrepreneurs a platform to share their journeys and inspire others.

With Jarhead Jabber, Cox and Garcia are helping the Marine Corps League amplify its reach — building community, preserving history, and keeping the voices of America's veterans alive.

For more information or to schedule a recording, visit thelostart.podbean.com

Listen to the
Podcast HERE



STAY TUNED
TO OUR

The Texas **SCUTTLEBUTT RADIO SHOW**

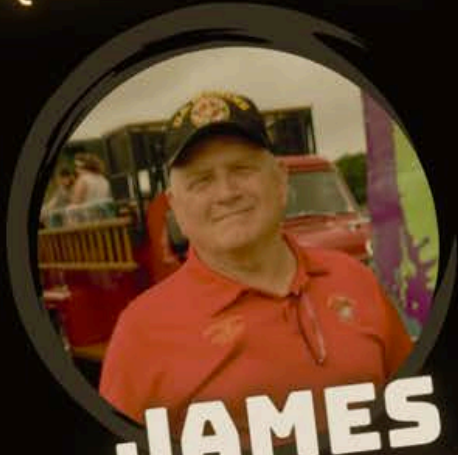
EVERY SUNDAY

12:00 PM

KNTH - AM 1070 - FM 103.3

THE ANSWER
**INTELLIGENT
CONSERVATIVE**

Hosted by



**JAMES
HARVEY**



**MARK
OLDMIXON**



**TINA
HARVEY**

Who's Birthday is It?



Happy Birthday to our Marine Corps League Members!

We're proud to celebrate the birthdays of our brothers and sisters who were born in the months of September and October. Your dedication to the League and your continued spirit of service are a gift to us all.

May your special day be filled with pride, joy, and the camaraderie that comes from being part of the Marine Corps family.

Happy Birthday, Marines!
Semper Fidelis!

Colonel J. McPhail

V. Salas
Detachment 430

R. Thomas
668 Galveston County

B Conkwright
Cowtown #1480

G. Kimmins
Detachment 318

A Frank Arechiga
Detachment 0315