

# LST 534 Newsletter

October, November, December 2011

Volume 14 , Issue 4

## SERGEANT RECKLESS

### FOUR LEGGED MARINE HERO RETIRED TO CAMP PENDELTON

Few stories better illustrate the military's promise to leave no one behind than that of Staff Sgt. Reckless, a horse who became a decorated Marine during the Korean War.

Plans have begun to honor the horse once left behind in Korea.

A Marine officer purchased Reckless from a Korean boy who needed money to buy his sister an artificial leg, according to Marine Lt. Col. Andrew Geer, who commanded the 2nd Battalion, 5th Regiment of the 1st Division in Korea. Geer wrote two articles about the horse for the Saturday Evening Post in the 1950's and later wrote a book, "Reckless, the Pride of the Marines."

The horse served at the bloody Battle of Vegas after training as an ammunitions carrier, according to Geer.

He wrote "Every yard she advanced was showered with explosives. Fifty-one times she marched through the fiery gantlet of the Red barrage - and she saved the day for the

Leathernecks."

Bob Rogers, a former Navy Corpsman who now lives in Kansas, remembers Reckless wandering around a military camp in Korea wearing a blanket bearing stripes and her Purple Heart. Rogers said in a recent interview that he is planning a statue to honor the horse. The location has yet to be decided.

Rogers said Reckless had a weakness for rations.

"We'd go out for the day and return to a wrecked tent," he said. "Reckless could smell any goodies, especially cookies, and would find them—guaranteed!"

"A lieutenant, myself and others were in a circle talking. Reckless came up behind one fellow and nuzzled the back of his neck. It scared the guy, and he cursed Reckless, calling her a "blinking nag." The lieutenant sternly let him know Reckless was a hero and had done more for the Marine Corps than he ever would. And since Reckless outranked him, any further verbal abuse would be cause for disciplinary action."

"I had the honor of being in formation when Cpl. Reckless

was promoted to Sergeant," said Rogers, 70.

Reckless was left in South Korea as her Marine buddies returned home, but after publication of Geer's article, Post readers and friends of the horse arranged to bring her to the United States.

In preparation for her transfer to Camp Pendleton, Geer wrote the Commandant of the Marine Corps in Washington, D.C.:

The undersigned is in hearty agreement that Reckless should be stationed at Camp Pendleton ...It should be kept in mind, however, that this is no ordinary horse and she should have special care and attention...It is suggested her court be in the vicinity of the Commanding General's quarters and properly marked with appropriate sign, so that all will know this to be the home of Sergeant Reckless, Pride of the Marines.



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“Geer continued. ...Her shoes should be removed and she should be allowed to go bare-foot for a period of six weeks,” Geer continued. “At that time, her feet should be trimmed and new shoes fitted. Only the most knowing and patient horseshoer should be employed. Sergeant Reckless is extremely proud of her feet and will not stand for inexpert attention. Several Korean horseshoers will painfully attend to this statement.”

The memo continued “During the extreme heat of Korea, when potable water was scarce or non-existent, Reckless came to know and like certain liquids other than water. She is fond of coca cola and milk. Under the stress of battle she has been known to drink beer.”

In 1959, five years after arriving at Camp Pendleton, Reckless was promoted to a staff sergeant, according to a November 1992 article in Leatherneck magazine.

Reckless died in 1968 and was survived by three offspring.

For information about plans for the statue honoring Reckless, e-mail :  
rogers-bc@terraworld.net

*Credit: Lillian Cox, freelancer  
San Diego Union Tribune*

## FACTS ABOUT RECKLESS

**Korean Name:** Flame in the Morning (Ah Chim Hai)

**Bought for:** \$250 by Lt. Eric Pederson from a young Korean boy (Kim Huk Moon) at the Seoul Race Track.

**Became a Marine:** 10/26/52

**Highest Rank:** Promoted twice to Staff Sergeant at Camp Pendleton. First time in 1957 by Col. Richard Rothwell, and again in 1959 by Commandant of the USMC—General Randolph McCall Pate.

**Height:** 142 hands high

**Weight:** 900 lbs

**Most Heroic Battle:** Battle of Nevada Cities: Outpost Vegas, March 26-29, 1953.

**Favorite Foods:** Scrambled eggs, hershey bars, candy

**Favorite Pastime:** Drinking beer with her marines.

**What Marines Remember Most About Her:** She loved to eat—anything and everything!

**Offspring:** Fearless, 1957-1969; Dauntless 1959-1971; Chesty 1964-1976.

**Retired:** 1960 at Camp Pendleton—Staff Sergeant

**Died:** May 13, 1968—Buried with full military honors at Camp Pendleton

## NEWS:

### WHAT IS 125?

It's the number of cards sent to Rose Cumella on her 80th birthday. Thanks to all ship-mates who helped make Rose feel special.

## WHAT IS 300?

As workers excavated the site of the underground vehicle security center for the future World Trade Center in New York City, in July 2010, they uncovered the 32 foot long wood hull of an 18th century ship. Discovered 20 to 30 feet below street level, the ship was the first major discovery made along the Manhattan waterfront since 1982. Archaeologists believe the ship dates to the mid-to-late 1700's and was not dug up when the original World Trade Center was built in the 1960's.

Entombed for more than 200 years the ships timber began to deteriorate instantaneously after workers uncovered its wreckage and exposed it to the air. Archaeologists immediately got to work recording and analyzing the discovery. Fortunately, at the time the ship was discovered it was raining and the sun wasn't shining. As Chief Regional Archaeologist Doug Mackey of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation said, “If the sun had been out, the wood would have already started to fall apart.”

Archeologists believe the vessel more than likely was used as landfill debris to extend lower Manhattan into the Hudson River in the 18th century.

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## WHAT IS 18,000,000?

Roughly the number of flowers used to decorate the floats in the Tournament of Roses Parade, in Pasadena, California. Each float contains more stems than an average American florist goes through in five bloomin' years! The 123rd festival, themed Just Imagine gets going at 11 A.M. on New Year's Day . Who will be the Grand Marshall for the Parade this year?

## WHAT IS 1775?

On October 13, 1775, the United States Navy was established.



Ed Overstake and his lovely, fashionista wife Aldine, visited New York City this October and met Linda for dinner. We had a great time catching up on each other's lives. Ed and Aldine travel around from Michigan to Florida. Ed was a signalman on Board LST534. He was last in New York City in 1943!! Needless to say, the City has changed a bit since then.

Linda, Ed and Aldine also got together for lunch before they had to leave for Florida. It was a true joy to visit with our shipmates.

## BIRTHDAYS:



### October 27

Johnny Medeiros  
C/o Sheila Sexton  
1505 NE 55th Street  
Ocala, FL 34479

### October 31

Oscar Cress  
9701 E. Hasket Dr.  
Dayton, OH 45424

### November 11

Albert Straka  
643 Foothill Road  
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

### November 27

George Popham  
6375 Juniper Drive  
Missoula, MT 59802

### December 5

Norris Long  
Ocean Trail Nursing & Rehab  
630 N. Fodale Avenue  
PO Box 10249  
Southport, NC 28461

### December 20

Wayne Jens  
4275 Owens Road Spt. 136  
Evans, GA 30809

### December 25

William Ayers  
221 Westwood Avenue  
Jackson, TN 38301-4321

## HOLIDAYS AND IMPORTANT DATES

### October

- 7 Yom Kippur begins at sundown
- 10 Columbus Day (Observed)

- 31 Halloween



### November

- 6 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 8 Election Day
- 11 Veterans Day
- 24 Thanksgiving Day

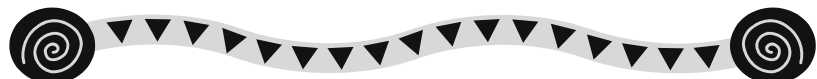


### December

- 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 20 Hanukkah Begins
- 22 First Day of Winter
- 25 Christmas
- 26 First day of Kwanza



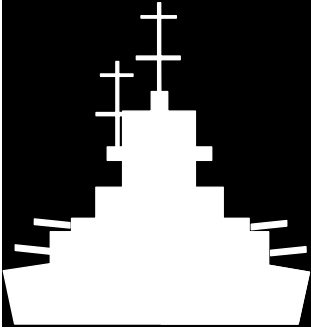
- 31 New Year's Eve



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# Just for Fun

### Trivia

Early politicians required feedback from the public to determine what the people considered important. Since there were no telephones, TV's or radios, the politicians sent their assistants to local taverns, pubs and bars. They were told to go sip some ale and listen to people's conversations and political concerns. Many assistants were dispatched at different times. "You go sip there" and "you go sip there". The two words "go sip" were eventually combined when referring to the local opinion and, thus we have the term "gossip."

### NAUTICAL TERMS

*In memory of James Richard Drew who contributed to this column until his passing.*

Hatch - An opening in a boats' deck fitted with a watertight cover

Forepeak- A compartment in the bow of a small boat.

### Editor and Comments:

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