



Marine Corps League

George C. Leber Detachment # 1481

Lincoln County, Oregon

Marine Corps League Detachment #1481 was established in April 2020, with permission from the National Marine Corps League. The detachment wanted to adopt a Marine who represented Lincoln County . Members offered up names of Marines and George C. Leber, a Radioman in World War II was voted in as the designee of the detachment.

Biography



George C. Leber was born May 19, 1919 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to George and Florence Moore Leber. His childhood and early years were spent on the East Coast, and he graduated from Haddon Heights High School in Camden, New Jersey. After high school he became a lineman for Public Service Electric and Gas Company as well played semi-pro baseball.

In February of 1942 George enlisted in the US Marine Corps and went to boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina. Six months after completing basic training, and Radio Operators School in Quantico, Virginia, he found himself on Guadalcanal with an infantry unit, and for three months he battled the Japanese on that island. Following an attack of malaria and a rest in New Zealand, he returned to active duty and rejoined his unit in the battle at Tarawa. Their landing boats could get no closer than a few hundred yards off shore, making the marines “clay pigeons” for Japanese machine gunners. The enemy was entrenched in pillboxes of timber and concrete, most of them underground. There was no way of rooting them out with artillery fire so the

Marines did it with rifles, bayonets and grenades.

His unit then went to Saipan, where things got even tougher, and he lost many of his close friends on the beaches there. They spent days under enemy artillery fire, with no time for sleep. The tension experienced in such a protracted ordeal was beyond description. Saipan had several large centers of population on it; as soon as the marines secured a beachhead, the inhabitants, who represented half a dozen races, made a beeline for the U.S. position to give themselves up, and get away from the Japanese.

George's unit went on to battle with the enemy on Tinian Island, and there they were more successful. On Tinian, George had a recurrence of malaria and was sent to the United States for treatment. In February of 1945 he was released from the Stratford Home, a rehabilitation center/sanitarium for malaria victims in Klamath Falls.

George Leber was honorably discharged from the US Marine Corps on July 9, 1945. For his service he received the Asiatic-Pacific ribbon with four stars denoting that many campaigns, two Presidential Unit Citations, a sharpshooter's and bayonet experts badge. As luck would have it, George was in 4 major battle campaigns without being wounded, which was a rarity.



George married Jessie V. Starr on March 16, 1945, and took up residency in Klamath Falls, Oregon. He started working in the food distributing business. In 1948 he moved the family up to Eugene and continued in the food business. He and Jessie had 3 children, 2 sons and a daughter. George became a volunteer fire fighter for Danebo Fire District, which led to a career for him as a full time fire fighter for city of Eugene. He retired 22 years later, achieving the rank of Captain. George and Jessie divorced in 1973.

In 1975, George married Doris Dawson and they lived in a small neighborhood about 13 miles east of Waldport on the Alsea River for much of their retirement. He became an avid fisherman for those elusive salmon and steelhead. He enjoyed woodcrafts and travel. He attended church regularly and was a member of the Elks. In 2001, due to health issues, they moved to Springfield Oregon and lived there until his passing in 2004, at the age of 85.