

## Gene Dixon



Born December 10, 1929 in Tulsa, Oklahoma and grew up during the great depression and World War II. Graduated from Bluejacket, OK high school and joined the U.S. Marine Corps in December 1946, went through boot camp at San Diego, CA. After boot camp, went to Field Telephone School at Camp Del Mar, CA. Promoted to PFC and graduated in July 1947.

First duty station was Marine Barracks, Camp Lejeune, NC as telephone installer/repairman. In 1948 was promoted to Corporal. I was interested in aviation and started taking the Airpilot's course offered by the Marine Corps Institute, thinking that after my enlistment was up, I would attend Spartan University in Tulsa, OK and enroll in Commercial Aviation pilot course. In 1949 I completed the MCI Airpilot's course and received orders to report to the Marine Corps Institute as instructor in the course. Was promoted to Sergeant and in December 1949 my first enlistment was up. Jobs in the civilian world were hard to come by, so I reenlisted for two more years for duty in security at the Naval Ammunition Depot at McAlester, OK.(this would be close to home town). However, I was there only six months and received orders to 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. Apparently I had given up the idea of pursuing the commercial pilot career.



When the Korean War broke out, shipped out with the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 5<sup>th</sup> Marines First Provisional Marine Brigade, arriving in South Korea on August 2, 1950. Participated in the Pusan Perimeter, Inchon-Seoul, Chosin Reservoir(walking out free on my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday on December 10, 1950), operations Guerrilla Hunt, Ripper, and Spring Offensive. Rotated back to the states June 1951 and was promoted to Staff Sergeant. Transferred to Security Naval Communications Station in Washington DC, the to base communications at Quantico, VA. March 1952 was ordered to Recruiter's School, Parris Island, SC. Upon graduation, ordered Western Recruiting Area at San Francisco, CA.



By this time, was a career Marine and served at several duty stations over the next few years. After attending Recruiters School, assigned to recruiting duty at Stockton, CA. Was promoted to Technical Sergeant, and again recruiting duty at Traverse City, MI 1955-1958. Met my wife, Verna and was married in 1957. Photo on the left by Traverse City Record Eagle. Final instructions to new enlistees headed for boot camp.

After married would continue to serve; December 1958 was order to Communications Chief's School at San Diego, CA. Promoted to Gunnery Sergeant(E7 new rank structure) in June 1959. Next three years was with 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine

Division until September 1962. Received orders for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division on Okinawa. September 1963 ordered to Inspector-Instructor Staff at Rochester, NY. and in June 1966 was selected for Master Sergeant(E8), however declined the promotion since it was required to serve two additional years after promotion in the Staff NCO ranks, and my retirement date had already been set and plans made to return to Traverse City and civilian life.

**Authorized Awards:** Combat Service Ribbon; Navy Presidential Unit Citation w/3 bronze service stars for 4<sup>th</sup> award; Marine Corps Good Conduct w/1 silver service star for 6<sup>th</sup> award; World War II Victory; National Defense w/1 bronze service star for 2<sup>nd</sup> award; Korean War Service w/1 silver service star for 5 campaigns; Korean Presidential Unit Citation; United Nations Service Korea; Republic of Korea Service.

My most memorable experience was the Korean War. Even though it was a horrible experience, I believe it made me a stronger person and strengthened my faith in God and led me to become a committed Christian.

After retiring in July 1966, worked at Tower Finance Corporation in Traverse City as assistant manager. However, soon discovered this was not for me. It was great to make loans to people, but then when they did not repay, it was my job to try to collect. In July 1967 I quit Tower Finance Corporation and went to work at the Traverse City Post Office as postal clerk, however this was mostly night work, so in January 1968 I went to work at the Grand Traverse County Road Commission as Clerk of the Board and Payroll Clerk, retiring in 1988 after 20 years. Have been enjoying the retired life since then, doing only what I want to do and when I want to do it.

In 1983 while at the Road Commission, I set up computer operations to handle personnel and payroll. So after retirement, became more interested in the internet and web site building and now spend a lot of time creating and designing web sites. I do this for my own enjoyment and never charge for my services. I now maintain my own website on my special interests in Family,

**Church, Genealogy, Government, Marine Corps, and more. I have also created and maintain websites for my church, my son's business, Grand Traverse Area Veterans Memorial, Yagle Brothers Detachment 165.**



**In the past, I had refrained from joining any veterans groups. About two years ago I met Maurice Cahill and he invited me to drop by the detachment building and look it over, and more recently I met Ray Rayl at a Grand Traverse Area Veterans Memorial Coalition meeting and he invited me to come to the next meeting of the Yagle Brothers Detachment 165. I accepted his invitation and was impressed with the members, the meeting process and patriotism shown and joined as a member and life member in January 2011. I am also a member of the Korean War Veterans Association, Northwest Michigan Chapter 38, Traverse City, Michigan**

**-usmc**