

LIST OF CANDIDATES AND BIO'S – 2023-2025

President:

Jeson H. Hall – Jeson is a Hospital Corpsman who served with the Navy and Marine Corps for 14 years from 2001 – 2015. During those years, Jeson was assigned to Second Battalion, Fourth Marines from 2002 to 2005. During this time, Jeson deployed twice with 2/4, once for 11 months as the Ground Combat Element with Golf Company, Second Platoon from 2002 to 2003 and after that deployment, he was transferred to the Headquarters and Service Company from 2003 to 2005. In 2004, Jeson would deploy with 2/4 to the Anbar Province into Ramadi, Iraq where 2/4 would experience one of its toughest deployments of the entire Operation Iraqi Freedom Campaign. Jeson would later get assigned to the USS Cleveland and as the Ship's Company Medical Representative, would get to host 2 different companies with 2/4 for a Western Pacific deployment in 2009.

Jeson would deploy with another unit who saw combat again in 2014, when he deployed with First Battalion, Seventh Marines for 5 months. Overall, Jeson has 5 deployments, having traveled to Europe, Asia, and Australia. Jeson has been stationed on the West Coast with First Marine Division and as far East as with the Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, U.S. Naval Forces Africa, Commander U.S. Sixth Fleet.

After serving in the U.S. Navy, Jeson went to North Carolina to earn his Associates Degree, his Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, settle down and get married, have a son, and return back to school for his Master's Degree in Social Work. Jeson has worked for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for 8 years having served within the Veterans Healthcare Administration in both North Carolina and in California. He would be honored to receive your vote, serve alongside the other board members, and represent this battalion for this upcoming term.

Joseph "Pete" P. Gannon – Pete Enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1966 and signed up for Motor Transport Mechanic School. He arrived in Viet Nam in 1967 and was assigned to the 3rd Marine Motor Transport. In December 1967, he was assigned to 2/4 and was one of the two mechanics for all of 2/4's vehicles. While taking ammo and retrieving wounded and dead on an Otter during Dai Do, he was wounded and medevac'd on the last "Helo" along with Chaplain Habiby. After completing his enlistment in the Marine Corps, Pete joined the Fire Department of a small city outside of Ft. Lauderdale, FL and, working his way up to Battalion Chief, served the city for 25 years. During that time, he trained firefighters at the Fire Academy. As a firefighter, he learned to dive and was a member of Dive Rescue International which trains Fire, Police, and Public Safety personnel. He has been a member of Florida State Fire Instructors, holding the position of President for 8 years, is a member of 30 years of the U S Coast Guard Auxiliary, currently, teaching boating safety classes, and is a Sr. Vice – Commandant of Tarmac Detachment 755 of the Marine Corps League. Additionally, Pete volunteers at the local VA where he enjoys meeting, greeting, and assisting Veterans. Pete believes that he has the background to carry on the high traditions of the 2nd Battalion 4th Marines Association. He has served two terms as Vice President and he would deem it an honor to continue to serve the Association as your President.

Vice President:

Joseph C. Hayes – Joe Hayes- Joe enlisted in the Marine Corps in May of 2001 and served through May of 2005. As a Rifleman, Joe was assigned to 2nd Battalion 4th Marines, Golf Co. 3rd Platoon. In February 2004, Joe deployed to Ramadi, Iraq with 2/4. On April 6 2004, while leading a fireteam in 3rd platoon, Joe was wounded in action by an enemy hand grenade. During the firefight, 2 squad members were killed and 3 were wounded including Joe. After being medevac'd to the U.S., Joe requested to delay the surgeries to remove the grenade shrapnel so that he could return to Iraq. Joe reunited with 3rd platoon in July of 2004 and finished the deployment with them. Awards include the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. Shortly after exiting the Marine Corps, Joe was hired as a police officer by the Shafter Police Department. Joe specialized in narcotics and gang enforcement and served the community for 11 years. During his time as an officer, Joe completed a bachelor's degree in religion at Liberty University. After retiring, he completed a Master's of Business for Veterans at the University of Southern California. Joe is a committed Christian and has a mission to care for the spiritual welfare of those he served with. Joe operates a YouTube channel (Day of Battle) where he ministers primarily to Veterans. Joe recently moved outside Oklahoma City and started a custom homebuilding company (Whitetail Construction and Homes). Joe is married and has three children. It would be his pleasure to serve as your Vice President.

Secretary:

Jeffery L. Dancker – Jeff was with 2/4, specifically Golf Company, from 2004-2008. He deployed twice with 2/4, once with the 31st MEU and once with the 15th MEU, where they went into Iraq in 2006-2007.

In December of 2020, Jeff saw a few other USMC infantry battalions that had history pages on Instagram and he wanted to create one for 2/4. Since creating the page, it has only helped bring a lot of Marines of 2/4 together. He, also, currently, helps run the 2/4 Association Facebook page. Jeff's goal as Secretary is to continue keeping accurate records for the Association, bringing all of our generations together, and continue growing our Association!

Director:

Benjamin A. Turner [Incumbent] – Ben joined 2/4 fresh out of School of Infantry in August of 1992 and stayed with the battalion until April of 1994. Ben, then, transferred to 8th & I and eventually finished up with 3/8. He left active duty in 1998 at the rank of Sgt.

After leaving active duty, Ben has run a successful IT company for the last 15 years and sat on the BOD for his former Home Owner's Association for nearly ten years before moving to a new location. Additionally, Ben has held various board member positions with other non-profit organizations. The most prominent has been with the American Heritage Girls chairing the Outdoor/Camping group for his daughter's troop. He looks forward to continuing to serve the Association members as Director.

Alphonso Velasco – Alfonso joined the United States Marine Corps in 2001 straight out of high school, and graduated boot camp on September 14, 2001, three days after the 911 attacks. After graduating from boot camp and SOI, he reported to 2/4 Golf Company. In 2002, he was deployed to Okinawa, Japan and attached to the 31st MEU. In 2004, Alfonso and his unit deployed to Ramadi, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom where he led Marines into Combat as a team leader. He left active duty in 2005 at the rank of Corporal

After leaving active duty, Alfonso joined the Los Angeles Police Department in 2008 where he has worked as a Police Officer for the last 15 years. While with LAPD, Alfonso has worked many assignments including patrol, Youth Service Officer, and Public Engagement Section. Currently he works the CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) where he reviews and approves the security site plans for buildings being constructed in Los Angeles.

Another part of his work is being a Liaison Representative for the Devil Pups Youth Program of America. If Elected, Alphonso looks forward to serving the Association membership as Director.

Matthew J. Boelhower – Matt Enlisted in the Marine Corps in his Junior year of High School and left for Boot Camp upon Graduation in 2003. After graduating Boot Camp at MCRD San Diego and Infantry Training Battalion, as an 0311, on Camp Pendleton, he was assigned to Golf Company, 2nd Bn 4th Marines. He served with Joker 1 through three deployments to include Ramadi Iraq, Okinawa on the 31st MEU, and Barwana Iraq with the 15th MEU. He left 2/4 as a Sergeant graduating from Martial Arts Instructor Course and Corporals Leadership Course.

After a short stint as a civilian, Matt Re-Enlisted and was stationed in 29 Palms with 1st Bn 7th Marines. Due to the deployment cycle, he filled several roles in Baker 1/7 as a Platoon Commander, Platoon Sergeant, Section Leader, and Squad Leader. He graduated from Infantry Squad Leaders Course, Sergeants Course, and helped his Battalion create a Team Leaders course. Matt deployed to Karmah Iraq with Baker 1/7 where he was a Mounted Section Leader. After returning from that deployment Baker 1/7 trained as a small boat raid company using CRRCs. Matt graduated from Assault Climbers course as a Tactical Rope Suspension Technician and deployed again to Okinawa on the 31st MEU with Baker 1/7.

After leaving the Marine Corps, Matt married his wife, Erin, and made Illinois their home. They have one beautiful daughter who is their world. Matt was hired as a Correctional Officer for the McHenry County Sheriff's Office in Illinois in 2013. He attained an Associate's Degree in Firearms Technology and became a Firearms Instructor for the Department. Matt felt compelled to do more and gained the status of Operator in 2015 on the jail's emergency response team. Matt is also a Crisis Negotiator and is currently the Assistant Commander of the Special Response Unit which encompasses the Intel, Crisis, and Tactical Teams. He will celebrate 10 years of service with the Department in July.

Matt cares deeply for his first unit, the Magnificent Bastards, and would love the opportunity to serve the members of the Association as a Director. As a student of history, he understands the power of fellowship that is often called upon with Veteran and Unit organizations and what better way to foster that, than to be honored with a position on the Board to help maintain our legacy.