

Marines Run for Gen. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller

US Marines from the Fort Lee Marine Detachment made their annual pilgrimage to the grave site of Lt. Gen. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller in Christ Church Parish, Middlesex, on Friday 10/30/2015 with a running tour through the Town of West Point where Puller was born.

The 62-mile run which begins to follow "General Puller Highway" in Saluda, VA, serves to honor and commemorate the General, arguably the most prolific and legendary figure in [United States Marine Corps](#) history.



Marine sources have said. "The run is special because it gives Marines the opportunity to celebrate Puller and also the Marine Corps as a whole. November 10th is the Marine Corps' birthday, and the Corps uses this as an opportunity for Marines to celebrate that and to see where (Puller) grew up and where he as a member of the parish and served on its Vestry and was buried in Christ Church Parish, Middlesex cemetery. This tradition started over 20 years ago and it's a pretty special deal running all the way

Another Marine source has said, "The run also serves as a reminder of Puller's dedication to his fellow Marines. The run is a celebration of Lt. Gen. Puller and his service to his Marines and the Marine Corps. Puller was known as a 'Marine's Marine' and there are many stories about Marines simply dropping by his home (in Saluda) just to speak with him.

"The event has grown substantially within recent years because the Marine Corps Detachment in Fort Lee continues to grow. We brought in (training) schools from all the way up to Aberdeen, Maryland to way down south in Huntsville, Alabama and

consolidated them all here at Fort Lee, so the footprint we make here at Fort Lee is a lot bigger than it used to be."

The source explained how 62 Marines will run in length in teams of two for approximately two miles per group. The run begins in Fort Lee and ends at Puller's grave site at Christ Church. Simpson said every Marine who is not in training on the day of the run will be bused to Saluda where they will run en masse to Christ Church Cemetery, where Puller is buried.

"The run is something Marines look forward to every year. It's a great camaraderie opportunity for the Marines and everybody looks forward to it."

"November 1st is when the Marine detachment at Fort Lee celebrates their annual Marine Corps Birthday Ball. "It's a great week of camaraderie and for (Marines) to spend time with each other and really enjoy being a Marine and the perks that come along with it."

Puller was born June 26, 1898 in West Point, VA. He joined the Marine Corps in 1918 at the rank of Private and did not retire until 1955, in which time he had achieved the rank of Lieutenant General. On their way to Saluda, Marines Corps members will run through the Town of West Point, going past the home where Puller was born on First Street. He graduated from West Point High School in 1917.

Puller — known for his quick-witted remarks and reputation as 'a Marine's Marine' — served in both the Second World War and the Korean War, and participated in major battles such as the 1942 Guadalcanal Campaign during WWII and the Battle of [Chosin Reservoir](#) during the Korean War.

During his service in the Marine Corps, Puller was awarded five Navy Crosses — the second-highest military decoration awarded for valor to a member of the [United States Navy](#) or any branch operating under the Department of the Navy — three Air Medals, two Legion of Merit decorations, a Distinguished Service Cross — the second-highest military decoration awarded to a member of the [United States Army](#) — a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart Medal, in addition to many other awards and citations.

Puller remains the most highly decorated member of the US Marine Corps. He died Oct. 11, 1971 in Hampton, Virginia at the age of 73.

- See more at: <http://www.tidewaterreview.com/features/va-tr-byline-puller-run-1015-20141015%2c0%2c1180724.story#sthash.yXmO1Jyp.dpuf>