

# TEXAS

**Charles Ynman**  
**Commandant**



# MARINE

**Department of TEXAS**  
**Marine Corps League**

# SUMMER

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## Commandant's Corner

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### I WANT TO THANK

the membership for electing me Department Commandant at the State Convention. I do not take your confidence lightly and intend to exceed your expectations. We have an exceptional group of Department Officers. I thank our previous and current Board of Trustees and Committee Chairmen for their excellent work and contributions. I also thank the Alamo Detachment and the Marine Corps League Auxiliary in San Antonio for hosting a superb 2015 Department of Texas Convention.



Thank you!

The Board of Trustees is also proud to announce that the **Captain John Yancey Detachment** has been selected for the 2016 State Convention in Dallas, Texas. The web site will have hotel details soon.

Thank you, Yancey Detachment for stepping up.

As you are aware, last year we set goals of transparent communications and an increase in the roles of the District Vices. This enabled us to communicate with the Detachment Commandants on a regular basis and, in turn, with the individual members. We have now added a new weapon to our arsenal. Our Texas web site is now back on line and functional ([www.texasmcl.org](http://www.texasmcl.org)). Our intention is to make the Department information available 24 hours a day. We need your help by **signing up on the web site** and listing your profile.



I also suggest that if you have any concerns or questions, please email your District Vice and/or a Department Staff Officer.

At the recent State Convention in San Antonio, the members approved the order and production of State tribute coins that will show our new logo.

When these coins arrive, you will be able to order them via the web site using Pay Pal.



The Department of Texas is also growing and maintaining its membership. We are pleased that we were able to retain the Hill Country Detachment and increase its size. This was accomplished through cooperation between the District 4 Vice Commandant and the Department of Texas Board of Trustees. The Hill Country Detachment will alternate its meetings between several Hill Country cities.

We also welcome a new Detachment, the LCpl. Jacob D. Hayes, McKinney, TX. We will present their Charter on **August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015**. The ceremony will be held in the Collin County Courthouse in the Central Jury Room, 2100 Bloomdale Rd., McKinney, TX 75071.



The Commandant Elect Nathan Hanson has advised that each guest Should be prepared for a security screening (no knives, concealed carry, etc.).

They will have a fellowship meal beginning at 1830 and are asking all members and guests to make a \$10

donation to cover the meal. **I also ask that everyone **RSVP** me before the close of **business on Friday, August 14<sup>th</sup>**.** They will need a good head count for the meal and to advise the courthouse.

Commandant Elect Hanson is planning to arrange for the MC JROTC to conduct a Color and silent drill performance. If this is possible they will be performing at 1920. We will officially open the meeting at 1930. We will first present the Charter, swear in the new members and associate members and then swear in the officers and turn over the duties to the new Commandant.

The new Detachment will have t-shirts, bags of Detachment coffee, and Marine/veteran hats for sale to help raise some initial funds. It is also planned to send out several press releases to solicit possible guests from the local area.



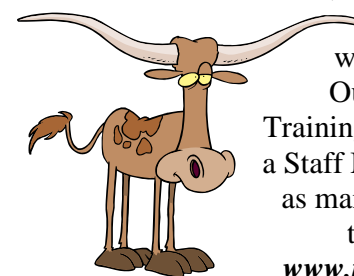
Please have all wishing to attend **RSVP** Commandant Elect Nathan Hanson with the number of people in your party at [GySgtHanson.MCL@gmail.com](mailto:GySgtHanson.MCL@gmail.com).

We plan to appoint liaisons from the membership to open communications with female Marines and Navy Corpsmen and invite them to join the Marine Corps League. I have also asked an Associate Member to work on making ourselves more accessible to Associate Members and finding ways to include them in the League activities.

We are now looking forward to the Department of Texas Fall Conference, hosted by the Longhorn Detachment, which will be held in Ft. Worth.

Our plan is to make this a Training Conference as well as a Staff Meeting. We encourage as many members as possible to attend. Please refer to [www.texasmcl.org](http://www.texasmcl.org) for details and registration. Please make your reservations now because we expect a large turnout.

Now, turning to happenings at our National Headquarters... at the time we are submitting this article the National web site is not operating and the National Board of Trustees is over their budget.



National employees are at risk of losing their jobs and the National leadership has been questioned. What will happen is in the hands of our present National Leaders. I have advised our Department of Texas Staff leadership to refrain from distributing any non-authorized information. "Scuttlebutt" can be more dangerous than the truth. The National Board and Budget Committee will meet in July and recommend a balanced budget.



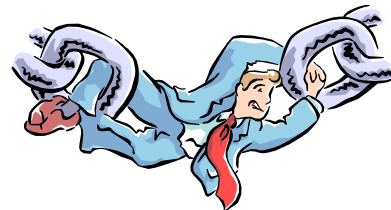
Texas MCL Officers and Board plan to attend the National Convention in Scottsdale where many decisions will be discussed and made. I propose we observe and listen. We can then make our decision how to best react. On return from the National Convention, your Commandant and Board of Trustees will inform the Department of Texas members of our findings. Until then, I ask for your patience and trust. I do assure you the Department of Texas is in good order and in budget.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

Ynman, I also will continue as the Department Youth Activities Staff Chairman.

Since assuming the duties of Sr. Vice, the Commandant and I have been working on ways to improve and simplify both the Detachment and Youth Activity reports. We are working toward being able to present it at the Fall Conference in October of this year.

We will also continue to work on effective communication between the Department, District Vices and Detachments. This will help to make a smoother running Department and keep our member update data on what is going on in the Marine Corps League. We are only an email or phone call away if you need help or have a question. Remember to use your chain of command.



Don't blind side them.

I mentioned at the Department Convention that Detachments that

support Young Marine Units that have a marksmanship program should apply to the NRA for grant money. All you have to do is go online to the NRA Foundation and click in the *grant* section.

There are three regions in Texas. Find the one that covers your county. It also lists the representative for your area. You can contact them if you have



questions about the grants. At

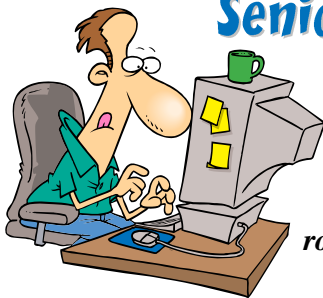
present the web site for submitting grants is being revised; however, you can request to be notified when it is back up and running. You can get a lot of equipment at no cost other than writing a

grant request. They hold one Grant Board a year for each region. Do not miss the due date for grant or you will have to wait until next year.

The upcoming Fall Staff Meeting is not just a Staff and Officers meeting. This is where training classes are conducted for ALL members in the



## Senior's Segment



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## AS THE NEWLY ELECTED

Department Sr. Vice Commandant I what to thank everyone for their vote of confidence in me to fulfill the duties of this position. I also wish to give a "WELL DONE and THANK YOU" to the Alamo Detachment for the excellent job they did on hosting this year's Department Convention.

Under the authority of the new Commandant, Charles



Department of Texas. This is where the future leadership of the Detachments and Department can become more knowledgeable and proficient in their future leadership roles. So I ask all our members to make an effort to make the Department Fall Staff Meeting.



word that you are here, shout it from the mountain, local paper, twitter, Face Book, Internet, local radio... use all your resources to **communicate.**

I look forward to an awesome year with my Brothers and Sisters.



## Junior's Journal

Charles "Chuck" Bones  
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## THANK YOU FOR YOUR support

Texas Marines. We have experienced some changes in our League... some really awesome things have been put into place that have greatly improved our communication amongst our Detachments in the Department of Texas.

Our membership is the key to survival as a Veterans organization.

Every member has a voice in the League. "Red Hats" run the League. Your Detachment, your membership, be it new or Veteran members, is our life blood.



One key to good membership is to open communications with your members and potential new members. The League has been around since it was founded by John A. Lejeune in 1923 and Congress granted us the Federal Charter in 1937, yet the first time I ever saw mention of it was in 2011.

Our title was *earned*; it was never given. Our Brotherhood should not be a secret. Let the Marine Corps League be heard loud and clear, get out the

## Judge Advocate's Alerts

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## I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU

some information on my goals as the newly elected Judge Advocate for the Department of Texas. I want every Commandant and fellow Department Officer to feel comfortable with contacting me whenever issues may arise regarding the Department Bylaws. I will do anything I can to provide you with the proper advice, but if I cannot give you the answer I will find it.

My background in the MCL is as Judge Advocate and Commandant in the Sgt. J.R. Tijerina Detachment #1295, Katy, Texas.

I am a retired attorney. My legal experience



includes both private practice and federal service as an attorney for the IRS. My experience in private practice included almost every segment of the law. My experience with the IRS, of course, was concentrated in various areas of the tax law. I feel that my legal experience will benefit the Department of

Texas during my tenure as your Judge Advocate.

I look forward to serving the Department.

## Adjutant/Paymaster Postings

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### IT WAS WONDERFUL TO SEE

so many Detachments represented at the Department Convention last month. I hope just as many, or more, Detachments are able to attend the Fall Conference in Ft. Worth in October.

The League is now in a new fiscal year, FY 16.

Therefore it is time to start numbering your transmittals 16-01 and continue numbering them sequentially, -02, -03, etc. In the past, when Paymasters have numbered their

transmittals incorrectly, I have corrected them and advised the Detachment to advise their Paymaster of their error. However, we have too many Commandants who do not communicate with their staff members. **Therefore, this year I will be sending the transmittals back to the Paymaster for correction.**

We are fast approaching the time to file your Detachment 990. Even though the deadline isn't until 2400, 15 November, **PLEASE** don't wait until the last minute to do so. Several Detachments have already filed and sent me their copy of the IRS email showing that their 990 has been accepted. It is a requirement by National that you email me your acceptance email. I, in turn, send all the IRS emails to National so they know who has filed. Please do not mail me a hard copy because I will have to scan it so I have a digital copy to send to National.

If your Detachment files the long form 990, please just send me the first page of the form.



## DON'T DELAY, FILE TODAY.

At the Department Convention, there were some conversations regarding Detachments who conduct raffles.

Before your Detachment conducts a raffle, make sure you **KNOW THE TEXAS LAW** regarding nonprofit raffles. Go to this link and

review the requirements for nonprofit raffle:

<http://www.gambling-law-us.com/Charitable-Gaming/Texas/texas-raffles.htm>.

If you have any questions regarding this, or any other admin issue, please feel free to contact me.

## Sergeant-At-Arms Summary

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I, CHRIS BOREL,



JUST WANTED  
TO SAY "Hi" ...  
AND I'M NOT  
LION!

I would like to assure all of you that being newly elected to the duties of "Sergeant-At-Arms" I plan to fulfill the office diligently. I do not pretend to know everything, but I can assure you I do know how to research anything. I'm a big believer in "asking people for answers." My favorite quote is, "You cannot know what you do not know." So I would ask you all to forgive me while I (like all



new guys) stumble my way into learning my new position. I also invite constructive criticism at the appropriate time.

I am planning to insert some reminder information for all new Detachment Sergeant-At-Arms and any new members who wish to know. If anyone has some topics they would like me to cover I am always open for suggestions.

Here is my first bit of basic information to those new members who may not know:

**Entering/Departing while Meeting is in Progress:**

Procedure, similar to embarking/disembarking ship ...

- Enter without disturbing meeting, salute flag, then the Sergeant-At-Arms.
- If necessary to depart, reverse the procedure.

I am looking forward to serving you and the Department this year. Thank you for your time.



**Chaplain's  
Comments**

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HELLO DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS!!

Once more I find myself under a new cover, fielding new responsibilities. I am honored to be your Chaplain. Thank you for your trust and confidence.

I have no special words of wisdom or guidance, except to remind those of you who are Detachment Chaplains that it is absolutely vital to the League that you complete the necessary documentation when one of your members passes. Certainly, it is not something that we as Chaplains like to do, but notifying the chain of command is important. Firstly, it allows the Marine Corps League to have accurate information regarding its membership. Secondly, it affords



the opportunity to send condolences and offer support to the family.

The first point above is administrative, but the second is precisely what we in the League are... "family." As Marines, FMF Corpsmen, and Chaplains, we are members of a close family. We always take care of our own. We know that it has been instilled in each of us since our time on the yellow footprints. It is a



fundamental truth that enables us to accomplish the mission while on active duty, and it is no less important to our mission as members of the League! Until next time, be sure to take care of the paperwork and always take care of each other and our own.

**Jr. Past Commandant's  
Commentary**

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**IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE**

serving the Department of Texas Marine Corps League as Commandant. It also has been a very good learning experience. I'm just sad that I couldn't seek a second term due to some family health problems which wouldn't allow me the time to keep doing my duties as Commandant. But a big Thank You goes to the Officers of the Department of Texas MCL who have stepped in to help this past year.

Most of our District Vices were very busy passing out and getting information from the Detachments. I had heard some Detachments say that they never had any contact or information from their District Vices, so one of our projects

was to have communication between Department and Detachments using the District Vices... and they did a great job.



Thanks to Marine Edgar Ermis we now have a web site that has all the updated information to allow you to

do your Transmittals to Activity Reports. All you have to do is log in. Once logged in you will have access to all the Staff Officers.

Also, I would like to thank Marines Ermis, Bones, and Ynman for designing the new emblem for the Department of Texas.



As your Commandant for the past year I attended the following: 2014 National Convention in Charleston, WV, Texas Fall Staff Conference in Granbury, TX, 2015 Midwinter Conference in Falls Church, VA, and 2015 Southern Division Conference in Ft. Smith, AR. I also installed Officers for the Coastal Bend Detachment in Corpus Christi, Laredo Detachment in Laredo, Loosemore Detachment in Refugio, Rose City Detachment in Tyler, and Alamo Detachment in San Antonio. I also attended the Iwo Jima Day Ceremonies both in Corpus Christi and Harlingen and the wake and funeral for our Department Chaplain Joe Vickery in Texas City.

I would like to wish the new Officers for



2015-2016 the best of luck and encourage them to keep the communication and information between the Detachments and Department going.

## Associate Member Analysis

Submitted by Larry Webber  
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### I AM WRITING THIS TO LET

the members of the Department of Texas know how well, as an Associate Member, I was accepted as an attendee at the Marine Corps League 2015 State Convention. I also admire the excellent job the Alamo Detachment did in hosting the Convention. It makes me want to return to my Detachment and get more involved and it gives me a new respect for the United States Marine Corps. I only wish I was 19 years old again, so I could enlist in the Marines and be so bold to stand on those yellow footprints.

At Sunday breakfast, I was alone and not knowing anyone I approached a table of about five Marines and asked if I could sit with them. There was only one vacancy and they welcomed me in typical Marine style. I quickly informed them I was an Associate Member and had a question... to which the biggest guy there, said "As long as you don't mind getting an answer you don't want!"

I said, "No problem," and then asked the question, "What do you expect of an Associate Member?" to which I received an immediate answer, "Don't sit down at the table with us!!" This of course brought a big laugh from the rest of the guys. My immediate reaction was, "What did I get myself into?"

Then the guy to my right asked, "What was your oath when you accepted membership in the League?" I said, "I listened to the oath our new Commandant took at the ceremony last night and it was almost the same oath I had taken when I joined."

He replied, "Exactly... we expect exactly the



# Veteran's Voice

Texas Veterans Newsletter is available to any MCL member or any Veteran. It pertains to the Veterans of the State of Texas and is available at [www.tvc.state.tx.us](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us).



same thing from you as any Marine.” Everyone at the table agreed and gave examples of how Associate members contribute in their home Detachments. As throughout the State Convention, they codified the feeling of being a part of the team. I would never claim to be a Marine, but this is probably the closest one could come to feeling like one.

The Department Commandant Charles Ynman encouraged me to go to the State Convention. I did and he was right. When I told him about my experiences he recommended I share it with our members. I was also impressed with everyone’s



military bearing, even after years separated from active duty. I experienced it close up, by being two minutes late to a meeting and being suddenly introduced to a rather large Sergeant-At-Arms who quickly showed me the proper procedure for entering and leaving a meeting after it is in progress and which is the correct hatch.

I have a lot of procedures and protocol to learn. The meetings were professionally run with military decorum. I was so impressed with the dedication I witnessed.

Over the course of the Convention, especially after Sunday breakfast, I really felt part of the League. I felt I was in the presence of “warriors.” I believe every member, including Associates, should make a real effort to attend the next Convention. I plan to make next year’s Convention as well as the Fall Conference in Ft. Worth in October. I encourage all members to participate in the upcoming events as well as your Detachment meetings. It will make you feel a part of something solid... something worthwhile. I am beginning to understand the meaning of Semper Fi.



**SOME OF THE** highlights since publication of the May 2015 newsletter are:



## ***Promise of Free Tuition Could Vanish for Some Veterans’ Children***

By Matthew Watkins, *The Texas Tribune*  
May 15, 2015...

During Troy Reynolds’ 24-year post-Army career, he has risen from teaching theater to overseeing curriculum at a Houston-area school district. But he has never sought the top job in his field... superintendent.

That’s because he’d probably need a doctorate for that position, and doctorates are expensive. Reynolds would rather give one of his kids the free tuition that Texas promises him and other veterans.

“I made a career decision,” said Reynolds, 47. “I decided that I would rather have my child get a bachelor’s degree than have a doctorate for me.”

His sacrifice could soon be for naught. Reynolds has been counting on free school for one of his kids since 2009, when the Legislature began allowing veterans to pass unused tuition benefits on to a dependent. But costs of the tuition program, known as Hazlewood, have spiraled out of control. And legislators now are working on peeling back those benefits.



That means Reynolds may have to find a new, last-minute way to pay for his daughter’s school. Other veterans across the state could experience the same problem – all because of what critics see



as poor financial planning by the state.

“That seems absurd to us,” said Jim Brennan, Legislative Director of the Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations. “That is grossly unfair.”

### Poor Estimates

Hazlewood has been available for decades to honorably discharged veterans from Texas who spent at least 180 days on active duty. Each veteran gets 150 free credit hours at a state school. But many of those credits go unused, because most veterans also qualify for federal benefits under the GI Bill.



Sen. Van de Putte

In 2009, then Senator Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, raised the idea of allowing veterans to transfer those unused hours to a dependent child. Her proposal was unanimously approved, but some lawmakers now say they didn’t understand the idea’s true consequences.

The Legislative Budget Board predicted at the time that the program would have an annual combined cost of \$21 million for Texas’ public universities by 2014 if Van de Putte’s bill passed. That was way off. In December 2014, the LBB estimated that the program actually cost \$169.1 million in 2014. That number could grow to \$379 million by 2019, the agency said in a report.

Universities are responsible for covering those costs and have struggled to keep up. School administrators call the program a massive unfunded mandate, and warn that non-Hazlewood students’ tuition will have to rise if changes aren’t made.



“Everyone had good intentions, but I don’t think anyone had a clear understanding that it would result in the financial burden that the schools are going to have to absorb,” said Representative John Zerwas, R-Richmond, chairman of the House Higher Education Committee.



Rep. Zerwas

The program grew

because it was wildly popular among veterans. Reynolds said he was *thrilled* when he heard about it. He had used his GI Bill benefits to pay for his undergraduate education at Sam Houston State University, and then had used some Hazlewood hours to earn a master’s degree at the same school. But he still had more than 100 hours left over.



With two kids and one income, those extra hours promised to be a huge relief. He was being recruited into a doctoral program at his alma mater, but decided to hold off. The benefit would be better spent on one of his kids, he said.

“I had started saving for college, but I didn’t have a whole lot,” he said. “It was moving very slowly.”

Reynolds’ 16-year-old son is planning to join the military, so he’ll probably be able to use his own Hazlewood benefits. But Reynolds’ 14-year-old daughter has talked about attending Sam Houston State or the University of Texas at Austin. Reynolds says he only has about \$5,000 in savings, which may not be enough to pay for a semester at UT-Austin.

“I will probably be able to come up with enough loans to put my kids through Sam Houston State,” he said. “For UT, I can’t do it if I am doing it on my own.”

If he had known that the Hazlewood program could disappear, he said, he could have saved more in the last few years.

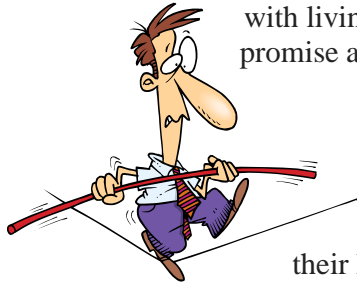
### Tighter Restrictions

The full details of Hazlewood’s overhaul haven’t been finalized. A proposal that passed the Senate by a 24-7 vote on May 5 would require a veteran to serve six years before he or she could pass the benefits on to a child. And those benefits would expire after 15 years, meaning the child would have to be born before the parent left the military in order to benefit.

The proposal, Senate Bill 1735, was made even stricter when it passed through the House Higher Education Committee. That version would cap free tuition for legacy beneficiaries at 60 hours, half the amount needed for a typical bachelor’s degree.

Zerwas, the House Committee Chairman, said he expects the bill will be amended by the full House to bring it closer to the Senate's version before final passage. The final version will also probably include some sort of grandfathering provision so that current juniors and seniors in high school would still qualify for the legacy benefit, he said.

“We are trying to balance fiscal responsibility with living up to as much of the promise and dedication we have made to the veterans,” Zerwas said.

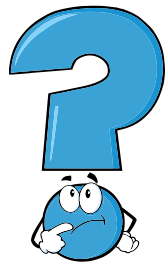


But most families start saving for college well before their kid is a junior. So a lot of veterans will be hurt by the broken promise, critics say. Reynolds left the Army in 1991, so he will have passed the 15-year cutoff date when his kids are ready for school.

Younger families will feel the impact, too. Austin veteran Stuart Stribling said his wife joined the military specifically for the Hazlewood benefit. They have a 6-year-old and a 4-month old, so they will probably never be able to use the program if the changes are approved.

“I understand the financial aspect of it and that it's potentially not sustainable,” Stribling said. “But to make the changes and make them retroactively, I think is just wholeheartedly wrong.”

Given the difficulty of estimating Hazlewood patterns, it's hard to say how many veterans' families would be affected. The Legislative Budget Board didn't even venture a guess about the fiscal impact of this year's bill. But veterans groups predicted a lot of financial trouble for their members.



Enlisted members typically serve for less than four years, said Brennan of the veterans' coalition. And in 2011, the Army cut the length of its combat tours to nine months.

“You could have a veteran who serves multiple tours of combat who doesn't qualify,” Brennan said, “but people who served in the reserves for six years and didn't go overseas would.”

The people who would benefit the most, Brennan said, would be the career officers who already make more money – the people who need it the least.

“Clearly higher ed has far more influence and money in the Legislature than we do,” he said.



### *Homes for Heroes Donates New Home to Paralyzed Marine*

By Denise Marquez, [lubbockonline.com](http://lubbockonline.com)  
June 17, 2015...



A veteran who was paralyzed while he served as a sergeant in the U.S. Marines may have received the thank you he deserves for his sacrifice.

Christopher Montez, 39, on Tuesday received the keys to his new home located at 2104 101st St. from the West Texas Home Builders Association's Lubbock Homes for Heroes program.

Montez served in the Marines from 1994-98 and re-enlisted in 2001 after the September 11 terrorist attacks. He was paralyzed from the neck down in a helicopter accident in 2004 when he was stationed in Hawaii.



Montez said receiving the keys and seeing his new home for the first time was “amazing.”

“It's a huge relief to finally be able to have a place that you can actually call your home,” Montez said. “Everything that's been given and donated — there's no words to express how blessed we feel.”

Montez is cared for daily by a medical team and his mother, Erminia “Minnie” Honesto who will live with him in his new home.

“It's gorgeous,” Honesto said. “So many people have helped us and gave and donated. We thank everybody from the bottom of our hearts. It's

a total blessing to finally say we have a home. If something ever happens to me I know he's going to be okay."

Stewart Townsen, the lead builder of the new home, said the house is catered for Montez's needs. He said Montez will be able to control the lights and television with his voice, and the doors are constructed to be wide enough for Montez to maneuver in and out of with his wheelchair.

"We have a sidewalk (outside) that is enclosed with a fence so he can't fall out," Townsend said. "That will get him from the backyard to the front yard and he's not been able to do that before. It gives him some control. I think it's really going to make a difference and make their lives a lot easier."

Two bedrooms are also located upstairs for an in-house caregiver and for Montez's 15-year-old son.

"He won't have accessibility to (those rooms), but that's for the possibility of his son coming to stay with him and the possibility of another caregiver," Townsen said. "His mother's bedroom is on the ground floor."

Montez's home is the fifth home built by local builders and members of the WTHBA. The lot was donated by Robert Wood and Trey Strong, developers of the Fox Ridge subdivision.



Shane Salyer, WTHBA President, said the WTHBA board votes on a candidate that is presented by Operation Finally Home — a nonprofit organization that helps provide mortgage-free homes to military veterans and to widows of fallen soldiers.

"Our goal is to try and provide a project each year," Salyer said. "We have donations from people from all around the city. It's a great project. We're giving Chris a mortgage-free home. It's kind of a little bit of repayment for the sacrifice he gave for us."

Montez's new home is being featured in the WTHBA 60th annual Parade of Homes that runs until June 21<sup>st</sup>. Montez will be able to move into his home after the Parade of Homes.



## ***One Year After VA Scandal, the Number of Veterans Waiting For Care is Up 50%***

By Emily Wax-Thibodeaux, *The Washington Post*  
June 23, 2015...

One year after an explosive Veterans Affairs scandal sparked national outrage, the number of veterans on wait lists to be treated for everything from Hepatitis C to post-traumatic stress is 50% higher than at the same time last year, according to VA data.

VA's leadership attributed the growing wait times to soaring demand from veterans for medical services, brought on by the opening of new centers and a combination of aging Vietnam veterans seeking care, the return of younger veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan and the exploding demand for new and costly treatments for Hepatitis C.

Ahead of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs budget hearing scheduled for Thursday, VA leaders also warned that they are facing a \$2.6 billion budget shortfall. They said they may have to start a hiring freeze or furloughs unless funding is reallocated for the federal government's second-largest department.

Amid tense debate, VA Secretary Bob McDonald earlier this year asked for "flexibility" to reallocate billions of dollars in funds from the \$10 billion that Congress established last year to fund private care to help former troops struggling to obtain appointments or who live far from a health center.



**VA Secretary  
Bob McDonald**

The embattled VA says that its vast health-care system has handled 2.7 million more appointments than in any previous year, and has increased its capacity by more than 7 million patient visits per year, double what they anticipated, the *New York Times* first reported this week.

VA made more than 2.9 million authorizations for veterans to receive care in the private sector between June 1, 2014, and June 1, 2015, which is a 44% increase in authorizations, when compared to the same period in previous years.

“We are simply asking Congress, once again, for the budget flexibility to use our existing funds to provide Veterans with the care in the community they have already earned,” said VA Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson via e-mail.

At the VA hospital in Phoenix, the epicenter of the crisis, more than 300 staff was added. But 34,000 additional appointments were completed, VA officials said. During the June-December period, the number of veterans receiving primary care was up 13%, specialty care up 15% and mental health care up 29% over the previous year, the VA said.

“We have confidence in Secretary McDonald. It’s clear that the VA is seeing more veterans than historically or in previous years and they are poorer, sicker and older than the past,” said Carlos Fuentes, senior legislative associate with Veterans of Foreign Wars.

“At the same time, the Hep C drug is revolutionary, and unfortunately because it’s a high-cost drug, they are spending more than they expected. Ultimately our view is veterans should not be denied care because of budget questions.”



The VA wait-times scandal came to light last summer amid allegations that veterans died while waiting for care. After the scandal, the department that serves 8.7 million veterans received \$15 billion to bring down wait times and hire more doctors and nurses last August under a Republican supported plan that included the Choice Card. That card would allow veterans to obtain private care when they wait too long for appointments or live far from the agency’s nearest clinic.

Former VA secretary Eric Shinseki resigned amid the scandal, in which department leaders and clerks allegedly falsified records to hide long wait times facing veterans seeking care.

McDonald, a former Procter & Gamble chief executive, took over last July with vows to reduce wait times and support an open culture that allows whistleblowers to highlight problems inside the system.



There have already been passionate objections among Republican lawmakers about using the Choice Card funds to make up for what the VA describes as a shortfall. Some also expressed deep frustration that the VA wasn’t able to better predict the need for Hepatitis C treatment.



According to internal VA memos, hospitals across the country have run out of money for treatment of new life-saving medicines for Hepatitis C. Wait lists are being maintained at most facilities along with a controversial directive to delay treating patients who have fatal illnesses.

“The VA received a \$15 billion supplemental appropriation to help address the wait time issue,” said Representative Mike Coffman (R-CO), who has been one of McDonald’s most vocal critics. “This is an organization that is so incompetently led that they can’t even tell us how much any given procedure costs, so it doesn’t surprise me that they can’t manage their existing resources to better serve veterans.”



*Rep. Mike Coffman*

## Division/District/Detachment Digest

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

Submitted by Randy Rigg  
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### MARINES

If you were not able to make it to San Antonio for the Department of Texas Convention then you missed one fine convention. A big **Well Done** goes out to the members of the Alamo Detachment



#315 for the fine job they did in making sure everyone had a good time.

By now all of you should have received the information on the Department of Texas Fall Staff Conference hosted

by the Longhorn Detachment #1069 which will be held in Ft. Worth in October. This should be another fine time because I know the members of the Longhorn Detachment will also make sure everyone has a great time.

As we get ready for the 2015-2016 budget process that I will be attending we will be facing some issues and challenges for the coming year. This is not a unique problem for us, as many organizations have faced the same issues of expenses overtaking revenues and we have not been immune. It has finally caught up with us and we will need to deal with it in the best manner as we can.



I am not sure what our financial future holds, but I can assure you that those involved in the budget process will do their best in producing a balanced budget for your approval in August at the National Convention.

I want to thank all of you out there who have been checking with your Paymaster and taking care of your dues renewal. It happens all too often that we get busy, misplace the notice, and miss a membership meeting and pretty soon our membership has expired. I want everyone out there to double their efforts in keeping our memberships up to date and work at bringing back some of those past members who have slipped away from us over the past years. The Southern Division has been leading the way on keeping the unpaid membership down and I want to thank you all for your efforts.

I look forward to seeing you all in Ft. Worth for the Department of Texas Fall Staff conference.

**DISTRICT 3 |  
DEANE HAWKINS DETACHMENT  
EL PASO**

Submitted by Robert Way, *Commandant*  
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**THE DEANE HAWKINS**

Detachment has had another busy quarter so far this year.

During this period leadership awards were presented to NJROTC cadets at Socorro High School, El Dorado High School, Canutillo High School, San Elizario High School, Americas High School and Santa Teresa High School during their annual awards ceremony.



*Deane Hawkins Detachment member Danny Maldonado receives a group hug from Canutillo NJROTC graduating Senior Cadets*

Members of the Detachment participated in the Military Order of World Wars annual Massing Colors.

Seven Eagle Scout presentations were also made this quarter. The El Paso Young Marines helped one of the new Eagle Scouts with his community service project. It gave the Young Marines some insight on what is required to become an Eagle Scout and gave the scouts a little insight as to what it takes to be a young Marine. Educational, for all parties concerned.



*Pete Gomez presenting Eagle Scout Certificate to Kaegan O'Hara*



*Pete Gomez presenting Eagle Scout Certificate to William Kalvaitis*



*Pete Gomez presenting Eagle Scout Certificate to Noah Welch*

The Detachment did the MCL Rose Program along with a recruiting drive on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The Young Marines helped with the MCL Rose program Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>.



Members of the Detachment also helped to put up the Avenue of Flags at the Ft. Bliss National Cemetery on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and take them down on May 26<sup>th</sup>.



*Volunteers putting up the Avenue of Flags*

Members also helped to serve snacks to the volunteers who put the small flags on each of the grave sites at the National Cemetery on May 24<sup>th</sup>. Over 1,400 people were served.



*Volunteers placing flags on each grave site*

Several members also attended the Memorial Day Ceremony conducted by the Army at the Ft. Bliss National Cemetery on Memorial Day.



*Tigua Indian tribe elders at Memorial Day Ceremony Ft. Bliss National Cemetery.*

The Honor Firing detail provided Honors for seven Veterans during this period. Mel Bashner, the oldest member of the Deane Hawkins Detachment, was one of the Veterans we provided Honors for. His daughter donated his interment flag to the Ft. Bliss National Cemetery so that it could be flown on the Avenue of Flags on Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Detachment members made sure that it was the first flag in the Avenue of Flags.



*Chon and Connie Pena with Mel Bashner's interment flag prior to raising it with the Avenue of Flags at Ft. Bliss National Cemetery*

Members of the Detachment also provided snacks at the VA clinic during this time frame.

participated during this year's convention. A good time was had by all. I personally want to thank my Convention Chairman Bob Otto, Adjutant/Paymaster of Alamo Detachment, for his tireless efforts in implementing and coordinating the entire agenda during this year's convention. "A job well done Bob."



*New Commandant Charles Ynman being installed at Convention by Past Department Commandant Al Kotrla.*

A special thanks to the San Antonio Young Marines for their help with the flag raising ceremony held on Saturday morning. Local news station KSAT 12 was on hand to cover the ceremony comprised of Marines and Auxiliary members.



For those of you who were unable to attend and would like to see pictures from the convention, you can do so by visiting our web site at [www.alamodetachment315mcl.org](http://www.alamodetachment315mcl.org).

**ALAMO DETACHMENT  
SAN ANTONIO**

Submitted by Orlando Garza, *Commandant*  
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**2015 DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS  
CONVENTION**

The Department of Texas Marine Corps League held its 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention in San Antonio, Texas, on June 25<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup>, 2015. A special thanks to the Mayor of San Antonio, Mayor Ivy Taylor, for issuing a City Proclamation and presenting it to Alamo Detachment #315. I and the members of the Alamo Detachment would like to thank everyone who attended and

**SAN ANTONIO VETERAN  
RECEIVES THE LONE STAR  
MEDAL OF VALOR**

One of our own Marine Corps League members and Past Commandant of Alamo Detachment 1997-1999 was awarded The **Lone Star Medal of Valor**; it is one of the highest military decorations that may be awarded to a member of the Texas Military Forces.



**Texas Governor Greg Abbott (seated), presents the award to Ronnie Reininger (bottom Right)**

Werner "Ronnie" W. Reininger, Sgt, USMCR (Ret) was presented the Texas **Lone Star Medal of Valor** by the Governor of the State of Texas on Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Ronnie received the award for his extraordinary heroism during the Chosin Reservoir Battle in North Korea in 1950 as well as his many contributions to the Marine Corps and to Texas Veterans over the past 60+ years. Texas Governor Greg Abbott presented the award. Also in attendance was Senator Carlos Uresti, a former Marine and Guest Speaker at the 2015 Department of Texas MCL Annual Convention.

The award presented reads as follows:

*Citation to accompany the Award of the Lone Star Medal of Valor to Sergeant Werner W. Reininger, United States Marine Corps (Retired).*

*For extraordinary heroism while serving as a machine gun section leader, Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, in combat operations against Chinese forces in the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, from 30 November to 8 December 1950. When confronted with overwhelming enemy assault forces, Sergeant (then Corporal) Reininger, though painfully wounded and frostbitten, repeatedly and fearlessly repositioned his machine gun section, repulsing the advancing enemy to protect thousands of withdrawing Marines. Completely surrounded by enemy forces, Cpl. Reininger boldly turned his machine guns around to direct withering fire over the heads of the Marines. His courageous actions drew Chinese mortar fire on his own position, inflicting heavy casualties and severely wounding him again, resulting in the loss of one leg and injury to the other.*

*Cpl. Reininger's repeated acts of valor at enormous personal risk inspired fellow Marines to perform beyond their limits and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the military forces of Texas.*

Congratulations Ronnie! Thank you for your sacrifice.

**BIG D DETACHMENT  
DALLAS**



Submitted by Melody Bronson,  
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**HELLO FROM** the Big "D" Detachment!

The Mesquite Championship Rodeo hosted Military Appreciation Night the weekend of June 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. American Sniper Chris Kyle was inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame in a presentation ceremony on June 13<sup>th</sup>. His brother, Jeff Kyle, was there and accepted the award for the family.



Members of the Big D Detachment attended on June 13<sup>th</sup> to enjoy the rodeo and watch the induction ceremony.

The Marines were well represented by our Detachment as the only "Marine Group" in attendance. We stood with pride and folks definitely knew we were "in the house!"





*Big D Members @ the Mesquite Championship Rodeo*

Member Dennis Rendell had the privilege of meeting Jeff Kyle that evening. He offered congratulations to the family and presented Jeff with a Big D challenge coin.



*(L-R) Dennis Rendell & Jeff Kyle*



The Detachment also supported the American Legion Open House, held on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, by manning a Detachment Information Table, and by entering in the Chili Cook-Off and Bean Cook-off, coming in first place for both. The month of May began with Jr. Vice

Commandant John Withers representing the United States Marine Corps at the Texas Vietnam Heroes Memorial dedication ceremony at the Museum of the American GI in College Station on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. John read the names of the Texas service members that scarified all in Vietnam.



**BRAZOS VALLEY DETACHMENT  
BRYAN**

Submitted by Teresa Carpenter  
Jr. Past Commandant  
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May was just reflective of an active year for Detachment #1391. The year began with the Detachment attending the Valentines for Veterans Program at Sul Ross Elementary School in Bryan. This is the 17<sup>th</sup> year that Sul Ross Elementary School has provided this program. Mrs. Henson, the teacher in charge of the program, was named the VFW Teacher of the Year for the State of Texas. The Brazos Valley Detachment is fortunate to have an exceptional veteran community.



On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the Brazos Valley Detachment participated in the Texas A&M Commissioning Ceremony for the presentation of the Harry Bruce Retreat Hell Leadership Award. The award name was inspired by the Korean War, of which Harry Bruce was a decorated veteran. Faced with tough fighting between the blocking Chinese divisions and the withdrawing Marines at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea, Maj. Gen. Oliver P. Smith, Commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division, remarked: "Retreat, hell! We're not retreating, we're just advancing in a different direction."





*Dottie Bruce, Harry Bruce's widow, presents a Mameluke Sword, provided by BVMCL, to the top graduating Marine, Arthur Johnson, at his commissioning ceremony. Sr. Vice Commandant Thorin Moser represented BVMCL, provider of the sword.*



*After the presentation, Thorin Moser (representing Detachment #1391) stands to the right of Arthur Johnson (recipient of the award). Dottie Bruce stands on Arthur Johnson's left, and to her left is Col. Paul Timoney (Commanding Officer and Professor of Naval Sciences)*

June and July will continue the active year. In addition to sending representatives to the 2015 State Convention, we are featuring a presentation at our monthly meeting on *Aggies Go to War* in June and participating in both the Chappell Hill Independence Day Parade and *I Love America* celebrations at George Bush library on July 4<sup>th</sup>.



## HEART OF TEXAS DETACHMENT WACO

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### OUR DETACHMENT



just presented \$600 scholarships to two young ladies who are starting college this fall. We also presented \$250 each to the Cam Posey Scholarship fund and the Marine Foundation. We are looking forward to going to the National Convention and seeing old friends. We have at least six members going this year.

## LOST PINES LEATHERNECKS DETACHMENT BASTROP

Submitted by Ken Steffek, *Commandant*  
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### OVER THE 4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER

of 2015 the Detachment has had fundraisers of "Chuck-a-Puck" with the Texas Stars Hockey Team in Round Rock where we sold the pucks during the game and received a portion of the proceeds.



*"Chuck-a-Puck" Fundraiser*

We also had our annual “Tag Sale” which is a rummage sale in the Bastrop Tractor Supply parking lot.



*Annual “Tag Sale” held 4/11/2015*

Three Marines and three Associates continue to participate with the Bastrop County Veterans Honor Guard providing deceased local Veterans with full military funerals honors. These are performed by former members of all the military branches. In addition to funerals the Honor Guard also performs various ceremonies for Memorial Day, Veterans Day and other patriotic events. These funeral honors average about three to four per month.



*Funeral Honors on 3/28/15*



Six members are also involved as Guardians at the airport for Honor Flight Austin which honors Veterans of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Wars. These Guardians escort the respective War Veterans while they are at the airport (preparing to go to or returning from Washington, D.C. to see their memorials). In May of this year four of our members actually

went on the first Honor Flight Austin for Vietnam Veterans. We also have a WWII Veteran who went on his own flight and is now a Detachment member because of Guardian involvement.



*Detachment members Ken Steffek & Charlie Grant on an Honor Flight*

The Detachment made a funds presentation to The Veterans Connection which is a Family Thrift Store in Austin that benefits specifically homeless Veterans in the Austin area.

The Detachment continues to make a presence at area parades such as Elgin Western Days Parade at which they received another First Place ribbon for best decorated vehicle (4<sup>th</sup> in a row).



*Winner @ Elgin Western Days Parade on 6/27/15*

Our Detachment has been asked for the last four years to do a Flag Raising Ceremony on Flag Day by the Bastrop Lost Pines Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution. We also do flag retirement when requested.



*Flag Raising by Detachment Members*

Lost Pines Leathernecks is presently planning for the 2015 Veterans Appreciation Golf Tournament to be held at Cola Vista Golf Course here in Bastrop.



*Cola Vista Golf Course - Bastrop*

The tournament is scheduled for *Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>*, starting at 10:30 a.m. Check out the details at our website [www.lpl1384.org](http://www.lpl1384.org).



*Proclamation from the Bastrop County Commissioner Court acknowledging our 2014 tournament.*



*2014 Tournament Award Ceremony*

The Detachment also has a Challenge Cup Trophy which goes to the winning team that is represented by a Veteran. The trophy actually goes to the veteran's organization represented. In the case of 2014 the trophy went to Elgin VFW Post #6115 for them to keep and display for the year. The winning team was a law firm from Houston with a VFW Post #6115 member on the team.

*Cmdt. Ken Steffek (L) presenting the 2014 Challenge Cup Trophy to Ray Dudley of Elgin VFW Post #6115*



## **AUXILIARY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Submitted by Viola Trevino  
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 Department President &  
 Southern Division Vice President  
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## **GREETINGS LADIES...**

I'd like to thank the Alamo Detachment and Auxiliary for hosting a great Convention this year. The Auxiliary had a great turnout at their meetings and Flea Scratch. I congratulate our new officers and they are as follows:

- President ..... Viola Trevino
- Sr. Vice President ..... Johnnie Lopez
- Jr. Vice President ..... Marcia Ynman
- Judge Advocate ..... Barbara Hixson
- Secretary ..... Dema Ann Danford
- Treasurer ..... Dorcas Simpson
- Chaplain ..... Beverly Hill
- Captain/Guard ..... Brenda Tomonelli
- Trustee #1 ..... Karren Ogg
- Trustee #2 .... Martha Cisneros-Martinez
- Trustee #3 ..... Antonia Hurtado

Congratulations go out to Johnnie Lopez for receiving the 2015 Department of Texas Auxiliary Member of the Year Award and to Brenda Tomonelli for receiving the Department of Texas Marine Corps League Auxiliary Leadership Award.

*Johnnie Lopez (R) receiving Member of Year Award*



*Brenda Tomonelli (R) receiving Leadership Award*

**Americanism Activity Reports**, presented by Chairperson Brenda Tomonelli:

- ✿ 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Heart of Texas Unit
- ✿ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Coastal Bend Unit
- ✿ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Big D Unit

*(L-R) Dorcas Simpson receiving Americanism Award for Heart of Texas from Brenda Tomonelli*



**Child Welfare**, presented by Chairperson Karen Ogg:

- ✿ 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Heart of Texas Unit
- ✿ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Alamo Unit
- ✿ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Big D Unit

**Civics**, presented by Chairperson Dorcas Simpson:

- ✿ 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Coastal Bend Unit
- ✿ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Williamson County/ Cen-Tex Unit
- ✿ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Heart of Texas Unit

**Rehabilitation**, presented by Chairperson Johnnie Lopez:

- ✿ 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Heart of Texas Unit
- ✿ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Coastal Bend Unit
- ✿ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Williamson County/ Cen-Tex Unit

**VAVS Award**, presented by Barbara Hixson for Chairperson Connie Chambers:

- ✿ 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Heart of Texas Unit
- ✿ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Big D Unit
- ✿ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Williamson County/ Cen-Tex Unit

Congratulations and Thank You ladies for your participation as a volunteer in this Auxiliary.

Other certificates presented were a Certificate of Appreciation to Alamo Unit for co-hosting this year's Convention, and a Distinguished Award Certificate to Dorcas Simpson, both presented by President Viola Trevino. Other awards given were for **Mileage**:

- ✿ 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Big D Unit
- ✿ 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Heart of Texas Unit
- ✿ 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Coastal Bend Unit

Thanks everyone for all your hard work.



A reminder to all Units of the Department of Texas Auxiliary that **transmittals are due on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> every year**. Membership ends and all dues expire – this includes Members at Large. Life members should send a transmittal to verify their information. August 31<sup>st</sup> Bond Fee is payable with first transmittal.

I hope some of you will be able to attend the National Convention in Scottsdale, Arizona, on August 9<sup>th</sup> thru 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015. For details visit our National web site at [www.nationalmcla.org](http://www.nationalmcla.org).



*Auxiliary Members at Colors Ceremony on Saturday morning*

# Flea Fiddlings

Submitted by:

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Brenda Tomonelli

DOT MODDF Hide

Scratchy Flea

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## THE DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS

MODDF Hide met for the State Convention Fiesta Scratch at the Holiday Inn in San Antonio in June. The Convention was hosted by the MCLA Alamo Unit.

The Flea room was festooned in Fiesta colors, signs, emblems, and refreshments. The Fleas welcomed a whole pack of Pups for Pesterin'. They also initiated two new Crawlers from the Alamo Unit and held a Flamingo-Mariachi dancin' costume contest.



Winners were...



Big Flea Dorcas Simpson installed the new officers for the upcoming term. New Madame Big Flea Karren Ogg presented the Hide with a new wall banner depicting the Units which compose the Hide, and National Big Flea Colleen English won the afghan raffle. Lots of Flea partyin', candy sales, raffle sales, and finin', resulted in a nice donation to the Leatherneck Foundation.



*New Flea Banner with (L-R)  
Karren Ogg & Janet Deck*

*Brenda  
Tomonelli (L)  
presents afghan  
to National Big  
Flea Colleen  
English (R)*



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual presentation of the *Marie Williams Flea of the Year* was awarded to Dorcas Simpson for her outstanding representation of Fleadom during her tenure as Hide Big Flea. Congrats to her!!

Several Fleas are now preparing to represent the Texas Hide at the National Flea Scratch in Arizona in August, where we will wear our Coolest Flea outfits and present two Crawlers for advancement to Fleas. Good Luck to Johnnie Lopez and Marcia Ynman.



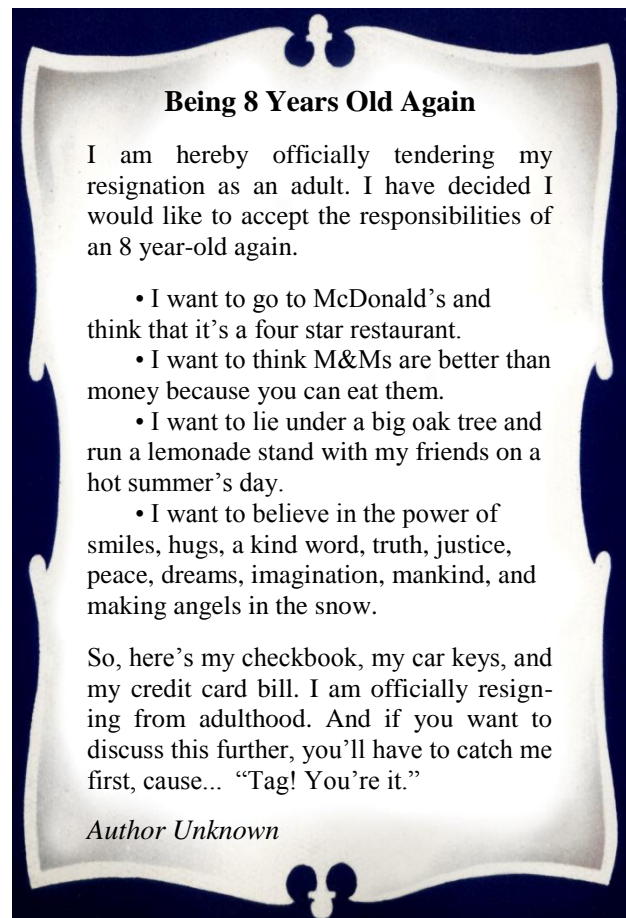
We would like to invite all MCLA members and MODD Fleas to visit our next Texas Flea Scratch in Ft. Worth in October and join us for COMIC-FEST!! – themed costume contest consisting of your favorite comic/cartoon/fairytale characters -

think Super Woman, Cinderella, Wilma Flintstone, Jane Jetson, Lily Muenster, Cat Woman, etc. - bunches of choices! WAM! BAM! Fun Dog Pesterin' times to be had!

We also want to remind all MCLA and MODDF members to register on the Texas web site - [www.texasmccl.org](http://www.texasmccl.org).

**M.O.D.D.F. HIDE OF TEXAS  
Current Flea Officers - 2015-2016**

Big Flea .....	Karren Ogg
Medium Flea .....	Viola Trevino
Little & Shopper Flea .....	Beverly Hill
Smart Flea .....	Johnnie Lopez
Scrappy Flea .....	Ann Danford
Holy Flea .....	Barbara Hixson
Police Flea .....	Marsha Ynman
Studious & Scratchy Flea .....	Brenda Tomonelli
Waggy Flea .....	Dorcas Simpson
No Name Flea .....	Martha Cisneros-Matinez
Trusty Flea 1 .....	Diana Figueroa
Trusty Flea 2 .....	Mary Rose Elizondo
Trusty Flea 3 .....	Janet Deck




# Highlights of the 2015 State Convention

## Activity Awards...

**Category 1: (15-49 Paid Up Members)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Deane Hawkins Det.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Hopkins County Det.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... LCpl. Shane Goldman Det.

**Category 2: (50-79 Paid Up Members)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Brazoria County Det.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Cen-Tex Det.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Jacksonville Det.

**Category 3: (80 & Over Paid Up Members)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Eastex Det.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Coastal Bend Det.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Tarrant County Det.

## Americanism Awards

**Category 1: (15-49 Paid Up Members)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Deane Hawkins Det.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Lost Pines Leathernecks Det.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Colorado Valley Det.



**Category 2: (50-79 Paid Up Members)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Brazoria County Det.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... NO Entries
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... NO Entries

**Category 3: (80 & Over Paid Up Members)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place ..... Big D Det.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place ..... Coastal Bend Det.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place ..... Alamo Det.

## Cam Posey Scholarships...



**Big D Detachment (Dallas):**

Melody Bronson

Nicole Holden • Jolina Rice

**McLemore Detachment:**

**(Houston)**

Elaine Renberg

**Sgt. Jay M. Hoskins Detachment (Paris):**

Aaron Greer • Rachael Greer

*(The Scholarships this year were  
in the amount of \$1,000 each)*

## Distinguished Citizen Silver Award (District Vices)...



Gary Clevenger (District 1)

Don Carlile (District 2)

Robert Way (District 3)

John Casey (District 4)

James Andrews (District 5)

Sal Vera (District 6)

Con Shuck (District 7)

Chuck Bones (District 8)

## (Individual)...

Robert Aguilar • Alex Azar

Jose Buenrestro • Edgar Ermis

Alfanzo Garibay • Pedro Gomez

Wally Gonzalez • Helen Hicks

Daniel Maldonado • Manuel Mendoza

Bernie O'Dell • Juanita O'Dell • Robert Otto

Geraniamo Palanco • Ascencio Pena

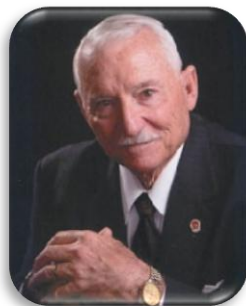
Concepcion Pena • George Simpson

Ted Vasquez • Robert Way

Polly Weidenkopf • Charles Ynman

## Marine of the Year...

**Joe Vickery**  
Galveston County  
Detachment



## Meritorious Unit Commendation (Detachment)...

Deane Hawkins Detachment

## Pack Dog of the Year...



**Charles Ynman**  
McLemore  
Detachment

## Miscellaneous...

### Department Officers for 2015- 2016:

Commandant ..... Charles Ynman  
Sr. Vice Commandant ..... Robert Way  
Jr. Vice Commandant .... Charles "Chuck" Bones  
Judge Advocate ..... James Gulley  
Adjutant/Paymaster ..... Polly Weidenkopf  
Chaplain ..... Dennis Bradford  
Sergeant-At-Arms ..... Chris Borel  
Web Master ..... Edgar Ermis  
Jr. Past Commandant ..... Amado Trevino

### District Vice Commandants:

District 1 ..... TBA  
District 2 ..... John Grafflin (Terrell Det.)  
District 3 ..... Chon Pena (Dean Hawkins Det.)  
District 4 ..... Charles Casey (Cen-Tex Det.)  
District 5 ..... James Andrews (Eastex Det.)  
District 6 ..... Robert Hurtado (Coastal Bend Det.)  
District 7 .... Mike English (Comanche Peak Det.)  
District 8 ..... Bill Hamby (Jacksonville Det.)

### Fall Staff Meeting – October 2015

Longhorn Detachment will be sponsoring the Fall Staff Meeting to be held in Ft. Worth from October 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 25<sup>th</sup>.

See the page at the end of this newsletter for further details or see the Department web site.



## State Convention – June 2016

A member of the Capt. John Yancey Detachment (Dallas) stood during the Convention and announced that their Detachment would love to host the next State Convention. However, no details were presented and no vote was taken.

More information will be passed along as it becomes available.

## MEMORIAM Department of Texas



*Notification received of members who passed away since State Convention 2014 (June 1, 2014 thru May 31, 2015)*

### **BRAZORIA COUNTY DETACHMENT (Angleton)**

Andrew J. Garza ..... 3 Jan 15  
Roger Lee Hanson ..... 12 Jan 15

### **COASTAL BEND DETACHMENT (Corpus Christi)**

David Kinsey, Jr. .... 3 Jun 14  
Loyse Emmitt Jacob ..... 30 Jun 14

### **EASTEX DETACHMENT (Conroe)**

Randall F. Montgomery ..... 14 Jul 14  
Donald Edward Boone ..... 30 Jul 14  
John Stanley Cillessen ..... 24 Apr 15

### **HEART OF TEXAS DETACHMENT (Waco)**

Carl Jones ..... 7 Dec 14

### **HILL COUNTRY DETACHMENT (Fredericksburg)**

Michael Sykes ..... 27 Jul 14

### **HOPKINS COUNTY DETACHMENT (Sulphur Springs)**

Alma E. Ellison ..... 21 Sep 14

### **JACKSONVILLE DETACHMENT (Jacksonville)**

Thomas E. Bullock ..... 25 Oct 14

### **1<sup>ST</sup> SGT JOYCE VENABLE DETACHMENT (Beaumont)**

John Harrison Miles ..... 29 Jul 14

### **LAREDO DETACHMENT (Laredo)**

David C. Leyendecker ..... 14 Sep 14

### **LONGVIEW DETACHMENT (Longview)**

Vernon Rose ..... 7 Aug 14  
Johnny R. White ..... 13 Nov 14

### **MCLEMORE DETACHMENT (Houston)**

John Lee Freeman ..... 6 Oct 14

### **PECAN VALLEY DETACHMENT (Brownwood)**

L.L. White ..... 27 Jan 15

### **ROAN CREEK DETACHMENT (Amarillo)**

Cecil M. Hamm ..... 13 Sep 14  
Robert Edward LaCourse ..... 17 Apr 15

### **TERRELL DETACHMENT (Terrell)**

Philip Collins ..... 27 Nov 14

### **TEXOMA DETACHMENT (Denison)**

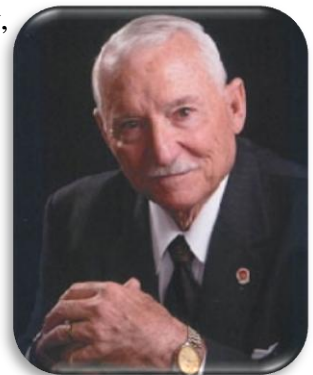
Ray Merrill Hall ..... 2 Nov 14

## Joe Vickery, Jr.

(August 20, 1933 – May 15, 2015)  
*Galveston County Detachment*

Henry Joseph Vickery, Jr., better known as “Joe” Vickery, went to be with his Lord on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015. He was born to Henry and Videlia Vickery August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1933, in Anniston, Alabama. The family moved to Texas City in 1947 where Joe attended Block Jr. High and Texas City High School where he was active in the school’s athletic programs.

Joe was a member of the Marine Corps Reserves in Galveston when the unit was activated in 1950. He proudly served his country during the



Korean conflict and for many years thereafter in the Active Reserves. While in the Corps he was nominated for Marine of the Year. He was an excellent marksman qualifying expert in both rifle and pistol.

Upon returning home, he finished his education and was employed at NASA for two years. He then transferred to the Galveston County Health District. Joe was active in many professional organizations including Texas Public Health Association, Sanitarians Association and the Environmental Health Association. He was elected and served many years as Director of Texas Municipal Health Officials, Eastern Section. This area included all of east Texas. During Joe's tenure as the Director of Environmental and Consumer Health his Department was considered one of the best and most progressive in the State. Environmental and consumer health programs in Galveston County were recognized as front runners and models throughout Texas. Joe loved animals and spent many years working to have a State approved animal shelter built in Galveston County. In 1993 the Animal Shelter at 3412 Loop 197 N was completed and the County Commissioners Court named it the "Joe Vickery Animal Shelter" in his honor. The shelter is sometimes referred to as the Galveston County or Texas City Animal Shelter. He was also a two time Director of the Galveston County Mosquito Control Department. He retired in 1993 and was honored with the title of Director Emeritus. After his retirement he remained as Chairman of the Mosquito Control Board for ten years.

Joe was a life member of the Marine Corps League. Espirit de Corps (Group Spirit, Pride, Devotion) was his motto and Semper Fidelis (Always Faithful) was his code. He held the office of Chaplain and Commandant in the Galveston Detachment and was elected Chaplain, Department of Texas, in 2014. He authored the Marine Corps League "Fallen Marine Program" in 2002. This program honors all fallen Marines and was adopted by the Department of Texas Marine Corps League as their official honor service. It has since been adopted by Departments and hundreds of Detachments all over the world. Joe has led Honored Services for over 400 fallen Marines in the Galveston County area. He was presented The

Unsung Hero Award in 2011 by the *Galveston Daily News* for his efforts.

Joe loved to travel with friends and believed laughter was holistic medicine. He welcomed a good story and never missed a chance to share one. He loved sports of all kinds. In his younger years he played tennis, racket ball, semi-pro football and golf. At one time, he carried a golf handicap of 71.5 with his lowest score being a 59. He had three hole-in-ones and shot in the low 70s well into his late 70s. In the 1950s Joe was also one of only four Water Safety Instructor Trainers in the State of Texas.

Joe was an active member of the First Baptist Church in Texas City. He accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior at an early age. He often admitted having problems back sliding in his Christian life but said many times, "If you attend church regularly and walk with God daily, He will wash the grease from your shoes."

Joe was preceded in death by his parents, sons Walter Harris and Jay Vickery, and brothers Curtis Hurst and James Vickery. He is survived by his wife of 47 years Dolores Vickery, daughters Debbie Harris, Karen Brewer, Cayce Brewster and husband William, and Rita Mussmann and husband August. Sons Keith and wife Victoria, and Richard Vickery. Sisters Lucille Sizemore and Margaret Dale and husband Bill. Brothers Donnie Caltagirone and wife Janet, and Ronnie Caltagirone and wife Lorris. Grandchildren Kara Brewer, Michelle Scott, Christy Key, Karl Vickery, Katie Halstead, Richard Keenan Vickery, Jr. and three great grandchildren.

Services were held on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, at First Baptist Church in Texas City, with interment following at Forest Park East. Honor service was performed by the Marine Corps League Detachment #668 and the United States Marine Corps. Pallbearers were his fellow Marines. Honorary pallbearers were Dr. John Hart, Ben Levissee, Bill Dale, Jim Greenwood, and Herbert Noakes.

## Jeannine Warren

(February 5, 1948 – May 20, 2015)  
*Eastex Detachment*



Jeannine Warren was born on February 5, 1948, and went to be with her Lord and Savior on May 20, 2015. She is survived by her husband, Robert E. Warren, and her children Thomas Keith Wright, Sharon Michelle

Wright, and Robert Neal Wright, and her step-children, Ricky Warren and Sonya McNortan. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Bobby Wright, Bobby Adkins, Ricky Elizabeth Warren, Richard Warren, Robert Warren, Victoria Minie, and Brandon M. Ray. She is survived as well by her mother Margaret Meeks and her brother Lewis Curry Meeks.

Jeannine and Bob were childhood sweethearts. Jeannine was very supportive of her husband who is a U.S. Marine. She was actively involved in the Marine Corp League Eastex Detachment alongside her husband. She was a member of the Red Hat Society and was a Flea in the Marine Corp Ladies Auxiliary Heart of Texas Unit. This past year, Jeannine was the Coordinator of the Toys for Tots program to supply needy children with Christmas presents for five counties, including Montgomery County.

The memorial service was held at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home on Saturday, May 30, 2015, at 2:00 PM, 10129 FM 1097 West, Willis, TX 77318.

## National News

*Commandant  
John Kovalcik  
Communications*

**JKovalcik@MCLeague.org**  
*Semper Fi article  
May/June 2015...*



### SPRING HAS COME AT LAST

to South Carolina – I can tell because the dandelions are starting to pop up on the lawns.



Summer's heat and humidity can't be far behind!

Our trip to the Marine West Expo aboard Camp Pendleton was interesting as always, and eventful. There were more vendors and attendees this year than last year, which is a good sign. It was good to meet old Marine friends and make new ones. Judy and I drove, and enjoyed watching how the scenery and weather changed from state to state – we went through all types of weather, from fog and rain to snow and then sunshine.



We held our breath on some of those canyon and mountain roads! Texas was miles and miles of empty space. We wondered, where is home for that one cow that we saw in a field surrounded by tumbleweeds and grass?

We took a different, shorter route home to Myrtle Beach, as we had to unpack and then repack before heading off to the Midwinter Staff Conference in Virginia. Midwinter was eventful and, as usual, very cold. Once again, it snowed the night of the banquet, and some members had to cancel their



trips because of bad weather in their states. When we left, the temperature was 27° with a 40 mph wind – which was a bit cold for our Southern bodies!

*Semper Fi article  
July/August 2015...*

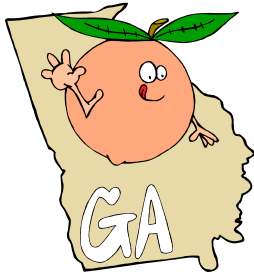
**AS I WRITE MY ARTICLE** this windy, rain-drenched Mother’s Day morning, I would first like to say I hope all our mothers enjoyed their day. We are just a few miles south of where Tropical Storm Ana made landfall a few moments ago, but we are fine.

I have been living out of a suitcase again. After we spent Easter in Jew Jersey with our daughter and her family, I had just enough time to get my laundry done before I flew to Wisconsin for two days. As usual, the Central Division did a great job and Ray Dailey, NVC Central Division, was a great host. Thanks, Ray.



Upon returning from Wisconsin, again I had, or actually Judy had, just enough time to do my laundry before I headed to Camp LeJeune for Marine South.

After a few days of rest back at home, we left for Atlanta for the Department of Georgia’s Convention. Thanks go to DVC Michael Clark and Department Commandant Ron Kirstatter for an enjoyable weekend. We are now getting ready to attend the Department of Maryland’s Convention in Ocean City.

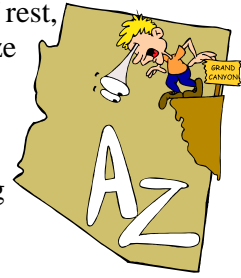


The month of June was filled with many miles of travel starting with the first week in Charleston and Department of South Carolina’s Convention, followed immediately with a trip to New Jersey and their convention.

The end of June was dedicated to family time – we returned to New Jersey for our granddaughter Jennifer’s dance recital.

July looks like a month of rest, *if*, that is, you would categorize getting ready for the National Convention in August in Scottsdale, AZ, as restful.

Looking forward to seeing y’all there!



**From the Front**

**65 Indonesians Saved from Tragedy by U.S. Marines, Sailors**

By Sgt. Emmanuel Ramos  
15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit  
June 12, 2015...

**USS RUSHMORE AT SEA ..**

Marines and sailors with the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit and the Essex Amphibious Ready Group aboard the USS Rushmore (LSD 47) saved 65 distressed Indonesian mariners from a sinking craft in the Makassar Strait, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.



After the decision was made, Marines and sailors burst into action and within 30 minutes of receiving the order they had set up an evacuee collection point, and had water, blankets, footwear and medical staff ready to receive them.

“The Marines and Sailors did a fantastic job of integrating between the ‘blue and green’ team to get ready without warning and pulling it off,” said Lt. Col. Wilfred Rivera, the Commanding Officer for the CLB-15, 15th MEU. “We bring a unique capability that can only be found between the Navy and Marine landing force, and that’s being able to execute a mission like this on a moment’s notice. That’s what the MEU is all about, and these Marines and sailors proved that in their actions.”

Once evacuees were pulled from the water, they were transported by sailors in small craft to the USS Rushmore where they were received by Marines who were waiting with warm blankets and ready to rush them to medical care.



*Navy Lt. Diane Hampton, the Chaplain for Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 15<sup>th</sup> MEU, comforts distressed mariners aboard the USS Rushmore*

“They were all exhausted and dehydrated, with many of them too weak to walk on their own,” said Hospital Corpsman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Christopher Rovelli, corpsman. “It’s heart wrenching to see it, and at that moment you know that timing is everything. We knew we had to make sure we gave everyone the help they needed, and fast. Luckily everything we do prepares us for moments like these.”

Within hours, the Navy and Marine Corps personnel safely brought the evacuees on board the USS Rushmore to provide shelter and medical attention.

“They were frail and weak, and when we saw them, all we wanted to do was make that pain go away,” said Sgt. Leclair Harris, combat engineer. “We took care of them and made them feel safe.”

It was these feelings that gave Marines and sailors the energy to push through the night to ensure everyone was cared for.

“It was extraordinary seeing everyone come together to help out,” said Cobb. “With so many

moving parts things can get hectic and can occur, but we didn’t have that problem. Everyone had a job to do and they did it. We had Navy personnel saving and bringing them aboard and we had Marines and sailors getting them processed, nourished, and attending to any injuries they had.”



*A U.S. Navy corpsman assigned to the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU provides medical attention to a distressed mariner aboard the USS Rushmore*

Even with a language barrier, it had no effect on the Marines’ and sailors’ ability to accomplish their mission of caring for evacuees.

“When we saw them in the situation they were in it didn’t matter,” said Cobb. “Any human can understand and empathize. Our Marines and sailors provided the care these people needed and they understood we were there to help.”

Marines and sailors were able to get by mostly on basic hand signals, until a Marine who spoke Illocano, a Filipino dialect, was able to communicate with evacuees.

Fresh from a liberty port in Manado, Indonesia, LCpl. Arven Bunao, an amphibious assault crewman assigned to Co. K, BLT 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., 1<sup>st</sup> Marines, 15<sup>th</sup> MEU, had learned that the Indonesian language was similar to Illocano.

“I was asked by my staff sergeant to see if I could communicate with them, so I gave it a shot,” said Bunao. “After speaking with a few of them I became comfortable communicating with them and was quickly able to pick up what they were saying.”

Bunao was able to translate their needs, where they came from, and how they had become stranded.

“I was just glad I was able to help out any way I could,” said Bunao.

There was no shortage of helping hands, even Marines and sailors who weren’t directly involved

in assisting evacuees did their part by donating their personal clean dry clothes.

“I think that was the greatest part of all of this,” said Rivera. “This was a ‘blue and green’ team effort. For some of these Marines it was their first time experiencing a situation like this, and everyone was touched by it.”

While evacuees were being tended to by the ship’s crew, Essex ARG officials made contact with Indonesian government representatives and organized a transfer of the evacuees for the following morning.



*A U.S. Navy Sailor assists a distressed mariner to medical staff aboard the USS Rushmore*

After a night of much needed rest, the mariners were transported to an Indonesian Coast Guard ship and on their way home.

The actions of the Marines and sailors reinforced the necessity of a U.S. presence on a global stage.

“Marines and sailors demonstrated a true example of our Nation’s capabilities,” said Rivera. “Whether it’s humanitarian assistance or some other mission, we showed that we’ll be ready at a moment’s notice.”

The survivors were saved after four days of clinging to floating debris drifting with the current.

Sailors on lookout first noticed scattered debris, and after scouring the waters they noticed what appeared to be people massed together clinging to a makeshift raft.

“The call first came roughly after 1 p.m.,” said Capt. Tanner Cobb, communications officer, Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit. “The Rushmore crew then sent a water craft to assess the situation. They determined the craft was un-seaworthy and that the people were pretty much standing in the water.”

## Remains of 36 Unidentified Marines from WWII Battle Return

*Associated Press*

*July 27, 2015...*

### JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR

HICKAM, Hawaii -- The military and a private organization have brought home the remains of 36 Marines killed in one of World War II’s bloodiest battles.

A group called History Flight recovered the remains from the remote Pacific atoll of Tarawa, the U.S. Marine Corps said. A ceremony was held on Sunday, July 26, 2015, in Pearl Harbor to mark their return.



*U.S. Marines unload the remains of 36 unidentified Marines found at a World War II battlefield during a ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Sunday, July 26, 2015, in Honolulu. (AP Photo/Marco Garcia)*

History Flight has started identifying the remains, and the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency will complete the effort, the Marines said. The Marines plan to return the remains to their families after they’ve been identified.

More than 990 U.S. Marines and 30 sailors died during the three-day Battle of Tarawa in 1943. Japanese machine gun fire killed scores of Marines when their boats got stuck on the reef at low tide during the U.S. amphibious assault. Americans who made it to the beach faced brutal hand-to-hand combat.

Only 17 of the 3,500 Japanese troops survived. Of 1,200 Korean slave laborers on the island, just 129 lived.

The U.S. quickly buried the thousands of dead on the tiny atoll. But the graves were soon disturbed as the Navy urgently built a landing strip to prepare for an attack on the next Pacific island on their path to Tokyo.

About 520 U.S. servicemen are still unaccounted for from the battle.

Preliminary work conducted by History Flight indicates the remains of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alexander J. Bonnyman, Jr., a Marine who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, is among the 36 brought to Hawaii.

Gen. Joseph Dunford, the Commandant of the Marines Corps, said in a statement he's pleased to learn of the discovery of the remains at Tarawa, the site of one of the service's most significant battles.

"It was also the first contested landing against a heavily fortified enemy, and a turning point in the development in our amphibious capability. The lessons learned at Tarawa paved the way for our success in the Pacific campaign and eventual end to the war," Dunford said.

History Flight brought attention to the Tarawa missing when its research indicated it had found the graves of 139 U.S. servicemen. The Marathon, Florida-based organization used ground-penetrating radar, reviewed thousands of military documents and interviewed veterans to narrow down possible gravesites.



*U.S. Marines carry the remains of 36 unidentified Marines found at a World War II battlefield during a ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.  
(AP Photo/Marco Garcia)*

## Marine Corps History

### CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS



### MARINES' HYMN

The Marines' Hymn is one of the most readily recognized songs in the world today and is the oldest of the service songs of our country. The history of the hymn has been clouded by the passing of time and confused by oral tradition. But there is no confusion on the part of the hearer when the Marines' Hymn is heard. It is as easily identified with the Marine Corps as "The Star-Spangled Banner" is with our nation. To all Marines it has become a sacred symbol of the pride and professionalism of a Marine and you will find them standing straight and tall at the position of attention when it is performed.

The music to the hymn is believed to have originated in the comic opera

*Geneviève de Brabant* composed by the French composer Jacques Offenbach. Originally written as a two-act opera in 1859, Offenbach revised the work, expanding it to three acts in 1867. This revised version included the song "Couplets des Deux Hommes d'Armes" and is the musical source of the



*Jacques Offenbach,  
French Composer*

Marines' Hymn.

The author of the words to the hymn is unknown. One tradition suggested that an unknown Marine wrote the words in 1847. This would have been 20 years before the music was written by Offenbach and is not likely. The first two lines of the first verse were taken from words inscribed on the Colors of the Corps.



After the war with the Barbary pirates in 1805

the Colors were inscribed with the words “To the Shores of Tripoli.” After Marines participated in the capture of Mexico City and the Castle of Chapultepec (also known as the Halls of Montezuma) in 1847, the words on the Colors were changed to read “From the shores of Tripoli to the Halls of Montezuma.” The unknown author of the first verse of the hymn reversed this order to read “From the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli.”

In 1929 the Commandant of the Marine Corps authorized the following verses of the Marines’ Hymn as the official version:

*“From the Halls of Montezuma  
To the shores of Tripoli;  
We fight our country’s battles  
On the land as on the sea;  
First to fight for right and freedom  
And to keep our honor clean;  
We are proud to claim the title  
Of United States Marine.*

*Our flag’s unfurled to every breeze  
From dawn to setting sun;  
We have fought in ev’ry clime and place  
Where we could take a gun;  
In the snow of far-off Northern lands  
And in sunny tropic scenes;  
You will find us always on the job  
The United States Marines.*

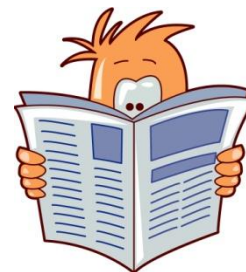
*Here’s health to you and to our Corps  
Which we are proud to serve;  
In many a strife we’ve fought for life  
And never lost our nerve;  
If the Army and the Navy  
Ever look on Heaven’s scenes;  
They will find the streets are guarded  
By United States Marines.”*

On November 21, 1942, the Commandant of the Marine Corps approved a change in the words of the fourth line of the first verse to read, “*In the air, on land, and sea.*” Ex GySgt H.L. Tallman, veteran observer in Marine Corps Aviation who participated in many combat missions with Marine Corps Aviation over the Western Front in World War I, first proposed the change at a meeting of the First Marine Aviation Force



Veterans Association in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Many interesting stories have been associated with the Marines’ Hymn. One of the best was published in the Stars and Stripes, the official newspaper of the American Expeditionary Force, under the date of 16 August 1918. “A wounded officer from among the gallant French lancers had just been carried into a Yankee field hospital to have his dressing changed. He was full of compliments and curiosity about the dashing contingent that fought at his regiment’s left.



“A lot of them are mounted troops by this time,” he explained, “for when our men would be shot from their horses, these youngsters would give one running jump and gallop ahead as cavalry. I believe they are soldiers from Montezuma. At least, when they advanced this morning, they were all singing ‘From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli.’”

★

**What I Am**  
By Donnie Marler

★

Tempered by the fire of battle,  
Tested by fear and doubt,  
Held up by my God and my brothers.

I have suffered, I have hurt,  
I have bled, I have lived,  
And I have died.

I have wept for fallen brothers,  
I have prayed for my family at home,  
I have hoped,  
And I have loved.

Though I’ve died, I yet live,  
I am reborn in each new generation of my  
brothers,  
I live in them,  
They carry my memory in their hearts,  
They honor me,  
And they will never forget me.

This land I love,  
I have given it all I had to give,  
And I would do it again.

I am one of The Few and the Proud.  
I am a United States Marine.

★
★



# U.S. Marine Corps News

## Marine Commandant Nominee Draws Fire for Answers on Iraq, Arming Recruiters

By Travis J. Tritten, *Stars and Stripes*  
July 23, 2015...



*Lt. Gen. Robert Neller listens to the opening statements during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on his nomination to be general and Commandant of the Marine Corps on July 23, 2015, on Capitol Hill. Behind him is his wife D'Arcy.*

**WASHINGTON** — The nominee to be the next Marine Corps Commandant had a rocky confirmation hearing in the Senate on Thursday, drawing fire for his positions on the war in Iraq and arming military recruiters.

Lt. Gen. Bob Neller, who was nominated earlier this month to replace Gen. Joseph Dunford, told the Armed Services Committee that the war in Iraq against the Islamic State has been at a stalemate for at least a year.

When pressed by Committee Chairman Sen. John McCain, Neller backed the current Obama administration strategy, which relies on keeping U.S. troops off the ground, directing air strikes. McCain (R-AZ) has argued that the policy is losing the year-old war in Iraq.

“The Iraqis cannot do it themselves. That is why they are losing,” he told Neller,



*Senator John McCain*

citing the fall of Mosul to the Islamic State last year. “That is why they’ve lost their second largest city.”

Neller disagreed, telling the committee that the Iraqis are not losing.

“I do not believe they are winning either. I believe they are at stalemate right now,” he said.

McCain made his position clear: “I am very disappointed in a number of your answers.”

Neller led the I Marine Expeditionary Force in Iraq from 2005-07 and oversaw forces in Anbar province during the Sunni Awakening, which became a key turning point for the U.S. war effort and the country’s sectarian insurgency. The MEF trained 6,000-8,000 Iraqi police and returned territory to U.S.-trained Iraqi security forces during the earlier war.

Neller also butted heads with Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) over arming recruiters.

He was the second military nominee this week to say firearms at the nation’s recruiting centers should be considered. On Tuesday, Army Chief of Staff nominee Gen. Mark Milley testified that it could be appropriate under certain circumstances.

But he also cautioned against the move and possible unintended consequences.

“I think we need to take a look at it, but I have some concerns of second- and third-order effects of that,” Neller told senators. “I’m not going to discount it but I think in the end, it is the most extreme measure to do what we need to do, which is protect those Marines who are serving out there.”

Defense Secretary Ash Carter has ordered a complete security review in the wake of the shooting, which has highlighted the threat of homegrown attacks and the vulnerability of military offices where personnel are barred from carrying weapons.



*Senator Lindsey Graham*



*Defense Secretary Ash Carter*

Mohammad Youssef Abdulazeez, a 24-year-old Kuwait-born resident of Tennessee, killed four Marines and a sailor last week when he attacked a recruiting center and a Navy and Marine Corps facility in Chattanooga.

Neller said other measures to boost security are underway and others fixes could be made, such as reinforcing glass in the front of the centers. Arming recruiters, he said, could alienate them from the public.

“We need to stay connected to the American people and we need to make sure they [recruiters] can go to schools and find the young men and women who want to become Marines,” Neller said.

Congressional leaders have pushed to allow more firearms on military bases and have proposed legislation to do it. Governors in some states have moved to arm some recruiters and move troops to armories.

Graham, who sits on the Armed Services Committee, criticized Neller on his position and said arming the strip mall recruiting center hit by a hail of bullets could have made a difference. Nobody was killed at the recruiting center but the shooter escaped and killed the service members at a Navy Reserve center.

“It is time to get real as to where we stand as a nation,” said Graham, who is running for the Republican presidential nomination.



**Marine West Expo**  
 Marine Corps Base • Camp Pendleton, CA  
**February 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016**



**National Mid-Winter Conference**  
 Fairview Park Marriott  
 311 Fairview Park Dr. • Falls Church, VA 22042  
 (703) 849-9400 • **March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016**



**Southern Division Conference**  
 Oklahoma City, OK  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend of March 2016**  
 (Tentative)



**Marine South Expo**  
 Marine Corps Base • Camp Lejeune, NC  
**April 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016**



**Upcoming Events**



**Department of Texas State Convention**  
 Dallas, TX  
**June 2016**



**Modern Day Marine**  
 Marine Corps Base • Quantico, VA  
**September 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015**



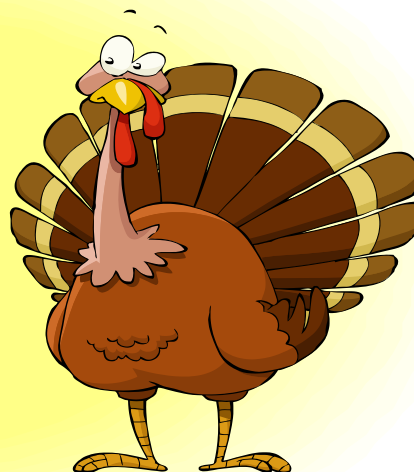
**MCL National Convention**  
 Hyatt Regency Tulsa  
 100 East Second Street • Tulsa, OK 74103  
 (888) 591-1234 • **August 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016**  
 (Reservations open August 17, 2015)



**Department of Texas Fall Staff Meeting & Training Conference**  
 Ft. Worth South Hotel • 100 E. Altamesa Blvd.  
 Ft. Worth, TX 76134  
 (817) 293-3088 • **October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

# DEADLINE

for  
**Texas Marine  
FALL Edition**  
will be  
**October 15th**



Please submit articles/photos to **Juanita O'Dell**  
@ 515 Hall St., Graham, TX 76450  
OR  
*juanita.odell@texasmcl.org*

### **Witness to the Corps** *by Lawrence W. Crider*

I can hear it, oh my brothers  
and I'll not forget the sound -  
of tramping feet at old Tun Tavern  
when the flag was coming round!  
I have heard it in the country  
I have heard it in the town -  
through the valley, on the meadow  
on forested hills, all up and down!  
I have seen it on the coldest mountain  
in the waving grass on foreign plains  
on the beaches of tropical islands  
in snowstorms and torrential rains!  
I have seen it on the desert  
trackless waste of endless sand  
they have written our Nation's history  
on the sea, in air, on land!

Now my eyes behold their glory  
as they go a-marching by  
I've felt the spirit in the thunder  
of their rousing battle cry!  
They who wear the Dress Blue uniform  
are still the bravest of the bold  
strong in conflict, vigilant in peace  
as they have been from days of old!  
And we're not forgetting all the boys  
who never made it home  
some still rest in lonely cemeteries  
far beyond the rolling oceans' foam.  
So, my brothers, keep the cadence  
Courage, Honor, Commitment all the way  
Semper Fidelis is still the watchword  
of the Marine Corps of today!

# DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS

## FALL STAFF MEETING & TRAINING CONFERENCE

Ft. Worth, Texas - October 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**HOTEL:** Fort Worth South Hotel (formerly Best Western Plus)  
100 E. Altamesa Blvd., Ft. Worth, TX 76134-2000 ♦ (817) 293-3088

**RATES:** Start @ \$59.99 per night (includes *Continental* breakfast only)

**DEADLINE for RESERVATIONS: October 15, 2015**



**REGISTRATION:**

MCL Member .. \$5  
MCL Auxiliary Member .. \$5

**FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL:**

\$ 5 per person

**SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET:**

\$35 per person

(Choice of beef, chicken or fish)

**DEADLINE for REGISTRATION, SOCIAL, & BANQUET:**

**Mail in: October 10, 2015**

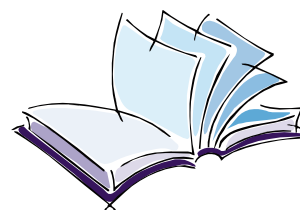
(Make checks payable to "Longhorn Detachment #1069" and mail to PO Box 938, Crowley, TX 76036-0938)

**Online: October 21, 2015** @ <http://www.texasmcl.org>



**PROGRAM ADS:**

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Make checks payable to "Longhorn Detachment #1069" and mail check with ad(s) to  
PO Box 938, Crowley, TX 76036-0938

**Electronic ads** should be emailed to Edgar Ermis: [edgar.ermis@mcllonghorn.org](mailto:edgar.ermis@mcllonghorn.org)

Forms & Information for Registration & Program Ads can be accessed at [www.texasmcl.org](http://www.texasmcl.org)

**Contact:** Bill Carver – (817) 401-0013 – [events@mcllonghorn.org](mailto:events@mcllonghorn.org)



## Room Raffle for 2016 National Convention Tulsa, Oklahoma

Submitted by Randy Rigg, Southern Division National Vice Commandant  
(903) 525-9521 (H) • (419) 345-8342 (C)  
[randy.rigg@southernmcl.org](mailto:randy.rigg@southernmcl.org)

Shown below is information about the “Room Raffle” that the Albert E. Schwab Detachment in Oklahoma is offering for the 2016 National Convention being held in Tulsa.

Ticket sales end **February 1, 2016**. So, if you’re considering attending the **2016 Convention** you might want to get in on this.

## Experience Oklahoma’s Great Spirit 2016 National Convention



**Albert E. Schwab Detachment 857**  
[www.mclschwabdet857.com](http://www.mclschwabdet857.com)

**WIN A SEVEN NIGHT STAY • HYATT REGENCY @ TULSA  
2016 MARINE CORPS LEAGUE NATIONAL CONVENTION  
“OKLAHOMA’S GREAT SPIRIT”**

**TICKETS \$5 EACH • TICKET SALES END ON FEBRUARY 1, 2016**

For tickets, make check payable to Schwab Detachment 857.

Send check and self addressed stamped envelope to:

Albert E. Schwab Detachment 857, Attn: Convention Hotel Raffle  
P.O. Box 470817, Tulsa, OK 74147