

TEXAS

**Amado Trevino
Commandant**



MARINE

**Department of TEXAS
Marine Corps League**



SUMMER

Edition



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Commandant's Corner

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IT IS AN HONOR and

a privilege to be serving as your Department Commandant. I want to welcome the new Officers and the Staff who have stepped forward to take new responsibilities in the Department Committees. I look forward to working with each of you.



The Convention in Waco, hosted by The Heart of Texas Detachment and Auxiliary, was a great event. Their hospitality and hard work was evident in this effort. Thank you Heart of Texas.

I want to thank you for your support during my journey to this office. One of my main interests since I started attending State Conventions has been the subject of communications. It seems that it is constantly coming up. I feel that the communications media is here. The outstanding *Texas Marine* newsletter, the training brochures/manuals on hand, and the seminars being conducted by various Detachments is an

indication that communication does exist here. I would like to expand on it.

My initial undertaking was to confer with Sr. Vice Commandant Charles Ynman and Jr. Vice Commandant Dennis Bradford. The consensus was to involve the District Vice Commandants more in the overall development of the Department.



This approach is starting to produce positive effects. During the last couple of weeks two District Vice positions have been filled - District 1 by Gary Clevenger and District 8 by Charles "Chuck" Bones. Congratulations and thank you.

Concentration in training of Transmittals, Officer Installations, and Activity Reports will be expanded upon as well as Recruiting and Retention. The Bylaws are very important since they are the guide we operate on. And, of course, getting the Department committees filled.

I have made three new appointments. Orlando Garza from the Alamo Detachment is the new Department of Texas Webmaster and Public Relations Officer. He took over from Webmaster Nick Weidenkopf



who has done a good job. Josemaria I. Lopez is the new Training Chairman and Historian and George Simpson is the new Convention Chairman. If you are interested in a Department Staff position, let me know. I will also be approaching you to fill vacant committee chairs.

As I get ready to attend the National Convention in Charleston, West Virginia, in August, I have asked the Past Department Commandants and Southern Division Commandant what information I will need to have. They have been very helpful in meeting this request. Also I have visited the National website and studied the Bylaws changes that are coming up

for vote at the Convention. The Bylaws at each level are the principle guide to unit operations. In addition, I asked State Officers, Detachment Commandants, and you to look them over and give me your input on anything that I may bring to the National Officers.

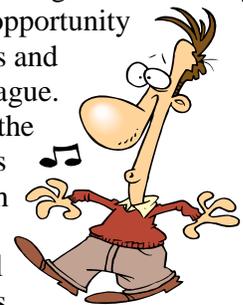
As I outlined in my candidacy for Commandant, the theme for my tour of duty is "Mutual Communication," "Information Dissemination," and "Active Participation." I can only fulfill these three objectives through your support, suggestions, and participation. Together we will continue the progress of this great Department of Texas.

Senior's Segment



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EACH TIME I attend our State Convention or Fall Staff Meeting, I walk away feeling grateful that I had the opportunity to spend time with my brothers and sisters in the Marine Corps League. What compels me to return to the conventions and conferences is this strong bond that I feel with all of my fellow Marines.



A big "Thank You" is well deserved by the Heart of Texas Detachment for hosting the Texas State Convention in Waco. I also give a sharp salute to all those who attended the convention.

This year, I was elected to Sr. Vice Commandant and I wish to thank each of you for your vote of confidence. Under the authority of our new Commandant, Amado Trevino, I assumed the additional duties of the Communication Committee and the liaison with the District Vice Commandants.

Effective communications is an extremely important factor in the success of our League. To



that end, our first goal was to make sure we had true and correct contact information for our Department Officers.

Additionally, your District Vices have begun to contact each individual Detachment and review the Detachment's needs with their Detachment Commandant. I am pleased that our initial contact with each Detachment has been successful. We have encountered a few problems, and with the individual Commandant's cooperation, have corrected them.

I have asked that each District Vice know each of their Detachment Commandants by first name. We will supply our District Vices with the most current rosters so that they can help the Detachments with membership and retention. The rosters will be maintained with the latest information and, most importantly of all, the updated information will be distributed to our members and our Webmaster. If at any point you find incorrect contact information, please notify me and we will update the information.

The District Vices realize that their position is not ceremonial, but rather that it is critical to the success of the Department. I ask all of you to give your cooperation to the District Vice Commandants. Department Officers are also at your service. As I have stated previously, we are here to serve the red covers because they are the mainstay of the League.

Our Department Commandant has been very supportive and has asked that after we accumulate our contact information, we proceed with some of our primary goals. The District Vices are working on the following objectives:

Officer Installation Reports, Transmittals, IRS 990 forms, Life Member Audits, and the goal to hold at least one District Conference/Training with Detachments in their respective Districts.



I ask all our members to make a special effort to participate in the Department Fall Staff Meeting in October. Our plan is for each and every League member to know that they are important to the Department of Texas.

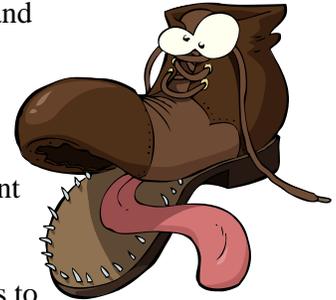


Junior's Journal

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THE SURROUNDINGS

are the same, but the job has changed; thank you all for your confidence and support! I admit that I have huge shoes to fill, since I follow in the footsteps of both Commandant Treviño and Sr. Vice Commandant Ynman. That alone provides a challenge.



According to the National and Department Bylaws, the primary responsibility of the Jr. Vice Commandant is to "... create and promulgate (make known) such membership incentives and programs as will produce enthusiastic response resulting in continuous membership growth." *Membership* means everything having to do with the simple process of recruiting and retaining members for the League.

In an atmosphere that sees every organization shrinking as members decide to become inactive, the Marine Corps League is resisting the national trend, but we can do better. The ultimate responsibility may rest with me, but I cannot maintain membership alone; the mechanism for making the Detachment, Department, and ultimately the whole



League successful is **YOU**, the red hat member of the Marine Corps League. You see, my vision for the continued success of

the League rests in your hands.

Each and every one of us is a recruiter for the League. Whenever I meet a Marine, the conversation always includes my interest in whether that person is a current member of the Marine Corps League. If not, then I ask, "Why aren't you a member?" I then add, "We would really like to have you become a member of our Detachment!"

Normally I am asked what we do, so I will warn you, you will need to be able to answer that question. Be able to tell anyone about our programs, scholarships, and events which are sponsored or aided by the Marine Corps League. A perfect example of a program aided by the League is *Toys for Tots*.



While technically a program of the Marine Corps Reserve, there is not always a local Reserve unit in the area. The Marine Corps League steps in to make sure local children have a merry Christmas.

Our motto is *Semper Fidelis!* In order to be truly "Always Faithful," we also must be "always prepared." Carry the necessary documents with you. Have a card with meeting and contact information specific to your Detachment. Also carry a current blank application that can be filled out immediately. You might also offer to pick that person up on meeting night. Whatever it takes!

Lastly, be enthusiastic about the League. The reason you participate and remain active is that you believe in the mission of the League! Share your enthusiasm.



Remember, we have an organization in which "Marine" is spoken. Many folks may not even realize that they miss talking to Marines. Let them

know that they will be welcome and feel at home with fellow Marines – in the Marine Corps League!

If you will help me, the League, the Department, and your Detachment will flourish!

Until next time, *Semper Fi!*

Judge Advocate's Alerts

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FIRST I WANT TO



thank everyone for electing and placing your trust in me as your Department Judge Advocate at the State Convention in Waco this past June. I also want to thank George & Dorcas Simpson and the Heart of Texas Detachment for hosting that convention and doing an outstanding job.

Just a few words about the MCL uniform, *the cover*. Everyone knows or should know that the official uniform of the Marine Corps League is the cover. While at the convention, I noticed covers with pins/ornaments like the ones worn at the American Legion and VFW. The *only* authorized emblem worn on the MCL cover is the gold colored Eagle Globe & Anchor (EGA) on the left side and, if authorized, the Devil Dog patch on the right side. I also noticed different style lettering and placement of titles and Detachments, etc. MCL regulations dictate the placement, font style and font size. You can find all this information in the Uniform Code in the Administrative and Procedures section.



Until next time, have a great and safe summer.

Adjutant/Paymaster Postings



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AS WE ENTER

into the new Marine Corps League fiscal year, I want to remind all Detachment Adjutant/Paymasters of a couple of things:

Paymaster Turnover

It is very important that the outgoing Paymaster adequately train his/her successor. This is particularly important when it comes to the preparation of transmittals. All Paymasters should have a copy of the Article Six of the National By-laws, which provides information on membership and can be found on the National website. This section can answer most questions that the Paymaster may have.

990

It is once again time for all Detachments to file their 990. The 990 must be filed between 1 July and 15 November each year. Detachments who have revenue of **less than \$50,000** can file the 990-N Post Card electronically. To do this, you go to www.irs.gov and enter "990-N" in the search area.



Then click on Form 990-N epostcard. The instructions for filing will be displayed. If you have recently become the Paymaster for your unit, you will have to get the user ID and password from your predecessor. Once you have logged in, follow the instructions and hit "submit." Once you have filed the 990, you will receive a confirmation email.

Please forward that email to me at pollyw247@att.net.



If your Detachment has revenue of **\$50,000 or more**, you must file the long form 990. Please advise me if your Detachment will be filing the long form and advise me when it has been submitted to the IRS. The long form must be filed by **November 15** as well.

Please remember that if your Detachment fails to file for three consecutive years, you will lose your nonprofit status.

If at any time you have questions about any admin issue, please feel free to email me.



Chaplain's Comments

Joe Vickery
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Submitted by Juanita O'Dell, Editor
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BURNT BISCUITS

When I was a little boy five years of age, living on the farm, Mama liked to start the day right by cooking a tasteful breakfast, usually at 5 a.m.

One morning, so long ago, Mama placed a plate of fried eggs, bacon, and fried apples in front of all the family, and placed an extremely burned plate of biscuits in the center of the table.

I remember waiting to see if Dad would notice. But all he did was reach for a biscuit, as he smiled at Mama.

I remember watching him smear butter and jelly on that ugly burned biscuit. He ate every bite of that thing... never made a face or said a word about it.

When I got up from the table that morning, I remember hearing Mama apologize to Dad for



burning the biscuits. And I'll never forget what he said. "Honey, I love burned biscuits every now and then."

Later that morning, I asked him if he really liked his biscuits burned.

He wrapped me in his arms and said, "Your Mama puts in a hard day at work every day and she gets tired. There's just as much love in a burned biscuit as there is in an unburned one. And, besides, a little burned biscuit every now and then never hurt anybody!"

As I've grown older, I've thought about that morning many times. Life is not always fair and it is full of imperfect things and imperfect people and I'm not perfect.



I forget things like everybody else. But what I've learned over the years is that learning to accept each other's faults and choosing to celebrate each other's differences

is one of the most important keys to creating healthy, growing, and lasting relationships.

Throughout our married life, if my wife Jane burned something I'd say, "Sweetheart, I like it that way." Which I really did, as she prepared it out of love. All her food has one main ingredient, "**LOVE.**"



And that's my wish for each of my children and grandchildren; that you will learn to take the good, bad, and ugly parts of your life and overcome them with kindness. Because in the end...

True thoughtfulness, forgiveness and consideration will give you a relationship where a burnt biscuit ain't such a big deal!

This can be extended to any relationship. In fact, understanding is the real basis of all relationships, be it brother-sister, husband-wife, parent-child, partners or just plain old friendship!

- Learn to be resilient.
- Be kinder than necessary because everybody you meet is fighting some kind of battle.
- Don't put the key to your happiness in someone else's pocket – keep it in your own.

"So, please pass me a biscuit, and yeah, the burned one will be just fine!" Remember, "As rain

and sunshine nourish the flowers, so praise and encouragement nourishes the human spirit."

This is the lesson I learned at breakfast 80 years ago.



By Art Ernst

Historian Headlines



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GREETINGS!

My name is Josemaria I. Lopez. You may call me Josemaria, Joe-Mary, Jose, Joe, or just Hey You. Nacho, Chema, or JMI is also OK.

I am a Past Department of Texas Jr. Vice Commandant, Department Historian, Department District 6 Vice Commandant, and National Newsletter Committee member. My experience in the Marine Corps League started in April 1978. I am still in the learning stage.

I have been appointed to chair two committees - that of Department Historian and Department Training. I am asking you to help me accomplish these tasks.

In the training stage I will concentrate primarily in answering, **What** is this requirement for and **Why** is this requirement needed? **Where** do I find the instructions for it? **How** am I to do it? **When** is it due? And most importantly, **Where** in the over-all scheme of things does it fit in?

The position of **Historian** is a tremendous undertaking. Everything is history. For instance how many



times a left eye blinks per second is history.

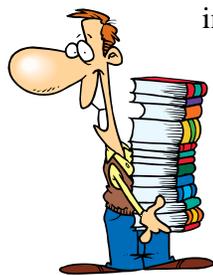
Coming down to earth however, I have developed a file for each Detachment. In it are four main sub-files which are 1) Detachment General History Information, 2) Detachment Newsletters, 3) Detachment Installation Reports, and 4) Detachment National Quarterly Rosters. This file is available to each Detachment at any time. In turn, I am requesting you provide me a copy of these items.

As a **Training** facilitator, this task encompasses all operational aspects of the unit.

“Nothing can be done without knowing what to do” coupled with “Doing it incorrectly is equal to doing nothing” or worse.

As I see it, administration is fundamental for planning. Activities are ingredients for the administration. Training is the link to success.

I am in the process of developing a Lesson Plans Library. It will include subjects encountered



in the various instructional manuals available like the Professional Development Program and the Guidebook for Detachment Officers.

The Lesson Plans will include subjects such as: Officer/Staff (Committees) Duties, Program

Activities, Various Required Reports and Forms, Recruiting/Retentions, and Fundamental Training Formats. They will be available to you upon request. Suggestions and feedback is essential for improvement of this task.

Below is a Department of Texas historical item from the *Texas Marine*, Volume 3, Issue 1, June 1991, page 9. Helen Hicks was Department of Texas Commandant at the time.

WAYS TO END AN ORGANIZATION

1. Don't attend meetings, but if you do, arrive late.
2. Be sure to leave before the meeting is closed.
3. Never have anything to say at meetings.
4. When at meetings vote to do everything - then go home and do nothing.
5. Next day find fault with the officers and members.
6. Take no part in the organization's affairs.
7. Be sure to sit in the back, so you can talk it over with a friend.

8. Never ask anyone to join the organization.
9. Get all that the organization will give you, but don't give the organization anything.
10. At every opportunity, threaten to resign, and get others to do the same.
11. Talk co-operation, but don't co-operate.
12. If asked to help, say you do not have the time.
13. Never read anything pertaining to the organization.
14. Never accept an office. It is easier to criticize than to do things.
15. If appointed to a committee, never give any time or service to the committee.
16. If you receive a renewal notice, ignore it.
17. Don't do any more than you have to, and when the others willingly and unselfishly use their abilities to help the cause, complain because the organization is run by a clique.

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.



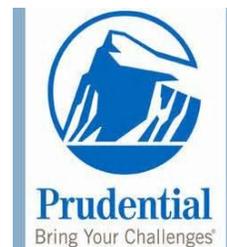
*Submitted by Juanita O'Dell, Editor
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SOME OF THE highlights since publication of the May 2014 newsletter are:



Military Veterans to Get Half of 300 Jobs at Prudential's New El Paso Technology and Call Center

By Vick Kolenc, El Paso Times
May 23, 2014...



Prudential Financial, Inc. plans to train and hire 300 people in the next three years, including about 150 military veterans, for a technology and call center in East El Paso, company officials announced on April 29th.

“We’re excited to be here, and excited about the prospects,” Prudential Chief Executive Officer John Strangefeld said at a press conference at City Hall, where he stood with Mayor Oscar Leeson, Texas Secretary of State Nandita Berry, City Council members, and other community leaders.



Prudential Chairman and CEO John Strangefeld addressed a filled City Council chamber after announcing that his company would bring 300 jobs to El Paso. Representatives Dr. Michiel Noe and Emma Acosta and Mayor Oscar Leeson listen as Strangefeld addresses the crowd.

Prudential is a giant financial services and insurance company with more than \$35 billion in sales last year.

It selected El Paso over several other cities to locate the center, only the second such center in Prudential’s global operations, because of Fort Bliss and the quality of the labor force here, Strangefeld said after the press conference.

Fort Bliss is one of the largest Army posts in the nation with more than 30,000 soldiers.

The company also will get \$1.15 million from the Texas Enterprise Fund, which is administered by the Texas governor’s office, and local incentives for placing the center here, the governor’s office reported. City officials have not yet disclosed details about the local incentives, which still must be approved by City Council.

Prudential’s goal is to hire about 150 military veterans for the El Paso center, and a large number of spouses of Fort Bliss soldiers, Strangefeld said.

The El Paso center is part of Prudential’s years-old initiative to help military veterans get jobs, he said.

“Fourteen years ago, we did a similar center in Ireland, and we had 200 people. Today, we are over 1,000 employees in the Ireland center,” Strangefeld said. The Ireland center is not tied to hiring military veterans, Prudential officials said. The El Paso center also may grow larger in future years, Strangefeld said.



The El Paso jobs will pay an average of \$35,000 per year.

Strangefeld came to El Paso with his wife and about 20 other Prudential executives and other staff members from its corporate headquarters in Newark, NJ. Staff from its Ireland center came to El Paso to begin setting up the El Paso center.

Leeson presented Strangefeld with the key to the city, and Strangefeld presented Leeson with a crystal Rock of Gibraltar, which is Prudential’s well-known corporate symbol. The Prudential executives and community leaders ate lunch at the upscale Anson 11 Restaurant downtown after the press conference.

The El Paso center will help create and test computer programs for employee-used systems and handle technology-tied calls from Prudential employees around the country, said Barbara Koster, Prudential Chief Information Officer. About half the jobs will be technology jobs and the other half will be call center jobs, she said.

Prudential is looking for people with a knack for technology, but only a high school diploma will be required, Koster said.

Prudential will put people through six-month to 18-month training programs, which will be operated with the help of the University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community College, Koster said. Trainees will be paid a stipend until they complete the training program, she said.

Prudential has already hired six El Pasoans



who will begin training at an HGS USA call center in East El Paso, a Prudential official said. Prudential has contracted with HGS, which manages back-office and call center operations for companies, to help operate its El Paso facility. The Prudential center will be located in an existing building at 8465 Gran Vista, near Lee Trevino and Interstate 10.

Leeser, in a statement released after the press conference, said comparing the Prudential center to a call center is misleading because people who work there will be “highly skilled technology representatives who will work with Prudential employees around the world.”

Rolando Pablos, CEO of the Borderplex Alliance, a regional economic development organization based in El Paso, said Borderplex and city officials had been talking to Prudential officials for about 14 months to convince them to put the facility here. El Paso and another city in Florida were finalists for the center, he said. Prudential’s Strangefeld would only say that the company had looked at “a number of places” before choosing El Paso.

Pablos said landing the Prudential facility will help El Paso build a “financial services cluster.” The large Automatic Data Processing (ADP) center on the West Side is an anchor for that cluster, he said. ADP’s center provides accounting and back-office services for businesses along with call center functions.

Borderplex is working with two other financial services companies about putting facilities here, Pablos said.

Army Colonel Brant Dayley, Fort Bliss Garrison Commander, said the Prudential center will provide badly needed jobs for Fort Bliss soldiers who leave the Army, and for their spouses. Several thousand soldiers end their Army service at Fort Bliss each year, and having more job opportunities will keep more of them in El Paso, Dayley said.



*Army Col.
Brant Dayley*

Prudential’s commitment to hire veterans is a big step for El Paso and could help attract other large companies seeking to build a relationship with the Army, he said.

David Zubia, 30, an El Pasoan who left the Air Force two years ago, and Javier Fierro, 19, an El Pasoan in the Army Reserve, were recently selected by Prudential to begin training for the El Paso center. They had been working at the HGS call center in El Paso. The Prudential jobs will provide a good career path, they both said.

Military veterans can apply for the Prudential jobs at wforce.org, and click on the veterans tab. Others can submit their resume at prudential.com/careers, or hgscareers.com, Prudential officials reported.



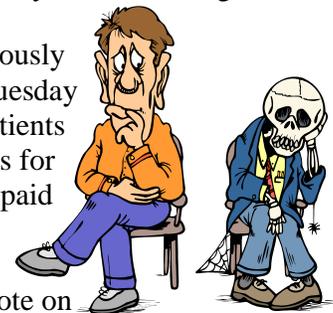
***House Votes to Ensure
Speedier Care for US Vets***

By Alan Fram, Associated Press
June 11, 2014...



WASHINGTON (AP) - United in response to a national uproar, Congress is suddenly moving quickly to address military veterans’ long waits for care at VA hospitals.

The House unanimously approved legislation Tuesday to make it easier for patients enduring lengthy delays for initial visits to get VA-paid treatment from local doctors instead. The Senate was poised to vote on a similar bill within 48 hours, said Democratic leader Harry Reid.



The legislation comes close on the heels of a

Veterans Affairs Department audit showing that more than 57,000 new applicants for care have had to wait at least three months for initial appointments and an additional 64,000 newly enrolled vets who requested appointments never got them.



**Jeff Miller,
VA Committee
Chairman**

“I cannot state it strongly enough - this is a national disgrace,” said Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, R-FL, chief author of the House legislation. Miller made his comments minutes before the House completed the first of two votes on its measure. Lawmakers approved the bill 421-0, then re-voted a little over an hour later, making sure

no one was left out on the politically important vote, with five more in favor and no one against. Miller sheepishly admitted the reason for the second vote: He was in his office and missed the first tally.

Representative Mike Michaud of Maine, top Democrat on the Veteran Affairs Committee, said the care that veterans receive at VA facilities is “second to none - that is, if you can get in. As we have recently learned, tens of thousands of veterans are not getting in.”

The House bill and a similar version in the Senate would spend hundreds of millions of dollars to hire more doctors and nurses, but that may be easier said than done given a nationwide shortage of primary care physicians.



“This is not a problem that is just isolated to the VA,” said Representative Dina Titus, D-NV. “It’s out there in the community.”

Primary care physicians are expected to become increasingly in demand as millions of people newly insured under the federal health care law start looking for regular doctors. The Association of American Medical Colleges has projected that by 2020, there will be 45,000 too

few primary care physicians, as well as a shortage of 46,000 surgeons and specialists.

Shortages tend to be worse in both rural and inner-city areas.

Nevada already has a chronic shortage of doctors, both in primary care and among specialists, Titus said. The state ranks 46th among states and the District of Columbia for availability of general and family practitioners, she said, and 51st for surgeons.

While she voted for the bill, Titus said Congress and the Obama administration need to do more to ensure that veterans receive care in the private sector.



The American Medical Association added its voice, in Chicago, as the House was voting. At its annual policy meeting, the AMA approved a resolution urging President Barack Obama to take immediate action to enable veterans to get timely access to care from outside the VA system. The nation’s largest doctors group also recommended that state medical societies create and make available registries of outside physicians willing to treat vets.

“Clearly there is a problem,” said Dr. Robert Wah, the AMA’s incoming president. He didn’t say how Obama should ensure vets get access to non-VA doctors but said the president needed to address the issue immediately.

Senator John McCain, R-AZ, a chief author of the Senate measure, said he believed the Senate would approve the bill in the next day or two, adding that it shouldn’t be hard for the two chambers to craft a compromise version.



Sen. John McCain

“I don’t think there’s a lot of major differences,” McCain said.

Senator Bernie Sanders, I-VT., chairman of that chamber’s Veterans Affairs Committee, said that by Senate standards, lawmakers are moving at “lightning speed.”

The Senate bill would authorize the VA to lease 26 new health facilities in 17 states and Puerto Rico and spend \$500 million to hire more

doctors and nurses. The House bill does not include a specific dollar amount, but Miller said the VA would save \$400 million annually by eliminating bonuses, money the agency could use for expanded care.

The House and Senate bills would let veterans facing long delays for appointments or living more than 40 miles from a VA facility choose to get care from non-agency providers for the next two years. Some veterans already get outside care, but the process is cumbersome and riddled with delays, veterans and their advocates say.

Both bills target controversial bonuses awarded to VA employees who meet certain performance goals. The House version would ban bonuses outright through 2016, while the Senate would block bonuses based on prompt scheduling of patients' appointments - a practice investigators say led some officials to create phony wait lists.

The Senate bill would make it easier to fire top VA officials, although with more employee safeguards than in an earlier, House-passed bill.

The VA, which serves almost 9 million veterans, has been reeling from mounting evidence that workers fabricated statistics on patients' waits for medical appointments in an effort to mask frequent, long delays.

The controversy led Eric Shinseki to resign as head of the VA on May 30th, but the situation remains a continuing embarrassment for Obama and a potential political liability for congressional Democrats seeking re-election in November.

The agency has started removing top officials at its medical facility in Phoenix, a focal point of the department's problems, and investigators have found indications of long waits and falsified records of patients' appointments at many other facilities.

Richard Griffin, acting VA Inspector General, told lawmakers his investigators were probing for wrongdoing at 69 agency medical facilities, up from 42 two weeks ago. He said he has discussed evidence of manipulated data with the Justice Department, which he said was still considering whether crimes occurred.



VA Cites Progress on Backlog; Congress Disagrees

By Matthew Daly, Associated Press
July 15, 2014...

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Department of Veterans Affairs says it has made “tremendous progress” in reducing a disability claims backlog that reached above 600,000 early last year. Members of Congress and the department’s Assistant Inspector General don’t believe it.



Allison Hickey, the VA’s Undersecretary for Benefits, told Congress that at the insistence of officials from President Barack Obama on down, the benefits backlog has been whittled down to about 275,000 - a 55% decrease from the peak.

Hickey’s claims were met with disbelief by some. Representative Jeff Miller, R-FL, Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, told her flatly that he thinks the VA’s numbers are inaccurate.

“I don’t believe anybody at the table is telling the truth from the VA,” Miller said at a contentious hearing that lasted more than five hours Monday night. “I believe you are hiding numbers.”

Asked if she trusted numbers produced by VA, the agency’s Assistant Inspector General, Linda Halliday, said no.

“I don’t want to say I trust them,” Halliday said. In a report issued earlier Monday, Halliday said that in its rush to reduce the backlog of disability claims, the VA has made benefits payments of more than \$85 million to veterans who lacked adequate medical evidence that they deserve them. Without improvements, the VA could make unsupported payments to veterans totaling about \$371 million over the next five years for claims of 100% disability alone, Halliday said.



The IG's office also found widespread problems at VA regional offices in Philadelphia and Baltimore, including mail bins full of disability claims and associated evidence that had not been electronically scanned for *three years*.

"Improved financial stewardship at the agency is needed," Halliday told the House veterans panel. "More attention is critical to minimize the financial risk of making inaccurate benefit payments."

Special initiatives designed to remove older claims and speed processing of new claims are worthwhile, Halliday said, but in some cases they "have had an adverse impact on other workload areas" such as managing appeals filed by veterans and reducing overpayments to veterans.

Hickey defended her agency, saying the department has spent the past four years redesigning and streamlining the way it delivers benefits and services to veterans.



Linda Halliday, Assistant Inspector General of Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General

Last year, the Veterans Benefits Administration, which she oversees, completed a record 1.2 million disability rating claims, Hickey said. The agency is on track to complete more than 1.3 million rating claims this year and pay a total of \$67 billion in benefits - about half the VA's budget, Hickey said. More than 90% of the claims are being processed electronically, she said.

The VA has long struggled to cope with disability claims. The backlog intensified in recent years as more soldiers returned from Iraq and Afghanistan, and as the VA made it easier for Vietnam-era veterans to get disability compensation stemming from exposure to Agent Orange.

The VA has set a goal to process all claims

within 125 days at 98% accuracy in 2015, but so far has fallen far short. The agency now

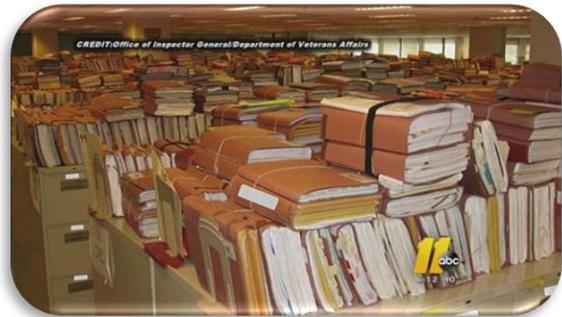


processes most claims within 154 days - or more than five months - at a 90% accuracy rate, compared with an accuracy rate of 86% three years ago, Hickey said. At one point, veterans were forced to wait an average nine to 10 months for their disability claims to be processed.

"It has never been acceptable to VA... that our veterans are experiencing long delays in receiving the benefits they have earned and deserve," Hickey said, adding that she was "saddened and offended" by related problems that have plagued VA health centers in recent months. Investigators have found long waits for appointments at VA hospitals and clinics, and falsified records to cover up the delays.

Halliday, in her report, said she found similar problems with the benefits agency, including faulty claims processing that "increases the risk of improper payments to veterans and their families."

Inspectors surveying Philadelphia's VA benefits center in June found mail bins brimming with claims and associated evidence dating to 2011 that had not been electronically scanned, she said.



Inspectors also found evidence that staffers at the Philadelphia regional office were manipulating dates to make old claims appear newer. The findings are similar to



problems in which investigators have found long waits for appointments at VA hospitals and clinics, and falsified records to cover up the delays.

In Baltimore, investigators

Division/District/Detachment Digest

DISTRICT 7

Submitted by Con Shuck, *District Vice Cmdt.*
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discovered that an employee had inappropriately stored in his office thousands of documents, including some that contained Social Security data, “for an extensive period of time.” About 8,000 documents, including 80 claims folders, unprocessed mail and Social Security information of dead or incarcerated veterans, were stored in the employee’s office, Halliday said.

Kristen Ruell, an employee at the VA’s Pension Management Center in Philadelphia, told the committee that mail routinely “sat in boxes untouched for years” at the pension office. Once, after becoming concerned that unopened mail was being shredded, Ruell opened the boxes and took photos. Instead of addressing the problem, she said, VA supervisors enacted a policy prohibiting taking photos.



Kristen Ruell, VA employee in a regional office in Philadelphia, testified in front of a House committee on July 14th on the backlog of disability payments to vets from the VA.

After VA officials in Washington issued a directive last year ordering that a backlog of claims older than 125 days be reduced, the Philadelphia office “took this to mean that they could change the dates of every claim older than six weeks,” Ruell said. While pension center managers later told the IG’s office that the mislabeling was based on a misunderstanding of the directive, Ruell said, “these behaviors are intentional.”

“The VA’s problems are a result of morally bankrupt managers that through time and (government service) grade have moved up into powerful positions where they have the power to and continue to ruin people’s lives,” Ruell said.

DISTRICT 7 is in a busy mode this quarter, with me having made visits to Tarrant County, Crowley,



Brownwood and Waco since the Convention in June. That does not include my home Detachment here in Granbury where,

as usual, they are busy.

Brownwood’s Pecan Valley Detachment had volunteered to host the Fall Staff Meeting.

They, being Reymundo Sanchez, Billy Murphey and others in the Detachment, made a valiant attempt to get a suitable hotel and rates that would meet the budget of all of us. No luck. Even the Hampton Inn where the MCL stayed in 2006 at \$82 per night had increased to \$129.



Myself and Alex Azar met George and Dorcas Simpson in Brownwood, toured the motel, and met with the General Manager and she would not budge. I do not remember any motel manager as arrogant as she was.

We went to the regular meeting of Pecan Valley and they voted to withdraw their offer of hosting the conference if the rate could not be reduced to the \$100 range. Ray had a 9 a.m. meeting set up to go over the contract with the General Manager. George was to meet him and the Manager at the motel. The General Manager did not show up. Ray rescheduled the appointment for 1 p.m. and George and Dorcas went back to Waco to fulfill a previous commitment. At about 1:30 p.m. Alex got the call from George that the conference would not be held in Brownwood and asked if Comanche Peak would be willing to put a conference together.

Personally, I really wanted Pecan Valley to host the conference in Brownwood for several reasons. First of all, it would give the MCL some publicity and exposure that has been lacking the past few years. There are many Marines in the Brownwood area and I felt that our presence there might be a good recruiting tool. We'll keep working on that recruiting. Maybe with a year's notice they can do the Fall Staff Meeting in 2015.

I sincerely hope that Pecan Valley will put in a bid to host the 2015 Fall Staff Meeting. I understand that new motels and meeting sites are planned and/or underway now, so maybe 2015 would be a good year. With 12 months to get it together I think they could do it.

Granbury's Comanche Peak Detachment was once again in the July 4th parade only this time instead of pulling a trailer we rode in Chris Valaro's 1942 Jeep with trailer. Not room for many members but more than adequate.



(L-R): Con Shuck, Rich Thompson, Ken Peterson, Alex Azar, Ray Beard, Chris Valaro, & Alden Bailey. Not pictured was Peter Palacios & Vince Osborne.



This was the largest parade ever held in Granbury with over 100 floats and an estimated 30,000 spectators. The Granbury High School MCJROTC Color Guard with Comanche Peak member 1st Sgt. Johnny Rositas led the way.

Meanwhile back at the lake, where we actually have water for the first time in a couple of years, PDD Alex Azar, PDD Con Shuck and DD Gary Matlock are making plans to go to Charleston for the MCL National Convention where Gary hopes to be advanced to PDD.

Enjoy the heat and the summer - see you in

Charleston

**BIG D DETACHMENT
DALLAS**

Submitted by Melody Bronson, *Commandant*
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mbronson@stevenstransport.com

HELLO FROM the Big "D" Detachment!

Hope everyone enjoyed their Memorial Day and 4th of July holidays and festivities! We had several from our Detachment attend the State Convention in Waco... had a good time and it was great to see everyone! We've been involved in several events since the last newsletter. Just to mention a few of them: the DFW Memorial Cemetery Services, Eagle Scout presentations, Honor Cadet Awards, Honor Guard duties, War Dog Dedication Ceremony and 4th of July Parade. Wishing everyone safe travels and a fun time at the National Convention!!

The city of Cedar Hill, with the help of a veteran Woman Marine, worked long hours and with a lot of dedication to turn the Cedar Hill Pet Cemetery into an honored resting place for all "dogs of duty," whether the dog worked with the police, a fireman or the military.

By Lourdes Vazquez, Dallas Morning News
June 6, 2014...

Cedar Hill Pet Cemetery Holds Dedication Ceremony for War Dog Monument



Lt. Charles Reiss of the Cedar Hill Police puts his hand on a statue of Titus, a Belgian Malinois and member of the Cedar Hill K-9 Unit, as he and other police officers carry the statue into the Cedar Hill Pet Memorial Park during a ceremony honoring service pets on May 31st.

The statue was put in place by the Cedar Hill Pet Memorial Project, and will serve to honor service dogs.

J. R. Podany, a corporal with the Cedar Hill Police Department, has been working with Titus, a Belgian Malinois, for more than a year. The dog, which is part of the department's K-9 Unit, is trained to detect drugs, track criminals, search for evidence and protect its handler.

In their short time together, Titus has proven himself, Podany said.

"It's exciting and rewarding to see all the training you have put in pay off," Podany said.

Now, Titus will keep watch over Cedar Hill Pet Memorial Park. His likeness was used as the model for "Enduring Valor," a bronze statue at the cemetery that honors the work of service animals.

The statue was dedicated May 31st and placed at the back of the property, where the nonprofit that runs the cemetery plans to set aside plots for service animals. More than 100 people attended the ceremony.

Nic Collins, an Air Force veteran, said the idea originated two years ago when members of the cemetery's support organization felt there was something missing: a tribute to service animals. Collins said he believes the War Dog Monument is the third of its type in Texas.

"War dogs haven't been honored in the past," said David Appel, treasurer for the Cedar Hill Pet Memorial Project.

The plots available to military and law enforcement service animals will be offered at no cost. Owners do pay for the gravestones for their service animals.

We want to raise awareness about what these dogs do," said Theresa Brandon, chairwoman of the Cedar Hill Pet Memorial Project. The cause is a personal one for Brandon, a former Marine. She served alongside a military dog named Chopper.

It took the nonprofit two years to raise funds for the War Dog Monument, Brandon said. The group still has to raise more money to complete the monument. The organization has received several donations, including granite for the plaque.

Dallas resident Eric Vidal, 54, said he remembered visiting the pet cemetery when he was young. His father buried his boxer, Butch, there in 1964.

The event was special not only for Vidal, but for Vidal's fiancée, Dotti Hinkle, who said she invested time in training her German shepherd, Katie Lynn. Though her dog was not buried at the cemetery, the mission of the nonprofit resonated with Hinkle, whose 6-year-old dog died in November after a tumor was found.

She was not able to put into practice what she taught Katie Lynn, but said a strong bond was formed nonetheless.

"You spend every day with each other. There's really no off day," Hinkle said.

Many service dogs are trained for dangerous situations in which they must protect their handler, Podany said. It's that loyalty, members of the nonprofit say, that is being honored with the monument.

"He's trained to do this and wants to do it," Podany said.



(L-R): Polly, Max, & Melody attending War Dog Ceremony

**BRAZOS VALLEY DETACHMENT
BRYAN**

Submitted by Teresa Carpenter, *Commandant*
jarheadlady@aol.com

BRAZOS VALLEY

Detachment participated in the Chappell Hill Independence Parade on July 4th. After the parade, member grandchildren enjoyed the petting zoo and the free Blue Bell ice cream.



Brazos Valley float



Throwing candy to crowd

The Detachment sponsored the Fun Run at the Independence Party sponsored by Independence's Harley-Davidson in College Station on Saturday, July 12th. In addition to the Fun Run, the Detachment manned the Dunking Booth, which at 90+ degrees was a favorite for both "dunkee" and dunker. Donated prizes were also raffled off.



Doug Crabtree, Sr. Vice Commandant, throws ball at the Dunking Booth



Commandant Teresa Carpenter (right) gives prize (a night at Messina Hof Villa) to Fun Run winner

Detachment members participated in the grand opening of the Museum of the American GI. In addition to having a booth, members enjoyed watching the mock WWII battle staged by the museum.



**CEN-TEX DETACHMENT
AUSTIN**

Submitted by Buzz Perez, *Commandant*
(512) 797-5682 (H) • DaBuzzard@austin.rr.com



Cen-Tex Detachment presenting certificate to an Austin Fire Department for flying our National as well as the Marine Corps flag whenever a Marine is on duty (they have three!) on June 28th.

**COASTAL BEND DETACHMENT
CORPUS CHRISTI**

Submitted by Harry Alfeo, *Commandant*
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ONCE AGAIN the people of the Republic of South Korea showed their thanks for the sacrifices American servicemen made in stopping North Korean and Chinese aggressors from destroying their country in a ceremony held at the Korean Presbyterian Church in Corpus Christi, TX, on June 25th, 2014. Words of appreciation were spoken by members of the Korean Chamber of Commerce. Medals marking the anniversary were distributed to the Korean vets in attendance as well as a hard covered book chronicling the progress the South Koreans have made since the end of the war. A lunch was also served to Korean vets and their

families. Our thanks go out to the people of the Republic of South Korea.



Coastal Bend Color Guard



*Music by the Veterans Band of Corpus Christi.
Ram Chavez, Director*



*Every Korean vet in attendance received an
“Ambassador for Peace” Medal*

**COMANCHE PEAK DETACHMENT
GRANBURY**

Submitted by Con Shuck, *Chaplain*
(817) 326-6132 (H) • *conshuck@gmail.com*

ON 8 MAY 2014

I received a request from Department of Texas Commandant Robert Ogg about a young man in my District, age 15, and his lifelong dream of being a U.S. Marine. After several emails passed back and forth between me and a lady in Ohio known as “Gunny Di” a letter was initiated to Robert Ogg.

On 9 May I received another email from this Gunny Di to inform me that the boy’s situation was worsening and had now spread to the lungs. She also commented that the boy’s mother had been to hell and back and faced many battles and this one is now lost except for the grace of God. She goes on to say, “I fear there is not enough ‘positive attitude nor faith’ that is going to keep this young man strong enough much longer.”

Knowing that only the Commandant can bestow honorary Marine status on anyone I contacted the boy’s mother again and tried to explain to her my thoughts and how I was going to approach the subject and gave her my plan. I was still skeptical.

I next contacted Robert Ogg and asked him to send me an Honorary Membership Certificate for the Marine Corps League. As soon as he told me he had mailed me a signed certificate I again called the mother back and set up a



date we could honor the boy. We agreed to meet in the waiting room at Cook Children’s Hospital in Ft. Worth at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 15th, for the presentation.

I contacted Raymond Beard, Commandant of my Detachment, along with Alex Azar, our

Paymaster, and Rich Thompson, our Sergeant-At-Arms. All wanted to be involved. The invitation was extended to anyone who wanted to join us but a Thursday was a bad day for most members.

Again I was being very apprehensive and cautious about this. Somehow I still thought it was a scam or something out of the ordinary. So being the Marine I am I decided to do a little reconnaissance of my own and get a little more information on this “want-to-be Marine” and I went to Cook Children’s Hospital in Ft. Worth to investigate.

Arriving at Cook’s I started to ask questions. This can be very difficult when you are not related to the patient plus do not know his birthday or even where he lives. I was being sent from place to place as everyone was trying their best to help without violating the HIPPA laws.

Finally I was sent to the Specialty Clinic, 5th floor, where a very nice lady said that indeed he did have an appointment on the 15th. Although she could not tell me what kind of treatment it was, she would just say it was an appointment with a doctor.

Back home more emails to Robert Ogg who assured me the certificate was on the way. I felt relieved knowing that at least the boy had an appointment. Myself and the rest of those wanting to go arranged to meet for breakfast on the 15th at 0800, headed for Ft. Worth, and got to the hospital about 20 minutes early waiting for a family to appear that I had no idea what they looked like and the same for them.

At about 10:35 a.m. we were all about ready to depart the hospital when I got a text message... “I was told you were here on Tuesday to present the certificate. You are coming today right?” I responded with “I’m in the lobby.” She texted back “Which lobby?” I replied with “Specialty Clinic 1st Floor.” She came back with “I’ll be right there,” and she was.

She and her family along with the boy’s football coach, two other members of the team, and the nurses were all gathered in the waiting room on the 5th floor. What a joyful meeting and such a pleasure to meet the boy with cancer and present him with an Honorary Marine Corps League certificate. All the doubts I had were now behind me.

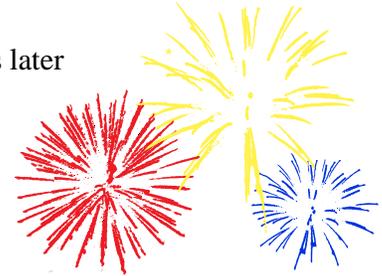
The mother had to ask what I was doing there

on Tuesday and I told her of my fears that this was a hoax. She had to laugh at the amount of time and trouble I had put in to making sure that her son became a member of the League.

Several times I was asked the difference, to which I only replied, “You had to be a Marine to become a regular member of the League” which made everything all right with everyone. Here is a picture of that meeting. That smile makes all the effort worthwhile.



The crowd was later treated to a very spectacular fireworks display by the City of Galveston.



**GALVESTON COUNTY DETACHMENT
GALVESTON**

Submitted by Guy Taylor, *Commandant*
(409) 770-9882 (H)
taylor_nomads@hotmail.com

DETACHMENT 666 held their annual July 4th parade in Galveston. The parade was a huge success with 66 entries and one of the largest crowds ever in attendance for any parade in Galveston. Our Marine Corps Reserve Unit here in Galveston led the parade. The crowd was very responsive to all of the entries, showing their patriotism with loud applause and lots of “flying” flags.



Submitted by Joe Vickery, *Chaplain*
(409) 948-0129 (H) • vick1933@aol.com

I AM SEEKING assistance from Detachment Commandants and Chaplains in a three-part program for recognizing and honoring our disabled and fallen Marines.

First – Please consider a regularly scheduled visitation program for Marines in nursing home facilities. If your Detachment does not have an organized visitation schedule please encourage every member to seek out and visit Marines in any home they may have reason to visit. A “Semper Fi” and five minute visit will mean a lot to a brother Marine.

Second – “Let no Marine fall unnoticed.” If your Detachment has a “Fallen Marine Honor Service” I would like to hear from you. If you do not, I recommend you adopt the service approved by our Department in 2003. Go to www.mclgalveston.com. You can view or download the entire program from this website. If you have any questions please contact me. I am the author of the “Fallen Marine Honor



Program” and will be happy to help any way I can.

Third – The Department of Texas wishes to recognize and honor all League members who pass away. If notified the Department Chaplain will send a “Sympathy Card” to the next of kin and will notify National headquarters. The Marine’s name may then be placed in “*Semper Fi*” magazine. A Notice of Death form (with four carbon copies) must be completed and sent to me (also Department Chaplain) at 2613 16th Avenue Circle, Texas City, TX 77590. This form may be ordered from MCL National Headquarters, P.O. Box 3070, Merrifield, VA 22116 (phone 800-625-1775). When completing this form, please press hard to insure the last page copy is legible.

If you have questions or if I can be of help in any way please feel free to contact me.

May the Lord guide your steps.

- Connected numerous veterans with assistance through the Veteran’s Service Office or other Veteran organizations
- Obtained our first corporate sponsor, King Financial Group
- Participated in Carry the Load’s Memorial Day event. We had one of the largest teams with 47 members and were one of the top 5 fund-raising teams raising over \$20,000



Lewisville Boy Scout Court of Honor for Tarun Swaminathan.

**LCPL. JACOB R. LUGO DETACHMENT
DENTON**

Submitted by Mark Roy, *Commandant*
(940) 395-0236 (H) • mark.roy@frx.com

SO FAR THIS YEAR

LCpl. Jacob R.

Lugo Detachment has:

- Started a scholarship fund
- Created a new website (www.DentonMCL.org)
- Added a “donate” button to our Facebook page
- Created Detachment challenge coins to raise money and awareness
- Created Detachment polo shirts to raise money and awareness
- Raised over \$2,500 to help Marines, FMF Corpsmen, and their families
- Participated in the Denton Dash for Public Schools
- Attended Chamber of Commerce Gala and other Chamber events
- Participated/attended events of other veteran organizations (American Legion/VVA)
- Helped keep a Marine in his home
- Helped multiple Marines find employment



Promoted the League and our upcoming Birthday Charity Ball on “Kilroy’s Conversation” (Veteran talk radio) on KVCE 1160 am



Helped raise \$1,500 for Honor Courage Comment, Inc., and raised awareness of veteran suicide with 22kill Honor Rings



Swore in 15 new Marine members, 1 Navy FMF Corpsman, and 3 new Associate members



Detachment members carrying Colors for VVA for July 4th Parade in Denton



Lewisville Senior Center's July 5th Luncheon where we posted the Colors

**LONGVIEW DETACHMENT
LONGVIEW**

Submitted by Jerry Crutcher, *Commandant*
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OUR DETACHMENT

continues to work the Veteran on a Veteran Program with



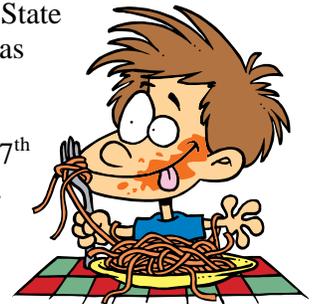
Hospice. This is a good program and I think that other Detachments would enjoy it. They can talk to a Hospice service, if they are interested, or they can give me a call

or email.

On May 17th, we participated with the Marine Recruiters on Marine Recruiter's Family Day, that we have been doing for a few years. All that are being sent to boot camp bring their family and have a meal. The Recruiters put on a good program. This happens about three to four times a year. Gary McDonald ran the event this year and did an outstanding job.

In June I attended the State Convention in Waco. It was great seeing everyone.

The Detachment had its spaghetti feed on June 7th and it was a great success. Jim Jones headed this up for another year and did a great job.



**SGT. JAY M. HOSKINS DETACHMENT
PARIS**

Submitted by John Ropella, *Commandant*
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jjropella@gmail.com

THE SGT. JAY M.

Hoskins Detachment #1364 from Paris, Texas, teamed with

the Paris Honda, Yamaha, Harley Davidson Dealership in Paris to kick off the 2014 Toys for Tots campaign and recognize those who supported us in 2013 with "Christmas in July." More than 200 toys and more than \$400 were donated.



Toys that were donated

This event, the first of what we hope will be many more in the coming years, was the idea of Timmy Chapman, co-owner of the Harley dealership and fellow Marine, John O'Donnell, Toys for Tots Coordinator. Timmy Chapman, a very big supporter of TFT and the Detachment, unfortunately, passed away unexpectedly this past year, so the event and major awards were in his memory. The Detachment provided BBQ brisket, chicken, hot links and all the fixin's to anyone who showed up.



Detachment members serving food to attendees

"Spirit of Giving" Christmas in July was a great success and promises to become even better in the coming years.



(L-R) John Ropella, Commandant; Dell Hayes, Sgt.-At-Arms; John O'Donnell, TFT Coordinator; Richard Smith, Jr. Vice Cmdt.; Robert Ogg, Dept. of TX Jr. Past Cmdt.; and Richard McIntire, Chief Cook



Devil Dog Doings

George Simpson
Pack Leader, Pack of Texas
(254) 666-4081 (H)
georsimps2@aol.com

FROM DEEP IN THE Heart of Texas:

I would like to say Thank You to all who came to Waco for the State Convention and I hope everyone enjoyed it. I also want to thank the members of Detachment #975 for all the work they did to help make it a great success as it takes a lot of help to pull it off.



We are now working on our next project – the Leatherneck 5K Run in November. The I&I Staff here in Waco always helps us on this. It will be our 14th year to have the run. Also, I would like to thank all the dogs for making me Pack Leader for the next year.



You will pay so bring lots of bones!!!!



Auxiliary Announcements

Viola Trevino
Department of Texas MLC
Auxiliary President
(361) 960-0142 (H)
vtat47@yahoo.com

THE FIRST

weekend of June I attended the Department of Texas Marine Corps League Convention in Waco, Texas. I would like to thank the Heart of Texas Detachment and Auxiliary for their hospitality and hard work in hosting such a great Convention.

I would like to congratulate the Coastal Bend Unit for their achievements this past year. In the Activity Reports they placed first in Americanism, first in Child Welfare, first in Civics and first in Rehabilitation. They also received a First Place certificate in miles traveled. I want to also congratulate the Heart of Texas Unit for achieving first Place in VAVS. Second Place Americanism went to Heart of Texas, second in Child Welfare to Heart of Texas, second in Civics to Pecan Valley, second in Rehabilitation to Heart of Texas, and second in VAVS to Big D Unit. Third Place Americanism went to Big D, Child Welfare to Pecan Valley, Civics to Heart of Texas, and Rehabilitation to Big D. I would like to thank all the Units and the chair people for their hard work in making this happen.



To my surprise I was presented the Marine Corps League Auxiliary Member of the Year Award. I felt so honored to receive this award and would like to thank the ladies of the Department of Texas for bestowing such an honor.

This year marked the 30th Anniversary of the Department of Texas Marine Corps League Auxiliary. We had a small celebration with

30

cake as we enjoyed looking through old pictures of years past but not before Brenda Tomonelli presented Connie Chambers with a Certificate of Recognition for 20 years of

dedicated service to the Auxiliary.

I would like to thank Dorcas Simpson and the Heart of Texas Unit for all the little baskets of goodies in our rooms.

Ladies, in the 25 plus years that I have been a member in this Auxiliary I am so proud that we finally got our Department banner. Thank you Dorcas for helping us in making the final touches on the banner that we inherited from Zapata Unit and for your dedication and hard work as President of the Department of Texas.

I would like to thank Brenda Tomonelli for a great and fun Flea Scratch. This year we had a western theme. Thank you to all those who participated and the winners: Dorcas Simpson, Toni Hurtado, and myself. Congratulations ladies.



The new Officers for the Department of Texas are as follows:

- President Viola Trevino
- Sr. Vice President Johnnie Lopez
- Jr. Vice President Luella Goley
- Judge Advocate Barbara Hixson
- Secretary Dema Ann Danford
- Treasurer Dorcas Simpson
- Chaplain Antonia Hurtado
- Capt. of the Guard .. Brenda Tomonelli
- Trustee #1 Connie Chambers
- Trustee #2 Janet Walton
- Trustee #3 Beverly Hill

I would like to thank the ladies for electing me President of the Department. I will work hard and I will assist the Board and the Units with anything they need. You can reach me via email or phone.



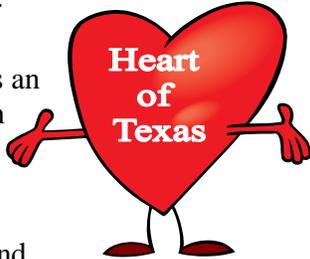


Dorcas Simpson
 Department of Texas
 MLC Auxiliary Jr. Past President
 (254) 666-4081 (H)
 georsimps2@aol.com

ALL AUXILIARY

Unit members, Unit Presidents and Board Members of the Department of Texas MCLA:

Thanks to all of you who made it to our State Convention and 30th year anniversary of our beloved Auxiliary. It was an honor to have this here in Waco, Texas, and thanks to our HOT Unit for all of their hard work in making it a fun weekend.



Also a special thank you to Johnnie & Lou Lopez for all the work and effort they put in getting ads for the program.

It was nice to finish my two-year term as Department President here in Waco. It was also nice to finally get our non-profit incorporated status for the State of Texas reinstated effective July 27, 2012. It seems that the Department Auxiliary had neglected to take care of that item for the past 13 years.



As of July 26, 2014, we are also in compliance with the IRS for tax exempt status. It took two years, a \$400 check from our Department Auxiliary, many sleepless nights, phone calls to the IRS every two months, and lots of searching through paperwork because someone back in 2010 did not do their job.

That's why I say if you cannot fulfill your oath of obligation when you take an office in our Auxiliary, call your President and ask that she get someone who can - it could save someone a lot of years of hard work. We are, as is every Unit in the Auxiliary, to stay in compliance with our IRS tax exempt number and our state non-profit corporation number each year. A copy of this is to be sent to National so it can be filed for each Unit in the U.S.



I am now the Department of Texas Treasurer. August is just around the corner. Please get your transmittal forms to me **before August 31st, 2014**. My address is **11474 Chapel Road, Lorena, Texas 76655-3007**. I hope to see some of you at National in Charleston, West Virginia.



If not, see you at the Fall Staff Meeting.

Remember a smile is worth a thousand words and costs nothing. Have a safe summer.



Flea Fiddlings

Brenda Tomonelli
 Department of Texas
 MODDF Hide
 Scratchy Flea
 (903) 786-8243 (H)
 bestepmom@yahoo.com



THE DEPARTMENT Convention Flea Scratch in Waco was a rip-roaring good time for the Fleas. Much thanks to the Heart of Texas MCL and MCLA for hosting a great convention.

Our MODDF theme was Cowgirl-Heart of Texas, with stick horses, hats, and boots. We celebrated 20 years for the Department Hide. Big Flea, Brenda Tomonelli, presented Charter Flea member, Connie Chambers, with a 20 year membership Certificate of Appreciation. She also presented very deserving Flea, Ann Danford, with a P.I.A. (pain in the a--) medal.



Connie Chambers (L) receiving Certificate of Appreciation at Department Convention.

All the Fleas participated in pestering and bitin' four new Dogs who serenaded the Fleas with a rousing, barking rendition of the Marines' Hymn. The Dogs then galloped around the Flea room on stick horses to the amusement of all.



The Fleas inducted one new Crawler, Marsha Ynman, and she was instructed to infiltrate the MODD Growl and wrench some bones from the Dogs. She was very successful with her sales technique, and with collected fines and dues, the Fleas made a donation of \$125 to the Leatherneck Foundation.

The Big Flea also presented PDD George Simpson, PDD Robert Ogg, and PDD Ron Tomonelli with Flea Appreciation Certificates and Dog Suckers for their continued support and patience with all of the Fleas' pestering antics.

The cowgirl-dressed Fleas then paraded for the Judges: Connie Chambers, Beverly Hill, and Shirley Otto (*welcome back Shirley!*) in the Cowgirl Costume Contest.



Contest entrants (L-R): Barbara Hixson, Toni Hurtado, Karren Ogg, Viola Trevino, Luella Goley, Ann Danford, Dorcas Simpson, Brenda Tomonelli

The Judges presented cowgirl-themed wine glasses to:



The Scratch continued with Crawler Ynman's

installation and installation of new officers for the coming year. Incoming Big Flea, Dorcas Simpson, set up a Decorating Committee for the coming year. The theme for the Fall Staff Scratch will be decided on before October's meeting in Granbury and all Fleas will be notified prior to October.

Brenda Tomonelli was honored and humbled to be the first recipient of the Marie Williams Flea of the Year Award presented by Dorcas Simpson at the Banquet.

Several Fleas are now in the process of preparing to attend the National Convention. All info regarding National Scratch can be found on MODDF website (www.nationalmoddfleas.org) or through the MCLA National website.

The Department of Texas MODDF will be proud to represent our Hide with our partying and Dog irritatin' *Texas-style* in West Virginia and welcome all Fleas (or potential Fleas) to attend the National Scratch if possible.

**M.O.D.D.F. HIDE OF TEXAS
Current Flea Officers-2013-2014**

Big Flea	Brenda Tomonelli
Medium Flea	Janet Walton
Little Flea	Viola Trevino
Smart Flea	Ann Danford
Scrappy Flea	Patsy Hamby
Holy Flea	Dorcas Simpson
Police Flea	Karren Ogg
Studious Flea	Toni Hurtado
Waggy Flea	Johnnie Lopez
No Name Flea	Louella Goley
Trusty Flea 1	Estella Alaniz
Trusty Flea 2	Barbara Hixson
Trusty Flea 3	Connie Chambers
Scratchy Flea	Brenda Tomonelli
Shopper Fleas	Dorcas Simpson & Karren Ogg
Wise Flea	Marie Williams



Highlights of the 2014 State Convention

Activity Awards...

Category 1: (15-49 Paid Up Members)

- 1st Place Deane Hawkins Det.
- 2nd Place LCpl. Shane Goldman Det.
- 3rd Place Laredo Det.

Category 2: (50-79 Paid Up Members)

- 1st Place Eastex Det.
- 2nd Place Tarrant County Det.
- 3rd Place Williamson County Det.

Category 3: (80 & Over Paid Up Members)

- 1st Place Coastal Bend Det.
- 2nd Place Big D Det.
- 3rd Place No Entry

Americanism Awards...

Category 1:

(15-49 Paid Up Members)

- 1st Place Colorado Valley Det.
- 2nd Place Brazoria County Det.
- 3rd Place Longhorn Det.



Category 2: (50-79 Paid Up Members)

NO Entries

Category 3: (80 & Over Paid Up Members)

- 1st Place Eastex Det.
- 2nd Place Big D Det.
- 3rd Place Coastal Bend Det.

Cam Posey Scholarships...



Christine Garner • Hanna Rice
 Jolina Rice • Stephanie Taldo
 (All recipients from Big D Detachment)

Distinguished Citizen Award...

Roberto Aguilar • Gabby Garibay
 Pedro Gomez • Wally Gonzales • Bill Hamby
 Asencio Pena • Concepcion Pena
 Thomas B. Smith • Robert Way

Distinguished Citizen Silver...

Chuck Bones • Jerry Crutcher
 Robert Goodman



Distinguished Service Award...

Jose Buenrestro • Con Shuck

Distinguished Service Award (Detachment)...

Hopkins County Detachment
 Jacksonville Detachment

Marine of the Year...



George Simpson
 Heart of Texas Detachment

Meritorious Unit Commendations (Detachment)...

Comanche Peak • Deane Hawkins
 Hopkins County • Jacksonville
 Longview • Lufkin
 Pineywoods • Sgt. Jay W. Hoskins

Meritorious Unit Commendations (Individual)

Brian Crews
 Anthony C. Dorries
 James Poston • Dan Singletary



National Vice Commandant's Award...

Alamo Detachment • Deane Hawkins Detachment
 Longview Detachment • Texoma Detachment

Pack Dog of the Year...



Con Shuck
 Comanche Peak
 Detachment

VAVS Bernard Sheeler Award...

Dorcas Simpson, Heart of Texas Detachment

Miscellaneous...

Department Officers for 2013-2014:

Commandant Amado Trevino
 Sr. Vice Commandant Charles Ynman
 Jr. Vice Commandant Dennis Bradford
 Judge Advocate Alex Azar
 Adjutant/Paymaster Polly Weidenkopf
 Chaplain Joe Vickery
 Sergeant-At-Arms Gary Matlock

District Vice Commandants:

District 1 Gary Clevenger
 District 2 Don Carlile
 District 3 Robert Way
 District 4 John Casey
 District 5 James Andrews
 District 6 Sal Vera
 District 7 Con Shuck
 District 8 Chuck Bones

Fall Staff Meeting – October 2014

The membership voted to hold the Fall Staff Meeting in Brownwood sponsored by the Pecan Valley Detachment. However, the Detachment encountered a few problems and was not able to get a reasonable rate from the hotel.

Therefore, the Comanche Peak Detachment in Granbury stepped up after the convention and volunteered to host the Meeting. It will be held in Granbury on October 23rd through 25th at the Comfort Suites. Rates will be \$69.99 for the king and \$74.99 for the double queen. This includes the continental breakfast.

Comanche Peak contacts are Alex Azar (817-219-9000) Chairman, and Con Shuck (972-880-1611) his assistant.

Information about the meeting should be posted on the Department website (www.texasmc.org) soon.

State Convention – June 2015

Following a motion that carried during the business meeting, **all future state conventions will be held during the 3rd weekend of June**. This is due to the fact that during the 1st weekend of June there are graduations and during the 2nd weekend Father's Day is celebrated.

The State Convention for 2015 will be held in San Antonio sponsored by the Alamo Detachment. More details to follow.

MEMORIAM
Department
of Texas



Notification received of members who passed away since Fall Staff Meeting October 2013

BRAZORIA COUNTY DETACHMENT (Angleton)

Charles A. Sullivan 8 May 14

CEN-TEX DETACHMENT (Austin)

Lee Hagan 18 Feb 14

COASTAL BEND DETACHMENT (Corpus Christi)

Boyd David Kinsley 5 Jun 14

COMANCHE PEAK DETACHMENT (Granbury)

William Roy Gregory 1 Apr 14
Jack Holmes 7 Mar 14

EASTEX DETACHMENT (Conroe)

Paul Kimbrel Smith, Jr. 26 Apr 14

HEART OF TEXAS DETACHMENT (Waco)

Joe K. Sanders 26 Mar 14

HILL COUNTRY DETACHMENT (Fredericksburg)

Andrew W. Heard, Jr. 17 Dec 12

**HOPKINS COUNTY DETACHMENT
(Sulphur Springs)**

Victor M. Cosme 11 Jan 14

LAREDO DETACHMENT (Laredo)

William Franklin Ueckert 8 Apr 14

LONGVIEW DETACHMENT (Longview)

Jessie D. Herndon 2 Feb 14

LOST PINES LEATHERNECKS (Bastrop)

Stanley Wayne LaBauve 27 Mar 14

LOUIS WAYNE QUALLS DETACHMENT (Temple)

Ron Rhonkowski 2014
Stanley Roth Stein 2014

MCLEMORE DETACHMENT (Houston)

Charles Couch 2012
Robert G. Curtis 19 Feb 14
Guinn Rasbury 2012
Gayle F. Twyman 24 Jan 14
Raymond E. Wyatt 10 Jan 14

PECAN VALLEY DETACHMENT (Brownwood)

William W. Bell Jan 14

TARRANT COUNTY DETACHMENT (Ft. Worth)

George Alden 9 Jan 14

TEXOMA DETACHMENT (Denison)

Kenneth A. Bicking, Jr. 8 Oct 13



**National
News**

*Commandant
Jim Tuohy's
Communications*

*JTuhoy@MCLeague.org
Semper Fi Article –
May/June 2014...*

CONFERENCE TIME!

As I write this, I am currently on a week-long vacation cruising from Passau, Germany, to Budapest, Hungary. So far we have visited Linz, Melk, Durstein, Austria, Vienna, Slovakia and Bratislava. We are currently on the way to Budapest, the final city of our trip.



Budapest, Hungary

It has been extremely exciting to visit these different countries, learn about their history and experience the different cultures of the local population. I learned a new custom in the city of Linz, Germany: the tradition of a couple going together and promising their love to each forever.

They purchase a padlock and key from the local hardware store, write their names on the lock, then lock it to a bridge over the river that flows through the town. Then they throw the key into the river, professing their love and commitment to each other. If that was a custom here in the States, I know of a few individuals who'd probably have about 10 locks on that fence and as many keys at the bottom of that river.



It's been busy since my last column. After MarineWest, I headed back to Fairfax, VA, for our

National Mid-Winter Conference. I thought the conference was successful and



well attended, despite the snowstorm that forced several people to turn around and go home and added many extra hours of driving for others.



Mid-Winter had no sooner finished than Division Conferences began. I attended the Southeast Division Conference in Nashville hosted by the Music City Detachment. Dave Gardner, Glen Barry Evans and their members put on a great conference.

After that, we headed to Galloway, NJ, for the Northeast Conference. Prior to the conference, I stopped off in my former home of New Milford, NJ, where I lived prior to relocating to Michigan, to attend a meeting of the Gooney Bird Detachment.



I had not been back there in some 33 years. The best part was

meeting a few Marines who were there when I was. It was great to see Bob Leonard, Al Frater and many new faces. It was a great visit with a bunch of great Marines.

The Northeast Division was held at a country club, and we enjoyed a great weekend. A special thanks to Joe Patrick and the Marines of the Cape Atlantic Detachment for a great weekend.

I headed to Camp Lejeune in April for Marine South Expo and spent a few extra days visiting my grandson and his family who are stationed there. While there, we attended the Marine Corps Association's Awards Dinner hosted by the MCA, and it was an enjoyable evening.

Following that I attended the VAVS Conference in Cary, NC. This is a wonderful event each year, and you really get an education on what our VAVS volunteers are doing at their local VA hospitals and outpatient clinics.

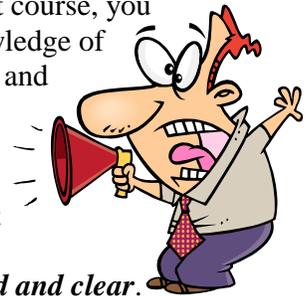
March was the first month that the United States did not lose any troops in Afghanistan, so let's pray that continues as we wind down this war and bring our troops home. Remember to keep them in your prayers.

*Semper Fi Article –
July/Aug 2014...*

PREPARE TO LEAD!

As you read this column, many Departments are concluding their annual Department conventions. Some of those Departments will see an influx of newly elected and appointed officers. Those officers will be responsible for leading their members for at least the next 12 months. I hope these Marines have reviewed all of the modules of the Professional Development Program (PDP), especially the one titled "Leadership Principles."

Since many of you are going to be in the forefront of working with members to keep the Department on a steadfast course, you need to have a good knowledge of the Marine Corps League and the duties of the Board of Trustees. It's also important to conduct meetings in a manner that ensures your audience is getting your message *loud and clear*.



There are also modules on District Vice Commandant duties and responsibilities, recruiting and retention, uniforms, disciplinary procedures and public relations. If you are going to be out



there selling memberships in our League, then you should review the public relations module and the recruiting and retention module in the Professional Development Program (PDP).

You can pick up some good ideas on where to advertise, how to host membership drives in your community, and how to plan and conduct activities that will draw Marines into the organization.

The PDP has some new information under support materials, such as the Officers Guidebook, Fallen Warrior Program, MCL Ritual and the 10 worst meeting offenses. If you have problems viewing these from the National website, go to the Department of Florida website, click on Leadership Program and download the modules.

The Professional Development Committee is currently working with the Chief Technology Officer to convert these programs from a Power Point format to a more user-friendly PDF format. This also is an excellent opportunity for all Marine Corps League members, especially those who desire to be future Detachment and Department officers.

In my recent travels around the League, I have asked two questions of the members in attendance: "How many of you have heard of the Professional Development Program?"

and "How many of you are using this program in your Departments and Detachments?"

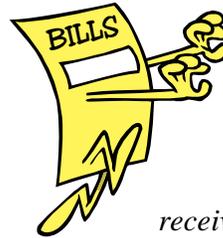


I can honestly say that the word is *finally* getting out. At the last two division conferences that I attended, the number of Marines who are currently using the program has increased significantly since last year, when almost no one was using it.

Remember, as a Marine, training was at the top of the list in order for you to remain proficient in your job. It should be no different in the Marine Corps League.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the National Convention in Charleston in August.

Please remember to keep our warriors who are in harm's way in your prayers, that they may accomplish their mission and return home safely to their loved ones.



Detachment Paymasters Information

The following notices have been received from **National Headquarters** and are included here for your information:

Information from Johanna Hill
Membership Manager
(800) 625-1775 • jhill@mcleague.org
June 30, 2014...

New Transmittals:

We have received the new transmittals at National Headquarters. These transmittals reflect the correct dues amounts and the updated life member dues structure.



We will send out the new forms with returned yellow copies as normal. If you would like additional forms, you can e-mail gpotestio@mcleague.org or send us a note at:

Marine Corps League National Headquarters
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 3070
Merrifield, VA 22116

We will still accept the old version of the transmittal form and printed copies, provided that you include all of the necessary information and pay the correct fees.

Reinstating Members:

Members are eligible for reinstatement if their membership has been expired for over one (1) year. Once reinstated, the membership starts over with a new enrollment date and a full year of membership starting from the day when we receive the payment.

You only need to send in \$20 for a reinstatement (that is, regular renewal dues). *The additional reinstatement fee was eliminated by Change #8 from the 2012 National Convention.*



We at Headquarters cannot automatically reinstate a member once he's been out for over a year. If we receive a renewal payment for someone whose expiration date is in June 2012, for instance, the payment will only bring him up to June 2013 unless he's marked for reinstatement. As the Paymaster, you should use the code "RI" on the transmittal to indicate that the member should be reinstated.

We send out dues notices for members up to two (2) years after their membership expires. Make sure to check members' expiration dates before sending in their renewal on a transmittal. Even if they send their payment in with a dues notice, they may not be up to date.

Changes to Dues:

At the 2013 National Convention in Grand Rapids, MI, the delegates approved a national dues increase of \$2 effective January 1, 2014. The portion of annual dues coming to National Headquarters is now \$20, with new member. The \$25 due for any delegates also approved a new Life Member dues structure. National Headquarters will be using the new amounts for all renewing, new, and life members. *Transmittals that don't reflect the changes will be returned to the Paymaster.*



As a reminder, the new Life Member dues structure is as follows:

Age Category	1 Jan 14
0 – 35	\$500
36 – 50	\$400
51 – 64	\$300
65 – over	\$200

Transmittals with the correct amount are now available. Please contact us with any questions or concerns.



From the Front

By Philip Ewing, Politico Pro
July 13, 2014...

Joe Dunford to Inherit Marine Corps in Flux



Marine General Joe Dunford

MANY LEATHERNECKS might argue there's no such thing as a bad day inside the United States Marine Corps — but even they might also admit there have been better times than this.

Marine General Joe Dunford, nominated to become the 36th Commandant of the Marines, is set to inherit the smallest of the Defense Department's military services at a time when it's getting even smaller. It's trapped in a straitjacket imposed by Congress. And it's struggling with goals as different as getting more women into frontline units and determining how to build a new amphibious vehicle.





Marine General James Mattis Ret.

“We’re in a transition period,” said retired Marine General

James Mattis, the former boss of the U.S. Central Command.

“It’s going to take someone with

intellectual acuity to guide the Marine Corps.”

But insiders and outsiders alike say Dunford,

who is likely to enjoy a warm reception at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee this week, is prepared for the challenge. He’s coming off a more than 16-month tour as the top commander in Afghanistan, where he’s credited with helping preserve the gains of the Afghan National Security Forces.

“He’s an outstanding officer, one of the finest I’ve ever served with,” Mattis said. “He’s calm under fire; he’s tough; he’s resolute — he’s unintimidated by any complex problem.”

Dunford’s history in Washington and his performance in Afghanistan have made him very popular with defense advocates in Congress. He also enjoys near-universal acclaim from his fellow Marines and the wider national security world in Washington.

Hailed for his sharp intellect, his wealth of experience and his deft personal touch, Dunford is already among the few whose names are being tossed around to potentially replace Joint Chiefs Chairman General Martin Dempsey, another Iraq War veteran who ascended swiftly after doing a toe-touch as the chief of his service.

But before he moves on, Dunford must get through the next few months closing out his tenure as the head of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

He must oversee the continued withdrawal of about 20,000 more

American troops —

assuming the government of Afghanistan signs the

bilateral security agreement that will permit the remaining force of



fewer than 10,000 to stay there beyond December 31st.

Army Vice Chief of Staff General John Campbell has been nominated to take Dunford’s place in Kabul.

When the dust settles, Dunford will have gone from being the boss of the guys who kick in doors

downrange, to the man responsible for organizing, training and equipping them at home. Put another way, he’s trading his hooch in Kabul for an office in the E-Ring, and that could cause something of a culture shock.

“There’s a learning curve in every job,” Mattis said.

But Dunford has an advantage, said retired Marine General John

Allen, the former top U.S.

commander in Afghanistan. He has done Washington tours before, including as

Assistant Commandant of the Marines.

“I think, while certainly living in

Washington again will be a different experience

for someone who’s spent the last year plus in command, of all the people who could have been unsettled, Joe Dunford will have the least amount of requirement to adjust,” Allen said. “Every day, he was dealing with the challenges that the Marine Corps faced as a service.”

Even so, there will be plenty waiting for him in his new role.

“He’ll be looking to reset the Corps after 13 years of war — he’ll have a lot of challenges,” Allen added. “These are challenges that come naturally from a service at this point in history. When I say challenges, though, I mean that in the context of them also being opportunities. Joe Dunford is the guy who can seize those opportunities.”



Army General John Campbell



Marine General John Allen

The Marines have spent the Iraq and Afghanistan era fighting as a second land army but now must switch back to their classic role as a light, nimble amphibious force, ready to project power ashore from Navy warships at sea.



“I’d imagine that a lot of time and effort will be spent on rebuilding expeditionary expertise through training and recapitalizing equipment needed to conduct expeditionary operations,” said Chris Dougherty, a research fellow with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

By Douglas Ernst, The Washington Times
July 17, 2014...

Top Marine Corps General Slams Obama’s Handling of Iraq

WASHINGTON D.C. -- Four-star General James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, used a speaking engagement at the Brookings Institute on Tuesday to deliver a stinging rebuke of the Obama administration’s handling of Iraq.



Marine General James Amos

“I have a hard time believing that had we been there, and worked with the government, and worked with parliament, and worked with the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Interior, I don’t think we’d be in the same shape we’re in today,” General Amos said, *The Fiscal Times* reported Wednesday.

It’s rare for an active-duty serviceman to give such blunt public criticism of a sitting president. While General Amos was careful not to mention the president by name, *The Fiscal Times* reported that the top general’s upcoming retirement this fall may have played a role in his decision.

“We may think we’re done with all of these nasty, thorny, tacky little things that are going on around the world – and I’d argue that if you’re in that nation, it’s not a tacky, little thing for you. We may think we’re done with them, but they’re not done with us,” the Commandant of the Marine Corps added, the paper reported. “We’re probably the only country in the world that has the resources and the capability to be able to do some of this that others can’t.”



The decorated officer added that it is breaking the hearts of Marines to see many of the gains made before U.S. troops pulled out in 2011 squandered. Sunni radicals with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have taken over large swathes of Iraq since June.



Roughly 852 Marines were killed and 8,500 injured during deployments to Iraq, *The Fiscal Times* reported.

By Cpl. Cody Haas
Marine Expeditionary Brigade
July 21, 2014...

Working Dog, Handler Prove Useful in Afghanistan

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- Improvised explosive devices remain a major threat to Marines conducting security patrols in Helmand Province.

To help mitigate the threat, working-dog handlers and IED detection dogs are used to find

possible IEDs before Marines get too close.

“I use Vito to search anything from roads and open areas to vehicles and buildings for IEDs or explosive chemicals,” said Cpl. Taylor Cross, a working-dog handler with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.



Cpl. Cross walks alongside his working dog, Vito, during a security patrol in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, July 4th, 2014.

As Marines patrol around buildings and compounds, Vito is always in the lead, sniffing around corners and alongside roadways clearing the route ahead.

Cross and the other Marines in the unit rely on Vito’s keen sense of smell for ensuring a safe route while conducting security operations.

“It is very humbling knowing that the guys I work with, along with myself, rely on Vito to keep us safe,” said Cross, a 21-year-old native of Cedar Falls, IA.

Vito, a 6-year-old purebred black lab, is trained to detect explosive material, both military and homemade.

During two months of pre-deployment training, Cross and Vito became a part of the battalion.

“The pre-workup training went great,” said Cross. “I was able to integrate Vito into the unit. It was amazing to see Vito’s detecting capabilities and potential to save lives in Afghanistan.”

Cross and Vito deployed to Afghanistan together from Twentynine Palms, CA, during March 2014.

“Vito has a hardheaded personality, but after working with him for such a long time, he learned to trust me and I learned to trust him and his judgment,” said Cross. “It has been a great learning experience. After taking care of Vito since the

beginning of our deployment, he is more than just a working dog to me; he is a part of my life.”



Marine Corps History

15 SEPTEMBER 1950

THE BATTLE OF INCHON

was an amphibious invasion and battle of the Korean War that resulted in a decisive victory and strategic reversal in favor of the United Nations. The operation involved some 75,000 troops and 261 naval vessels, and led to the recapture of the south Korean capital Seoul two weeks later. The code name for the operation was Operation Chromite.

Following the stunning success of the North Korean invasion of South Korea in the summer of 1950, United Nations forces were trapped in the southeast corner of the peninsula in an area known as the Pusan Perimeter. With the bulk of the North Korean People’s Army (NKPA) engaged around Pusan, UN Supreme Commander General Douglas MacArthur began advocating for a daring amphibious strike on the peninsula’s west coast at Inchon. This he argued would catch the NKPA off guard, while landing UN troops close to the capital at Seoul and placing them in a position to cut the North Korean’s supply lines.

Many were initially skeptical of MacArthur’s plan as Inchon’s harbor possessed a narrow approach channel, strong current and wildly fluctuating tides. Also, the harbor was surrounded by easily defended seawalls. In presenting his plan, MacArthur cited these factors as reasons the NKPA would not anticipate an attack at Inchon. After finally winning approval from Washington, MacArthur selected the US Marines to lead the attack. Ravaged by post-World War II cutbacks, the Marines consolidated all available



manpower and reactivated aging equipment to prepare for the landings.

Inchon Landings - Pre-Invasion Operations:

To pave the way for the invasion, Operation Trudy Jackson was launched a week before the landings. This involved the landing of a joint CIA-military intelligence team on Yonghung-do Island in the Flying Fish Channel on the approach to Inchon. Led by Navy Lieutenant Eugene Clark, this team provided intelligence to UN forces and restarted the lighthouse at Palmi-do. When Clark's activities were discovered, the North Koreans dispatched a patrol boat to investigate. After mounting a machine gun on a sampan, Clark's men were able to sink the patrol boat. As retribution, the NKPA killed 50 civilians for aiding Clark.

Inchon Landings - Going Ashore:

As the invasion fleet neared, UN cruisers and destroyers closed on Inchon to clear mines from the Flying Fish Channel and to shell NKPA positions on Wolmi-do Island in Inchon harbor. Though these actions caused the North Koreans to believe that an invasion was coming, the commander at Wolmi-do assured the NKPA command that he could repulse any attack. On the morning of September 15th, 1950, the invasion fleet, led by Normandy and Leyte Gulf veteran



Adm. Arthur Struble

Admiral Arthur Dewey Struble, moved into position. Around 6:30 a.m., the first UN troops, led by the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines came ashore at "Green Beach" on Wolmi-do.

Supported by nine tanks from the 1st Tank Battalion, the Marines succeeded in capturing the island by noon, suffering only 14 casualties

in the process. Through the afternoon they defended the causeway to Inchon proper, while awaiting reinforcements. Due to the extreme tides in the harbor, the second wave did not arrive until 5:30 p.m. At 5:31, the first Marines landed and scaled the sea wall at "Red Beach." Located just north of the Wolmi-do causeway, the Marines on Red Beach quickly reduced the NKPA opposition, allowing forces from Green Beach to enter the battle.

Pressing into Inchon, the forces from Green and Red Beaches were able to take the city and compelled the NKPA defenders to surrender. As these events were unfolding, the 1st Marine Regiment, under



Col. Chesty Puller

Colonel Lewis "Chesty" Puller, was landing on "Blue Beach" to the south. Though one LST was sunk while approaching the beach, the Marines met little opposition once ashore and quickly moved to help consolidate the UN position.

The landings at Inchon caught the NKPA command by surprise. Believing that the main invasion would come at Kusan (the result of UN disinformation), the NKPA only sent a small force to the area.

Inchon Landings - Aftermath & Impact:

UN casualties during the Inchon landings and subsequent battle for the city were 566 killed and 2,713 wounded. In the fighting the NKPA lost more than 35,000 killed and captured. As additional UN forces came ashore, they were organized into the US X Corps. Attacking inland, they advanced towards Seoul, which was taken on September 25th, after brutal house-to-house fighting. The daring landing at Inchon, coupled with 8th Army's breakout from the Pusan Perimeter, threw the NKPA into a headlong retreat. UN troops quickly recovered South Korea and pressed into the north. This advance continued until late November when Chinese troops poured into North Korea causing UN forces to withdraw south.

BATTLE OF CHOSIN RESERVOIR

(The fighting around Chosin Reservoir lasted from November 26th to December 11th, 1950.)

On October 25th, 1950, with General Douglas MacArthur's United Nations forces closing in a victorious end to the Korean War, Communist Chinese forces began pouring across the border. Striking the spread out UN troops with overwhelming force, they compelled them to retreat all

across the front. In northeastern Korea, the US X Corps, led by Major General Ned Almond, was strung out with its units unable to support each other. Those units near the Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir included the 1st Marine Division and elements of the 7th Infantry Division.

Battle of Chosin Reservoir – Chinese Invasion:

Advancing quickly, the Ninth Army Group of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA)



Maj. Gen. Ned Almond

blunted X Corps advance and swarmed around the UN troops at Chosin. Alerted to their predicament, Almond ordered the commander of the 1st Marine Division, Major General Oliver P. Smith, to begin a fighting retreat back towards the coast.



Maj. Gen. Oliver Smith

Commencing on November 26th, Smith’s men endured extreme cold and severe weather. The next day, the 5th and 7th Marines attacked from their positions near Yudam-ni, on the west bank of the reservoir, with some success against the PLA forces in the area. Over the next three days the 1st Marine Division successfully defended their positions at Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri against Chinese human wave assaults. On November 29th, Smith contacted Colonel “Chesty” Puller, commanding the 1st Marine Regiment at Koto-ri, and asked him to assemble a task force to re-open the road from there to Hagaru-ri.

Battle of Chosin Reservoir - Hell Fire Valley:

Complying, Puller formed a force consisting of Lieutenant Colonel Douglas B. Drysdale’s 41 Independent Commando (Royal Marines Battalion), G Company (1st Marines), B Company (31st Infantry), and other rear echelon troops. Numbering 900 men, the 140-vehicle task force departed at 9:30 a.m. on the 29th, with Drysdale in



Lt. Col. Douglas Drysdale

command. Pushing up the road to Hargaru-ri, the task force became bogged down after being ambushed by Chinese troops. Fighting in an area that was dubbed “Hell Fire Valley,” Drysdale



was reinforced by tanks sent by Puller. Pressing on, Drysdale’s men ran a gauntlet of fire and reached Hagaru-ri with the bulk of 41

Commando, G Company, and the tanks. During the attack, the B Comapany, 31st Infantry, became separated and isolated along the road. While most were killed or captured, some were able to escape back to Koto-ri. While the Marines were fighting to the west, the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT) of the 7th Infantry was battling for its life on the eastern shore of reservoir.

Battle of Chosin Reservoir - Fighting to Escape:

Repeatedly assaulted by the 80th and 81st PLA divisions, the 3,000-man 31st RCT was worn down and overrun. Some survivors of the unit reached the Marine lines at Hagaru-ri on December 2nd. Holding his position at Hagaru-ri, Smith ordered the 5th and 7th Marines to abandon the area around Yudam-ni and link up with the rest of the division. Fighting a brutal three-day battle, the Marines entered Hagaru-ri on December 4th. Two days later, Smith’s command began fighting their way back to Koto-ri.



December 6th, 1950 - Exhausted Marines at the breakout of Hagaru-ri.

Battling overwhelming odds, the Marines and other elements of X Corps attacked continuously as they moved towards the port of Hungnam. A highlight of the campaign occurred on December 9th, when a bridge was constructed over a 1,500 ft. gorge between Koto-ri and Chinhung-ni using pre-fabricated bridge sections dropped by the US Air Force. Cutting through the enemy, the last of the “Frozen Chosin” reached Hungnam on December 11th.

Battle of Chosin Reservoir - Aftermath

While not a victory in the classic sense, the withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir is revered as a high point in the history of the US Marine Corps.

In the fighting, the Marines and other UN troops effectively destroyed or crippled seven Chinese divisions which attempted to block their progress.

Marine losses in the campaign numbered 836 killed and

12,000 wounded. Most of the latter were frostbite injuries inflicted by the severe cold and winter weather. US Army losses numbered around 2,000 killed and 1,000 wounded. Precise casualties for the Chinese are not known but are estimated at 35,000 killed. Upon reaching Hungnam, the veterans of Chosin Reservoir were evacuated as part of the large amphibious operation to rescue UN troops from northeastern Korea.



Coming Attractions



MCL National Convention - 2014

Embassy Suites Hotel

300 Court St. • Charleston, WV 25301
 (304) 347-8700 • August 3rd – 9th, 2014



Modern Day Marine

MCB • Quantico, VA

September 23rd – 25th, 2014



Department of Texas Fall Staff Meeting

Comfort Suites Granbury

903 Harbor Lakes Dr. • Granbury, TX 76048

(817) 579-5559 • October 23rd – 25th, 2014



Marine West Expo

Marine Corps Base • Camp Pendleton, CA

January 29th – 30th, 2015



Southern Division Conference

Ft. Smith, AR

March 2015



Marine South Expo

Marine Corps Base • Camp Lejeune, NC

April 8th – 9th, 2015



Department of Texas State Convention

San Antonio, TX

June 2015

DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS FALL STAFF MEETING

October 23rd – 25th, 2014 • Granbury, TX

MOTEL: **Comfort Suites Granbury** - 903 Harbor Lakes Drive, Granbury, TX 76048
 Complimentary buffet breakfast, microwave, refrigerator, Wi-Fi, Internet,
 indoor swimming pool - Check-in time: 3 p.m.; Check-out time: 11 a.m.
 King - \$69.99, Double Queen - \$74.99 - **Reservations: (817) 579-5559**
Make your room reservation ASAP; limited no. of rooms available.



DEADLINE FOR MOTEL RESERVATIONS: September 29, 2014

REGISTRATION:



MCL Member - \$5/person; MCLA Member - \$5/person
 Friday Night BBQ - \$20/person
 Saturday Night Banquet - \$35/person (Steak or Chicken)
 Make checks payable to: **Comanche Peak Detachment #1297**
 Mail to: *c/o Alex Azar*
6105 W. Choctaw Court
Granbury, TX 76049-5246

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF REGISTRATIONS: October 10, 2014

PROGRAM: Advertising Rates...

Back Cover/Inside Cover	(Already Sold)
Full Page	\$ 100
Half Page	50
Quarter Page	25
Business Card	15
Name/Single Line	10



Please leave 1" margin on all four sides of ads and insure the ads are camera ready.

Make checks payable to: **Comanche Peak Detachment #1297** and mail to:

Bernie O'Dell, 515 Hall Street, Graham, TX 76450

Ads may also be emailed to bernieodell@sbcglobal.net

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ADS: October 3, 2014

CONTACTS FOR INFORMATION...

Primary: Alex Azar, (817) 219-9000, azar.usmc@gmail.com
 Assistant: Con Shuck, (972) 880-1611, conshuck@gmail.com

MARINES AND TAMPONS

Tampons to the rescue in Iraq!! Don't worry, it's a good story, and worth reading. It's even humorous in parts. It's from the mother of a Marine in Iraq.

My son told me how wonderful the care packages we had sent them were and wanted me to tell everyone thank you. He said that one guy we'll call Marine X, got a girl care package and everyone was giving him a hard time. My son said, "Marine X got some really nice smelling lotion and everyone really likes it, so every time he goes to sleep they steal it from him." I told my son I was really sorry about the mistake, and if he wanted I would send Marine X another package. He told me not to worry about Marine X because every time I send something to him, Marine X thinks it's for him, too.



He said when my husband and I sent the last care package, Marine X came over to his cot, picked up the box, started fishing through it, and said, "What'd we get this time?"

My son said they had the most fun with Marine X's package. He said he wasn't sure who we were sending the package to, but the panties were size 20, and he said one of the guys got on top of the Humvee and jumped off with the panties over his head and yelled, "Look at me, I'm an Airborne Ranger!!!!" One of the guys attached the panties to an antenna and it blew in the wind like a windsock. He said it entertained them for quite a while. Then of course... they had those tampons.



When he brought this up, my imagination just went running, but he continued. My son said they had to go on a mission and Marine X wanted the Chap-Stick and lotion for the trip. He grabbed a bunch of the items from his care package and got in the Humvee. As luck would have it, he grabbed the tampons too, and my son said everyone was teasing him about "not forgetting his feminine hygiene products."

He said things went well for a while, then the convoy was ambushed and a Marine was shot. He said the wound was pretty clean, but it was deep. He said they were administering first aid but couldn't

get the bleeding to slow down, and someone said, "Hey! Use Marine X's tampons!" My son said they put the tampon in the wound. At this point my son profoundly told me, "Mom, did you know that tampons expand?" ("Well... yeah!")

They successfully slowed the bleeding until the guy got better medical attention. When they went to check on him later the surgeon told them, "You guys saved his life. If you hadn't stopped that bleeding he would have bled to death." My son said, "Mom, the tampons sent by the Marine's Mom by mistake saved a Marine's life."

At this point I asked him, "Well, what did you do with the rest of the tampons?" He said, "Oh, we divided them up and we all have them in our flak jackets, and I kept two for our first aid kit."



I am absolutely amazed by the ingenuity of our Marines. I can't believe that something that started out as a mistake then turned into a joke ended up saving someone's life. My sister said she doesn't believe in mistakes. She believes God had a plan all along. She believes that "female care package" was sent to Marine X to save our Marine.

Either way, our efforts have boosted the morale of many Marines, provided much needed items for our troops, AND saved the life of a Marine! God bless every one of you for your efforts and hard work, and God bless our Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force and all our military service personnel.



DEADLINE
for
Texas Marine
FALL Edition
will be
October 15th

Please submit
articles/photos to
Bernie & Juanita O'Dell
@ 515 Hall St.,
Graham, TX 76450 or
juanitaodell@sbcglobal.net

