



## *The Straight Scoop*

Department Newsletter of the  
Marine Corps League  
Department of West Virginia  
P.O. Box 11828  
Charleston, WV 25339



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### COMMANDANT'S MESSAGE

Marines, FMF Corpsmen, FMF Chaplains and Associate Members. I hope this finds you well. I hope to see everyone at the Fall Quarterly meeting in a couple of weeks in Logan. Commandant Finley is ensuring a great meeting and good chow. I also want to send a big Bravo Zulu to our Department Fire Team who is almost ready to charter our newest detachment in Hurricane WV. I need to address some concerns that I have been dealing with lately with a few of our detachments in the state. Last month I talked about common courtesy, this month I need to extend this conversation. At no point do I want to be negative in my writing. This will only be negative if these examples describe you. Here is a question to ponder. If you were ever accused of being a Marine, would there be enough evidence to convict you? I ask this because of all of the petty, ridiculous and sometimes humorous arguments and disagreements that are going on in some of our detachments. We have some folks that are out to make a name for themselves. They are trying to set up a "Dynasty" for themselves and while doing so push other members away. We have detachments that are having problems because the "Leadership in the Detachment thinks they know everything"

and won't listen to their members. We also have detachments that have two groups of people, who because of the examples above, don't like each other and have division within their detachment. This is what I say to those detachments... Grow up and act like Marines. We all took an Oath in this all volunteer organization and I am asking that everyone in the Department rededicate themselves to this oath. It reads as follows...

#### OATH OF MEMBERSHIP -REGULAR MEMBERS

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, in the presence of Almighty God, and the members of the Marine Corps League here assembled, being fully aware of the symbols, motto, principles and purposes of the Marine Corps League, do solemnly swear or affirm that I will uphold and defend the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America and of the Marine Corps League. I will never knowingly wrong, deceive or defraud the League as to the value of anything. I will never knowingly wrong or injure or permit any member or any member's family to be wronged or injured if to prevent the same is within my power. I will never propose for membership, one known to me to be unqualified or unworthy to become a member of the League. I further promise to govern my conduct in the League's affairs and in my personal life in a manner becoming a decent honorable person and will never knowingly bring discredit to the League, so help me God.*

#### OATH OF MEMBERSHIP-ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, in the presence of Almighty God, and the members of the Marine Corps League here assembled, being fully aware that as an Associate Member, I will not be permitted to hold an elective office or to vote on Marine Corps League policy, a membership application, or an election of officers, do solemnly swear or affirm that I will uphold and defend the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America and of the Marine Corps League. I will never knowingly wrong, deceive or defraud the League as to the value of anything. I will never knowingly wrong or injure or permit any member or any member's family to be wronged or injured if to prevent the same is within my power. I will never propose for membership, one known to me to be unqualified or unworthy to become a member of the League. I further promise to govern my conduct in the League's affairs and in my personal life in a manner becoming a decent honorable person and will never knowingly bring discredit to the League, so help me God.*

The infighting needs to stop. If you are wondering if I am talking about you, give me a call and I'll be happy to discuss it with you.

With that being said, I appreciate the hard work that goes on across the Department as most Detachments are doing it right. Again, with all of the calls that I have received lately, I felt that this needed to be addressed. Again, I am proud to represent each of you as your Commandant and I live by the rule that it's not about me. It's about each of you.

Please keep all members of our Armed Forces in your thoughts and Prayers as they serve in harm's way.

Semper Fidelis,

Scott Kirby  
Commandant  
Dept. of WV  
Marine Corps League

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#### Chaplain's Corner

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Gospel of St. [Matthew](#) 5:3-10

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## **National Convention Summary**

Approximately 995 delegates of the MCL, Ladies Auxiliary and MODD attended the 2019 National Convention in Billings, Montana. These are the National Officers: National Commandant: Dennis Tobin, Sr Vice Commandant: Johnny Baker Jr Vice Commandant Warren Griffin and Judge Advocate J. J. Morgan. Roger Ware Department of WV was installed as National Vice Commandant Mideast Division. Rick Thomason Department of NC was installed as Assistant NVC for the Division. Greg Irwin was retained as MODD Kennel Deputy Mad Dog. The Department, Wood County Det 1087, Herbert J. Thomas Det 947 and L. D. Crawford Det 956 were presented with a 2019 National Convention Steamer for the colors. 88 members of the MODD advanced to PDD. The 2020 National Convention will be at the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, Daytona Beach, Florida August 10 - 15, 2020. The National Marine of the Year was Lisa Solarczyk, Department of PA the Kennel Dog of the Year was PDD Roger Ware., WV Pack. The Kennel donated \$50,000 to The Billings Clinic in Billings, Montana. PDD Tom Hazlett was elected as the Chief Devil Dog. The 2021 National Convention will be held in Springfield, Illinois.

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## **Detachment Administration**

Desktop Procedures - Detachments need to maintain copies of National, Department, and their own Bylaws and Administrative Procedures. In addition, the following is a guideline for other administrative reports, files and related correspondence that should be maintained for reference.

- Detachment Bylaws

- Department Bylaws with current changes

- National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures with current changes

- Guidebook for Detachment Officers

- Marine Corps League Ritual

- Charter

- Articles of Incorporation

- Permanent business certification - Business License

West Virginia requires Detachments to have a business license. Effective 2010 all license renewals were issued a permanent license. All non-profit corporations have no fee for their business licenses. If your business license has expired and you have not renewed it, contact the WV State Tax Department at 1-800-982-8297 and a renewal form will be mailed to your detachment so you can receive a Permanent Business Certificate. Ensure you have this permanent business license with you anytime you conduct a raffle or a fund raiser. Suggest making a copy of it and covering in a plastic frame, and keep your original in your detachment files.

Detachment Filing procedures yearly accounts - Files should be set up according to years. Retain all pertinent files and reports into your yearly folder. Example: 2016, 2017 2018.

These should include: IRS 990 N, Annual Corporate Report, Insurance policy, Paymaster Reports, Bank statements, Financial audits, Property inventory, Rifle inventory (If you have weapons), detachment meeting minutes

**Detachment Property Inventory:** An inventory should be performed prior to Officer Installation yearly to account for all detachment property.

## **Financial Records:**

- Bank Statements
- Financial Audit – at a minimum, an annual audit (quarterly is preferred)
- Paymaster Reports
- Dues Transmittals

**Detachment Meeting Minutes:** Minutes should be maintained for reference and for any audit from state or IRS as your fund-raising events, donations, and detachment administrative activities are documented.

The Detachment will meet for regular meetings on a scheduled basis on the same day and same time once monthly or as necessary as ordered by the Commandant at a place to be designated. All members will be informed of the meeting date, time and location. Special meetings may be called by the Commandant or by the Board of Trustees upon reasonable notice to the members thereof.

## Detachment Meetings

The Detachment Commandant is in charge of all meetings and must maintain control of those meetings. Members are reminded that they took an oath to bring no harm to any of the members and would follow and obey the rules of the League. All guests including Department, Division or National officers while attending a detachment meeting also follow the same rules as the Detachment Commandant is in charge of his meeting room and has the authority to have the Sgt-at-Arms remove a disgruntled or unruly member from the meeting.

The opening and closing ceremonies will follow the Ritual provided by National Headquarters of the Marine Corps League. The Bible, national insignia, Charter and gavel will always be present. A minimum number of members required to transact the regular and legal business of the Detachment is a quorum. The majority vote of those members present is required to approve general business. Officer meetings require no less than three to conduct business.

The Commandant will have an agenda that indicates the occurring events and reports. The business meeting will be concise, and will serve to inform members of Detachment activities and affairs, and solicit member ideas, information, and response to activities and reports. The meeting will allow time for introduction of guests and new members, induction of new members, and introduction of all the members. Membership meetings are where members can voice their thoughts or opinions so any potential conflicts can be discussed and settled by the members.

The Detachment is a corporate entity and must be run like a business entity with minutes taken to comply with corporate laws. Copies of minutes from all meetings will be kept in the Detachment's permanent files and copies will be sent to the Department Commandant. Members through their action and/or verbiage will not do anything detrimental to the good order of a meeting. Committees will meet at time and place deemed necessary and nonmembers will be excluded from meetings when conducting official business.

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## Members of the Department/Detachments:

This is a reminder that all your dues paying members membership expire on **August 31**. Paymasters, you have to remember that National no longer sends out *Dues Notices*. **You** have to contact your members either via letter, email, phone call or in person so they know where to send their dues and how much to renew. Use your *June 30 Roster* to verify those that owe annual dues. Let's see if we can reduce our total number of unpaid for the department. Funds that belong to the detachment are membership funds and can be spent any way the members desire. Be sure to send your dues transmittals to Department of WV Paymaster Patti Leib, PO Box 1224, Athens, OH 45701-1224

The department will help track your unpaid.

Semper Fi,

Roger Ware

COS Dept of WV

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## PFAS Toxic Exposure New SECDEF Establishes Task Force

On his first full day as secretary of defense, Mark Esper has signed a memo establishing a task force to deal with cancer causing chemicals found on military bases. The purpose, he told reporters at the Pentagon 24 JUL, is to "address all the key areas" of the military's response to the presence of harmful chemicals used in firefighting foam. The chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid and/or perfluoro octane sulfonate have been found to have caused contamination at more than 230 military installations, according to an environmental advocacy group. The Environmental Working Group says that harmful levels have been detected in groundwater or drinking water sources of the fluorinated compounds, known collectively as PFAS. An additional 44 civilian airports are included that are also used by Air National Guard units, according to the group.

Esper said the new task force will address a wide range of issues resulting from the contamination, "whether it's cleanup, whether it's finding an alternative for the current firefighting, you name it," said Esper. "It will include

the military department and our health affairs folks.” Esper said he has also asked the Environmental Protection Agency to be involved, as well as other government agencies “to make sure we go after this problem very aggressively, very holistically and get in front of it, stay in front of it and take care of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines and the outlying communities that are affected by it.”

In his memo, Esper writes that the issue must be tackled in an “aggressive and holistic” way with a “strong and proactive stance.” The working group will be chaired by assistant secretary of defense for sustainment Robert McMahon, and will focus on six key areas: health aspects, clean-up standards and performance, finding/funding an effective substitute firefighting foam without PFAS, science-supported standard for exposure and clean up, interagency coordination and public/congress perception of DoD/s efforts. The new task force will be stood up within 30 days, with an update due to Esper’s desk within 180 days of the memo.

Earlier this month, the Environmental Working Group, which has released maps about the location of the contamination, blasted the Pentagon and EPA for the way they’ve dealt with the issue. “The EPA and the Department of Defense have utterly failed to treat PFAS contamination as a crisis demanding swift and decisive action,” said Ken Cook, president of EWG, in a statement announcing the discovery of the additional sites. “It’s time for Congress to end new PFAS pollution and clean up legacy contamination,” Cook said at the time. A 2016 Environmental Protection Agency health advisory recommended water sources contain no more than 70 parts per trillion, or ppt, of the PFAS chemicals perfluorooctanoic acid, and/or perfluoro octane sulfonate at sites being addressed, including those under federal cleanup programs. While the EPA’s health advisory has been in effect since 2016, neither the Pentagon nor any municipality was required to meet the 70 ppt standard because the contamination limit is an advisory, not a requirement.

For decades, the military used firefighting foams that contained PFAS chemicals. These per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances are also found in hundreds of everyday household products. PFAS chemicals have been linked to cancers and other health problems. When told that thousands of veterans believe their cancers are linked to the chemicals, Esper said that the Department of Veterans Affairs should be consulted. “I think we need to follow the science on this and one of the agencies that we should be talking to is VA on this,” he said. “We just need to understand the problem and make sure we have our hands fully around it, follow the science, and then obviously if there is a relationship, we need to do our due diligence.”

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### **VA Priority Groups**

Did you know that once a veteran applies for enrollment, their eligibility will be verified by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)? Based on the veteran's specific eligibility status, he/she will be assigned a Priority Group. The Priority Groups range from one to eight, with one being the highest priority. VA uses the following factors to assign a Veteran to a priority group:

- ☐ Veteran’s military service history
  - ☐ Veteran’s disability rating
  - ☐ Veteran’s income level
  - ☐ Whether or not the Veteran qualifies for Medicaid
- Other benefits the Veteran may be receiving (like VA pension benefit)

The VA will assign Veterans with service-connected disabilities the highest priority. VA will assign the lowest priority to Veterans who earn a higher income and who don’t have any service-connected disabilities qualifying them for disability compensation (monthly payments). If you qualify for more than one priority group, VA will assign you to the highest priority group. A brief description of each Priority Group is as follows:

Priority Group 1: Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated by VA as 50% or more disabling, veterans determined by VA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions, and veterans who have been awarded the Medal of Honor.

Priority Group 2: Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated by the VA as 30% or 40% disabling.

Priority Groups 3: Veterans who are former Prisoners of War, veterans who have been awarded a Purple Heart medal, veterans whose discharge was for a disability that was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, veterans with service-connected disabilities rated by the VA as 10% or 20% disabling.

Priority Group 4: Veterans who receive aid and attendance or housebound benefits from the VA, and veterans who have been determined to be catastrophically disabled.

Priority Group 5: Veterans with nonservice connected or non-compensable service-connected disability and veterans rated by the VA as 0% disabled and who have an annual income below the VA's geographically-adjusted income limit. It also includes veterans who receive VA pension benefits and veterans who are eligible for Medicaid programs.

Priority Group 6: Veterans with a compensable 0% service-connected disability, veterans exposed to radiation during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975, veterans of the Persian Gulf War who served between August 2, 1990 and November 11, 1998, veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987, and currently enrolled veterans and new enrollees who served in a theatre of combat operations after November 11, 1998, and those who were discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003.

Priority Group 7: Veterans with gross household income below the geographically-adjusted VA income limit for their resident location and who agree to pay co-payments.

Priority Group 8: Veterans with gross household incomes above the VA income limits and the geographically-adjusted income limits for their resident location, and who agree to pay co-payments. It also includes veterans in Sub priority groups "a" through "g."

### **GI Bill Update - Everything You Need to Know**

What is the Post-9/11 GI Bill? The Post-9/11 GI Bill is a generous education benefit for the latest generation of service members and veterans. It includes payment of tuition and fees, a monthly housing allowance and a stipend for textbooks and supplies for up to 36 months. The GI Bill traces its history back to World War II when the Servicemen's Readjustment Act was enacted to provide education and training, home loan guarantee and other benefits for veterans. Revamped several times to aid veterans of war and peacetime, the GI Bill as we know it was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2008 and went into effect the following year. Portions of the GI Bill were updated again in 2017 under the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, better known as the "Forever GI Bill."

Who is eligible for the GI Bill? If you have served on active duty for at least 90 days since Sept. 10, 2001, you are eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits — whether you're still in the military or have already separated with an honorable discharge. The amount of time you spent on active duty determines the percentage of total benefits you can receive. Right now, the VA uses this scale to determine eligibility:

- 100 percent: 36 months or more, or at least 30 continuous days and discharged due to service-connected disability
- 90 percent: At least 30 months, less than 36 months
- 80 percent: At least 24 months, less than 30 months
- 70 percent: At least 18 months, less than 24 months
- 60 percent: At least 12 months, less than 18 months
- 50 percent: At least 6 months, less than 12 months

- 40 percent: At least 90 days, less than 6 months
- No benefit: Less than 90 days

Don't worry about memorizing this, though, because it's about to change in August 2020 when a portion of the Forever GI Bill goes into effect. At that point, the same 90-days-to-six-month window will equal to 50 percent of total benefits. Service members with at least six months and less than 18 months of service will be eligible for 60 percent of benefits. Children or spouses of service members who died in the line of duty on or after 9/11 may also be eligible to use the GI Bill to further their education through the Marine Gunnery John David Fry Scholarship Program. These benefits are available at the 100-percent level to children between age 18 and 33 and spouses who have not remarried for 15 years after the service member's death.

**How to apply for your GI Bill** You can apply for GI Bill benefits online or in person at a VA regional office near you. You can also call 1-888-GI BILL-1 to ask the VA to mail an application directly to you. The application process is simple, especially if you do it online. The form will ask you for information about your military background, education history and the school you want to attend. It also asks for your Social Security and bank account numbers, so make sure you have those handy, too. (While the tuition and fee payments go directly to the schools, the housing and textbook allowances go straight to you.) If you're feeling nervous about the process, you can also talk to the school certifying official at your college. This person typically works in the school's registrar's office or financial aid department and will be able to walk you through the application.

**GI Bill certificate of eligibility** Once you apply for your benefits, the VA will send you a certificate of eligibility that spells out exactly what you are eligible to receive. This is the document you'll present to your school when you enroll. If your tuition payments are ever delayed, your certificate of eligibility acts as proof that payment is coming, meaning your school can't charge you late fees or impose other restrictions when there's an outstanding balance on your account through no fault of your own. Keep in mind that it may take a while for the VA to issue your certificate of eligibility to you. In the meantime, you can log into your eBenefits account to keep track of things.

**How much does the GI Bill pay for school?** The Post-9/11 GI Bill includes payment of tuition and fees, a monthly housing allowance and a stipend for textbooks and supplies. For students attending public colleges and universities, the GI Bill covers all tuition and fees at the in-state rate, but it may not have the same reach at a private or for-profit school. The national maximum at such schools will be \$24,476.79 for the 2019-2020 school year and generally increases slightly each year.

If the GI Bill doesn't cover the full cost of your education, see if your school participates in the Yellow Ribbon program. This is an agreement schools make with the VA to split school costs not covered by the GI Bill, reducing or eliminating the amount students must pay themselves. Currently, only veterans and surviving dependents of service members are eligible for the program, though this will extend to active-duty troops in August 2022. A lot of schools participate in this program, including prestigious Ivy League institutions. To see if your school is part of the Yellow Ribbon Program, check out the interactive map on VA's website.

**Should I use my GI Bill while on active duty?** You can, provided you meet the minimum service requirements. But should you? If you use your GI Bill benefits to pay for school while on active duty, you will not receive a monthly housing stipend from the GI Bill in addition to the housing allowance you're already receiving from the military. Depending on which school you attend, that housing stipend could be worth as much as the tuition coverage and possibly more. Therefore, your GI Bill benefits will end up amounting to much less than what you would receive after separating from the military. Still, the choice is yours.

### **The GI Bill housing allowance.**

Your monthly housing stipend depends on the percentage level of benefits you're eligible for and how many courses you're taking. The VA uses the Department of Defense Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH, rates to calculate how much you will receive. Right now, this is the cost of living wherever the main campus of your school is located — not where you live — at the amount that an E5 with dependents would receive in that area.

(Your own rank has no bearing on the total amount you receive.)

Under the Forever GI Bill, however, housing allowances will be determined by the location of the campus where a student takes the most classes. So, that means if you take classes at a satellite campus, miles — or even states — away from the school's main headquarters, your monthly stipend will better reflect your cost of living. The VA is expected to roll this out in December 2019. The VA has already done a lot of the math for you through their GI Bill Comparison Tool. Simply search by school name or type and click on the results to see how much you'd receive each month.

A few things to remember:

- ☐ If you are pursuing a degree entirely online, you will only receive half of the national BAH average. For the 2019-2020 school year, that amounts to \$894.50 per month. Some experts recommend taking at least one class in person if you can, so you can get the flexibility of attending school online with the cash benefits of attending on campus.
  - ☐ If you are attending school half time or less, or are a dependent using GI Bill Benefits that have been transferred to you from a service member, you are not eligible for this part of the benefit.
- How to change schools with the GI Bill Changing schools once you've already started using the GI Bill is much like applying for the GI Bill in the first place. You'll need to provide basic information about your military service, education history and the school you want to go to, in addition to your Social Security and bank account numbers. You can do this all online or in person at a VA regional office.

GI bill status and how to check it. It's important to maintain an active EBenefits account so you can check on the status of your GI Bill benefits — how much you've used and how much you have left.

Transferring GI Bill to your dependents If you've already finished your degree or just don't see yourself ever going to school, you may want to consider transferring the GI Bill to your dependents. To be eligible for transfer, you must have at least six years of service under your belt and must be able to serve four more after the transfer is approved by the DoD. The DoD is slated to cap the transfer option at 16 years of service in January, though congressional lawmakers are working to kill the policy before it ever goes into effect. If you are an active-duty Purple Heart recipient, disregard all of the above; you can transfer your GI Bill benefits to family members whenever you want.

A dependent child must be 18 or younger when the GI Bill benefits are transferred to them — or under 23 in special cases for approved programs. To use the GI Bill, the dependent must be 18 or a high school graduate. If you decide you want to transfer your benefits, log onto [www.DMDC.mil](http://www.DMDC.mil) Connect to get started. At the top of the page, you'll see a section labeled, "I want to." Click on the "Transfer my education benefits" option and go from there.

- ☐ Cool alternative/creative ways to use the GI Bill:

You have a little flexibility with a GI Bill in that it doesn't have to just go toward a traditional education at a brick-and-mortar school. You can use it to take classes online or through correspondence.

- You can get help starting your own business.
  - You can get a tutor to help you with your classes.
  - You can also use your benefits toward a flight school or apprenticeship program. Even licensing programs, certification tests and admission tests, such as the SAT or LSAT, are covered.
  - If you are a veteran majoring in a STEM field — science, technology, engineering or math — you can apply for more GI Bill benefits, since many of these majors take more than the standard four years of college to complete. The Forever GI Bill set up the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship fund that will give up to \$30,000 to STEM students on a first-come, first-serve basis. Veterans and surviving dependents of deceased service members are eligible for this scholarship.
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## **Modern Day Marine Expo, Sep 17-19, 2019, Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia**

**For those attending Modern Day Marine, please use this link to register.**

Use Marine Corps League as the company name and the company will change it from Attendee to Sponsor.

[https://registration.experientevent.com/showMDM191/?flow=attendee&\\_ga=2.34896033.1858097035.1562843061-1141919114.1538425997](https://registration.experientevent.com/showMDM191/?flow=attendee&_ga=2.34896033.1858097035.1562843061-1141919114.1538425997)

MCL members are always needed to help staff the two MCL booths where welcome bags are distributed. Past MCL National Sgt-at-Arms Neil Corley is the point of contact and he will be in one of the booths commencing Monday Sep 16. The uniform for members working in the booths is polo shirt, MCL cover, black trousers and black tennis shoes. It is highly recommended that anyone who wants to attend log onto the modern-day marine expo site and click on the Attendee Badge Registration and fill it out. Once you arrive at the Expo, go to Registration and pick up your name tag. Here is the schedule for events.

### **ATTENDEE INFORMATION**

#### **Schedule-of-Events Tuesday, September 17**

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM	Registration Open
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	Opening Ceremony
10:00 AM – 3:30 PM	Exhibit Halls Open

#### **Wednesday, September 18**

8:00 AM – 3:30 PM	Registration Open
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Enlisted Awards Parade
10:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Reception in Exhibit Halls
10:00 AM – 3:30 PM	Exhibit Halls Open

#### **Thursday, September 19**

8:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Registration Open
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Exhibit Halls Open (Family Day)

#### **To Attend**

Uniformed Marines do not need to register for a badge. Retailers, Retired Marine's and Contracting Officials may register at no charge. Manufacturers not exhibiting in Modern Day Marine must register and will be charged a non-exhibiting manufacturer fee.

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### **Veterans Questions: Why Was I Only Given 6 Months of Back Pay?**

Q. I originally applied for disability during 1994 on 4 different counts. PTSD is just one account. I finally was approved during 2000 for PTSD 50%, then upgraded to 100% within a month, due to unemployability. Why was I only given back pay for 6 months instead of the whole 6 years? Most people say I should be happy with the 6 months. My first application was in 1994.

Answers A1: Big question here is from that time you filed in 1994 did you continued prosecuting your claim each year if you had a period of time where you had more than a year break than it goes with the latest date filed. (GR) 8/4/19

A2: The only way you would have gotten back pay for 6 years, is if you had appealed that first claim and then finally won. And you would have only received the backpay for what they first put you at...50%. If you just filed a whole new claim, and did not appeal the original claim, you will only receive back pay to the date you filed your last claim. (LM) 8/4/19

A3: The reason you didn't get 6 years retroactive benefits from 1994 is due to the date that the medical evidence from your claim first verified your claimed disabilities which was in 2000. Your previous claim from 1994 did not verify your service-connected conditions from that date because the medical evidence submitted back then did not show a confirmed diagnosis of your conditions from 1994 related to your military service. You can appeal that 1994 decision if you wish but unless you have medical evidence that was either ignored, overlooked or not proven from your military medical records in that 1994 decision, your chances of getting backpay from 1994 are very slim. (KG) 8/4/19

A4: VA benefits are contractual in nature legally and an overriding standard is reasonableness in which both parties have obligations. I am in the same situation starting in 1993 for Vietnam events... your MOS, duties etc. are records plus medical – continue the fight – right now I am upward of review case 89000 plus

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### **Veterans Questions Will I be Compensated for ALL of the Time I Waited for the VA Decision**

Q. I applied for hearing loss with the VA and my claim was denied so I appealed it and it was denied again. I recently got a letter from the VA informing me that my appeal had gone to the REMAND status. I waited for several months for more information and what was my next move, I got a letter from the VA about 6 weeks later for an C&P I did the hearing test and waited for more information finally went for another hearing test where I was told my hearing is not so good. I checked eBenefits about 4 weeks later and saw where my rating had been raised. Will I be compensated for all of the time I waited for the VA decision?

Answers A1: Yes. I filed in Feb 1997 for my 100 percent. It was finally granted in 2004. I received back pay compensation of \$99,201.01 just before Christmas and a few days later I got my regular check at new comp rate. So, whatever your new pay rate is you should receive a check for the difference back to date of claim. (MS) 8/11/19

A2: YOU should be compensated the day you filed your claim. GOOD LUCK! (HA) 8/11/19

A3: Yes, I say you will be compensated from the date of your first claim as you won on the appeal. I had one client who was finally awarded hearing after 10 years of appeal and he was compensated from the date I filed the claim for him. (GR) 8/11/19

A4: Dear brother, you should be compensated retroactive from the time you filed for an increase of your disability. If you have any problems, contact your nearest DAV service officer. You don't have to be a member and good luck. (PD) 8/11/19

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### **American Legion S.504/H.R.1641 LEGION Act Signed into Law**

In a significant legislative victory for The American Legion, President Trump signed a bill 30 JUL that declares the United States has been in a state of war since Dec. 7, 1941. The American Legion sought the declaration as a way to honor approximately 1,600 U.S. service members who were killed or wounded during previously undeclared periods of war. The LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service Act) also opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to access American Legion programs and benefits for which they previously had not been eligible.

Recognizing the service of these wartime veterans is the right thing to do and it is long overdue,” National Commander Brett Reistad said. “The families of those who were killed or wounded during these wartime acts should take pride in knowing that we recognize their sacrifice and service. Moreover, we are proud to welcome any of the six-million living veterans from the previously unrecognized periods into our organization and call them ‘Legionnaires.’” Now that the legislation has been signed, The American Legion’s eligibility criteria immediately changes from seven war eras to two: April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to a time later determined by the federal government. No other restrictions to American Legion membership are changed.

The law’s journey began on 14 FEB when Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) introduced S.504, along with Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC). A companion measure, H.R.1641, was introduced in the House by Reps. Lou Correa (D-CA) and Ben Cline (R-VA). Reistad expressed gratitude to the bipartisan members of Congress for passing the legislation. “We are grateful that President Trump fully acknowledges the importance of The American Legion by signing the LEGION Act in the White House today – just one week after it passed the House of Representatives,” Reistad said. “In an era of partisan gridlock, Republicans and Democrats in Congress overwhelmingly recognized the importance of allowing thousands of honorable but previously ineligible veterans the right to join the largest and most influential Veterans organization in the country.”

Reistad pointed out that existing American Legion membership applications are in the process of being updated but can still be used. “In the meantime, I recommend that prospective Legionnaires and recruiters write ‘LEGION Act’ in the eligibility date section of American Legion membership applications if they fall outside

the previous war eras,” Reistad said. “The larger pool of veterans now eligible for The American Legion will also open their family members to eligibility in the Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary as well.”

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### **Motivational Quotes**

Is there such a thing as funny motivational quotes? Of course! I mean, why can't we have a little fun and be motivated at the same time? Some of the quotes below are pure gold!

Here are 20 short and funny motivational quotes to help brighten your day:

1. “When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire Department usually uses water.” – Unknown
  2. “Age is of no importance unless you're a cheese.” – Billie Burke
  3. “Change is not a four-letter word... but often your reaction to it is!” – Jeffrey Gitomer
  4. “Every tattoo is temporary, because we're all slowly dying.” – Unknown
  5. “I am an early bird and a night owl... so I am wise and I have worms.” – Michael Scott
  6. “I used to think I was indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.” – Unknown
  7. “It could be that your purpose in life is to serve as a warning to others.” – Ashleigh Brilliant
  8. “Never put off until tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow.” – Mark Twain
  9. “The best things in life are actually really expensive.” – Unknown
  10. “The road to success is dotted with many tempting parking spaces.” – Will Rogers
  11. “Well-behaved women seldom make history.” – Laurel Thatcher Ulrich
  12. “Work until your bank account looks like a phone number.” – Unknown
  13. “A clear conscience is a sure sign of a bad memory.” – Mark Twains
  14. “Always remember that you are unique— just like everybody else.” – Unknown
  15. “Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It is already tomorrow in Australia.” – Charles Schulz
  16. “Friendship is like peeing on yourself: everyone can see it, but only you get the warm feeling that it brings.” – Robert Bloch
  17. “I am so clever that sometimes I don't understand a single word of what I am saying.” – Oscar Wilde
  18. “If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving definitely isn't for you.” – Steven Wright
  19. “It took me fifteen years to discover I had no talent for writing, but I couldn't give it up because by then I was too famous.” – Robert Benchley
  20. “Nothing is impossible, the word itself says “I'm possible!” – Audrey Hepburn
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### **Recruiting Points**

We as Marines all have the honor of belonging to the premier service organization in the world. One of Marine Corps League primary responsibility is to not only identify but to recruit new members.

The first point is to create a list of the great things about the Marine Corps League.

Another point is to enlist younger members to join the League. They bring fresh ideas and energy. We want to attract young people who want to get involved. When trying to recruit new members, talk about the League wherever you go noting work, parties, sporting events, family gatherings and church to name a few. There's never a place that's inappropriate to talk about the League. The fear of rejection shouldn't stop current members from seeking out new members. I think that people even if they are not interested just appreciate being asked. It's like getting asked to go to a party whether you're going to go or not. There's never a wrong time to ask a potential member to a meeting. You never know when where you'll meet your next member.

While speaking to someone about joining the League be sure to emphasize the service aspect of the organization. Being a member provides a pathway to getting involved in the League but also in the community and provides an excellent network to civic projects.

Embracing diversity is another point and be sure to congratulate your new members once they join. Make sure your new members feel wanted and welcome.

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**KENNEL DOG OF THE YEAR** – Roger Ware, center, the newly installed Mideast Division National Vice Commandant, receives the 2019 MODD Kennel Dog of the Year Award on Aug. 9 during Marine Corps League Grand Banquet in Billings, Montana.

From left are: Jack Severn, Mideast Division National Aide-de-Camp, Roger Ware Assistant National Vice Commandant – Mideast Division, and Mike McLain, Past Mideast Division National Vice Commandant. All three Mideast Division officials are past recipients of the MCL National Marine of the Year and the MODD Kennel Dog of the Year award.

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### **Pending Calendar**

2019 Department of WV Fall Quarterly Meeting - September 14, 2019 hosted by Danny M. Greene Detachment 577 in Logan, WV at the old Henlawson Grade School & Vet Center. Dept Staff Officer Meeting is 9:30 AM with general business meeting at 10 AM. WV Pack Growl will immediately follow Dept Meeting.

2019 Modern Day Marine Expo will be Sept 17-19, 2019 at MCB, Quantico, VA

2020 Department of WV Fall Quarterly Meeting will be January 4, 2020 hosted by MGM Detachment 1180 at American Legion Post 23, 100 Second Street Point Pleasant, WV 25550. Staff Officers Meeting is 0930 AM with general business meeting at 1000 AM. WV Pack Growl will immediately follow Dept. Meeting.

2020 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference will be Feb 26 – Mar 1 2020 at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside - 777 Waterside Dr, Norfolk VA 23510. group code: MCL Phone: (757-622-6664) Room rate includes up to 4 breakfast vouchers per occupancy. \$129.00 per night + prevailing tax (currently 14%) Resort Charge: \$3.00. Please make your room reservation direct to the hotel. Reservations made by calling the hotel or 1-800-325-3535 and mentioning the Marine Corps League Mid-Winter Conference Breakfast: Complimentary 2 per room daily Internet: Complimentary High Speed. Banquet Dinner: \$50 max inclusive Parking: Complimentary Self-Parking if staying at hotel.

2020 Department of Maryland Convention will be 7-9 May 2020 at Princess Royale Hotel, 9100 Coastal Hwy, Ocean City, MD 21842. 410-524-7777 Mention 'Marine Corps League' to get group room rate. Fri AM - Opening Ceremony. Fri PM -Pack Growl. Sat AM -MCL Meeting. Sat Night -Banquet More details to follow.

2020 Department of Delaware Convention will be May 9, 2020 Heritage Shores Golf Clubhouse, One Heritage Shores Circle, Bridgeville, Delaware 19933. Lunch will be served. POC- Frank Mathers, Commandant Department of Delaware, [mcldeptdecommandant@gmail.com](mailto:mcldeptdecommandant@gmail.com), 301-520-8051

2020 Department of West Virginia Department Convention will be May 15-17, 2020 at the Holiday Inn Express, 50 Martin Street, Elkins, WV 26241 hosted by Leland D. "Crow" Crawford Detachment #956. Room rate \$100.00 plus room tax. Phone: 304-630- 2266. Hotel registration deadline is April 29, 2020. Free parking and continental breakfast 6-10 a.m. Banquet \$30 and will be buffet style. POC is Roger Ware 304-636- 4365 or [rrware@yahoo.com](mailto:rrware@yahoo.com). **Please do not call the hotel to make your reservations as** Detachment 956 will make reservations when you send them your payment. Once your payment is received your name will be given to the hotel under the Code MCL. This is to take advantage of the tax-exempt status. There is a flyer attached which can be used for advance registration, hotel reservation, and banquet.

2020 Department of North Carolina Department Convention 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will be June 12-13, 2020 at the Hilton Charlotte University Hotel, 8629 J M Keynes Dr. Charlotte, NC 28262. 833-238-5101 Hosted by Pfc Bruce Larson Detachment #1242 and Charlotte Detachment #750

2020 Mideast Division Conference will be June 19-21, 2020 hosted by Dept of Virginia at Holiday Inn, 5655 Greenwich Road, VA Beach, VA 23462. Room rate \$120 plus 14% tax – total \$138.80, 1-800-567-3856 or 757-499-4400 – (dial 0) use code: MED. You can start reservation after July 12, 2019.

2020 MCL National Convention will be August 10-15, 2020 at Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, 100 North Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL, 32118 Phone: 888- 217- 5507. Room rate: \$145.00 includes tax, Wi-Fi, parking and breakfast. **Reservation open on Monday August 12, 2019 at 10 AM EST.**

2021 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference February 24– 28 2021 Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, 777 Waterside Drive Norfolk, VA <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/orfsi-sheraton-norfolk-waterside-hotel/> Group Code: MCL Phone: (757-622-6664) Room rate includes up to 4 breakfast vouchers per occupancy. \$129.00 per night + prevailing tax (currently 14%) Please make your room reservation directly to the hotel.

2021 Mideast Division Conference hosted by the Department of Delaware 16, 17, 18 April 2021 Atlantic Sands Hotel & Conference Center (Oceanfront) 1 Baltimore Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware 19971 Phone: 800-422-0600 | 302-227-2511 <https://atlanticsandshotel.com/> Room rate \$105.00 plus fees. Discounted breakfast, parking included. **Reservations may be made now.** \*Reservation may be made now by calling 1-800-422-0600, refer to the **Mideast Division Marine Corps League Block #9579** arriving Friday, April 16, 2021. **Reservations are open.**

2021 MCL National Convention will be August 6-14, 2021 at Wyndham Springfield City Centre, 700 E Adams St, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Room rate is \$129.95 with tax included. Free breakfast, free parking and WIFI. Pet friendly. [wyndhamhotels.com](http://wyndhamhotels.com) Phone. 217-789-1530

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**2020 MCL Mid-Winter Conference**  
**February 27 – March 1, 2020**  
**Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel 777 Waterside Drive**  
**Norfolk, VA 23510**  
**(757) 622-6664**

**Fact Sheet**

**Room Rate: \$129 + Tax Rate: \$14% + Resort Charge: \$3.00**

**Parking: Complimentary Self-Parking if staying at hotel, otherwise its \$13 per day.**

**Valet Parking is \$26 per day**

**Breakfast: Complimentary 2 per room daily**

**Internet: Complimentary High-Speed**

**Banquet Dinner: \$50 max inclusive**

**Reservations made by calling the hotel or 1-800-325-3535 and mentioning the  
Marine Corps League Mid-Winter Conference**

**All reservations will be charged one-night room and tax deposit at time of  
confirming reservation. This deposit will be applied toward your final bill. If you cancel within the  
cancellation period, the deposit will be refunded**

**Cancellation period is from time of making reservation until February 10, 2020. Any cancellations after  
February 10, 2020 will forfeit the one-night deposit**

**Marriott Reward points can be earned with the group rate**

**This is a smoke free hotel, any smoking in non-smoking rooms will incur a  
\$200 cleaning fee.**

**Each room has a mini refrigerator**

**On site restaurant next door to the Waterside District featuring restaurants and bars.**

**3 blocks from downtown mall**

**6 to 11 miles, depending on route, from Norfolk International Airport;**

**shuttle service will be arranged at a later date, stay tuned**

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## **The Veterans' Guide to Driving and Transportation Resources**

New studies show that veterans are a 75% higher risk of falling victim to fatal motor accidents and have brought attention to the unique needs and challenges that many veterans face when it comes to transportation or driving.

This is a new website dedicated to providing information about available resources that veterans are looking for: The [Veteran's Guide to Driving and Transportation](#). This guide addresses veteran specific topics such as mobility and disability challenges, adapting to life on the road, and adapting to driving with common veteran conditions such as PTSD. There is added value in this guide due to the highlighted resources available, such as Transportation 4 Heroes and Vehicles for Veterans that help them gain access to a vehicle. This guide is beneficial to both recently discharged Veterans who may not have the support and resources they need, and for more senior Veterans already acquainted with and receiving VA benefits who might have changing transportation needs. Check it out!



**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
WEST VIRGINIA  
MARINE CORPS LEAGUE**



**2020 DEPARTMENT OF WV MCL CONVENTION**  
**MAY 15-17, 2020 - Elkins - Hosted by Detachment 956**

Will be held at the Holiday Inn Express, 50 Martin Street, Elkins, WV 26241. Hosted by Leland D "Crow" Crawford Detachment 956. **Room rate: \$100.00** includes free continental breakfast, free parking and wireless Internet. POC Roger Ware: 304-636-4365 Email [rrware@yahoo.com](mailto:rrware@yahoo.com)  
To receive the block price, reservations must be booked by **04/28/20**. Make checks payable to Det. 956, MCL to avoid paying taxes. \$5 early registration fee for conference, \$7 at the door.  
**Banquet Cost: \$30.00 Mail** registration fee, hotel room rate, and banquet reservation to:  
Leland D "Crow" Crawford MCL Det. #956, PO Box 852, Elkins, WV 26241.

Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Detachment \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Relation \_\_\_\_\_  
\$100.00 Hotel Reservation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$5.00 pre-registration each \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$30.00 banquet each \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Member

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\$30.00 banquet each \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_



**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
WEST VIRGINIA  
MARINE CORPS LEAGUE**



**2020 MCL Department Meeting Schedule  
Department of West Virginia  
Elkins, WV  
MAY 15-16, 2020**

Friday, May 15, 2020

0600-0945 Breakfast

0900-1200 MCL Registration

1000-1200 MODD Registration

1200-1300 Lunch on your own

1300-1600 MCL Registration

1300-1600 MODD Registration

1300-1600 Professional Development Training

1300-1700 Department Audit Committee

1600-1700 Commandant's Council - Detachment Commandants/Staff Officers meeting

1700-1830 Dinner on your own

1700-2230 Hospitality Room open

1830-1900 MODD Pack Board Meeting\*

1900-2100 MODD Growl of the Pack

\* At call of Department Commandant, MCL; Pack Leader, MODD, PMOY Chairman

Saturday, May 16, 2020

0600-0930 Breakfast

0800-1000 MCL registration

0800-0815 Flag-Raising Ceremony

0820-0930 Memorial Services, all hands attending

0930-0945 Department Budget Committee Meeting\*

0930-0945 Department Nominations Committee Meeting\*

1000-1200 MCL Business Meeting

1200-1315 Lunch on your own

1315-1600 MCL Business Meeting

1615-1640 New Officer Installation & Department Officers' Meeting

1800-1900 Formal Reception

1900 Grand Banquet

\* At call of Chairman for Budget and Nominations Committee





Department of WV 2019 Convention, Morgantown, WV - Hosted by Det 342









Department of WV 2019 Convention, Morgantown, WV - Hosted by Det 342





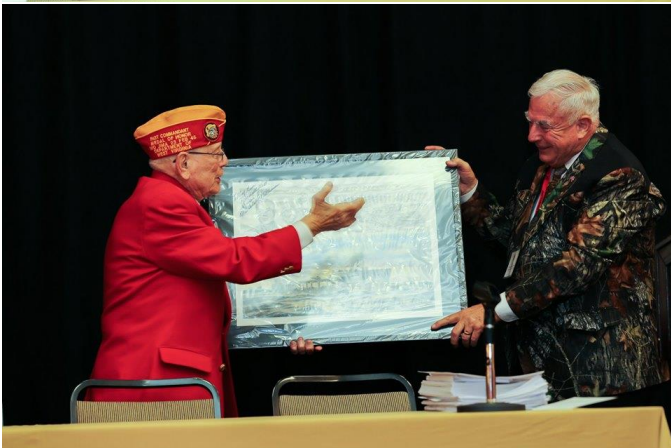
Department of WV 2019 Convention, Morgantown, WV - Hosted by Det 342





Our own Medal of Honor Recipient  
from Iwo Jima, WWII  
Hershel "Woody" Williams





Department of WV 2019 Convention, Morgantown WV - Hosted by Earl Anderson Det 342





If you weren't there, you missed a great Convention!