



The Straight Scoop

Department Newsletter of the
Marine Corps League
P.O. Box 1224
Athens, OH 45701-1224



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MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Commandant's Letter ~ December 2021

Welcome to all MCL members, Marines, FMF Corpsmen, Chaplains and Associate Members:

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving, enjoyed the ball games, and ate plenty of good food.

Along with other Detachments across the state, MGM Detachment 1180 hosted the 246th Marine Corps Ball on November 11 and I was honored to be a part of the presentation of a Bust of Hershel Woody Williams that was sculpted by Cliff Leonard, a Marine Corps Recon Marine Veteran from Florida. Cliff brought his family with him to make the presentation. Since Woody had been injured in a fall a few weeks before and was unable to attend, Cliff made the presentation to Woody's grandson Brent Casey. Our featured speaker was Marine Corps League National Marine of the Year and Junior Past Commandant of West Virginia, Scott Kirby. We appreciate Scott filling this need so well, and on short notice.

Don't forget the Department Spring Quarterly meeting on January 15 in Princeton, West Virginia. This is the time that your entry for the 50th Anniversary of the Department of West Virginia design of the medal, ribbon and

challenge coin must be turned in to a Board of Trustee member. So far there has only been one entry but hopefully more will be submitted at the meeting, or before.

There will be events scheduled remembering December 7, 1941, a day that will live in infamy, somewhere near you, so be sure to attend to honor all those who lost their lives on that fateful day.

Winter is here so don't forget to check on our shut-in brothers and sisters or their widows to insure they are doing ok, and to make sure they have enough food and heat.

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

Semper Fi

Jim Doss, Commandant

Department of West Virginia

Marine Corps League

Thank you to all our veterans for your service to your country.

Chaplain's Corner

A Christmas Prayer for Action

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks, then the work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart. And to radiate the Light of Christ, every day, in every way, in all that we do and in all that we say. Then the work of Christmas begins.

—Howard Thurman

A Soldier Died Today

He was getting old and paunchy, and his hair was falling fast. He sat around the Legion, telling stories of the past.

Of a war that he once fought in and the deeds that he had done. In his exploits with his buddies, they were heroes, everyone.

And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors his tales became a joke, his buddies listened quietly for they knew whereof he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer, for old Bob has passed away. And the world's a little poorer for a Soldier died today.

He won't be mourned by many, just his children and his wife. For he lived an ordinary very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a family, going quietly on his way. And the world won't note his passing, 'tho a Soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state. While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell of their life stories, from the time that they were young.

But the passing of a Soldier goes unnoticed, and unsung. Is the greatest contribution, to the welfare of our land, someone who breaks his promise, and cons his fellow man? Or the ordinary fellow, who in times of war and strife, goes off to serve his country, and offers up his life? The politician's stipend, and the style in which he lives, are often disproportionate to the service that he gives.

While the ordinary Soldier, who offered up his all, is paid off with a medal, and perhaps a pension, small. It is not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys, who won for us the freedom, that our country now enjoys. Should you find yourself in danger, with your enemies at hand, would you really want some cop out, with his ever-waffling stand? Or would you want a Soldier - his home, his country, his kin - just a common Soldier, who

would fight until the end? He was just a common Soldier, and his ranks are growing thin. But his presence should remind us, we may need his like again.

For when countries are in conflict, we find the Soldier's part, is to clean up all the troubles, that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor, while he's here to hear the praise, then at least let's give him homage, at the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple headline, in the paper that might say:

"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING, FOR A SOLDIER DIED TODAY."

Professional Development Training

PLEASE NOTE: Any requested changes to the Department of WV Bylaws and Administrative Procedures must be submitted for consideration no later than March 1, 2022, to Randy Doc Thomas, Scott Kirby & George Gill.

Bylaws and Administrative Procedures Committee shall receive and consider all properly written proposed changes to the Department Bylaws and Administrative Procedures. Properly submitted recommendations to the Department of West Virginia Bylaws and Administrative Procedures shall be made to the Department Bylaws and Administrative Committee no later than March 1 prior to the annual Department Convention. Requirements of a properly written Department Bylaws and Administrative Procedures change shall be:

- a. Typed, printed on plain white paper or submitted as a PDF document via email
- b. Stating Bylaw/AP Section number, sub-section number, etc. affected using current exact wording
- c. Address only one (1) section. See Bylaws Section 702(2)
- d. Recommended change to the Bylaw/AP using exact wording of change
- e. Rationale for change to the Bylaw/AP A revision encompassing the entire Bylaws and Administrative Procedures shall not be bound by the aforementioned requirements.

The committee, by majority vote, shall either approve or disapprove all properly written Department Bylaws and Administrative Procedures proposed changes. The Chairman will report the Committee's recommendation to the Department Convention for its consideration and action. The Department Judge Advocate shall be the Chairman of the Committee. Changes submitted that are not properly written according to the above rules will be returned to the submitter upon receipt with comments as to why it was rejected. They may be rewritten and resubmitted as long as they are received by March 1.

Award Writing

There are numerous awards that a person can have a recommendation for. The first thing is what type of award. You want to tailor your recommendation for that particular award. All award recommendations must be submitted from the detachment or Pound level and be approved by the membership. The following awards require a cover letter with the detachment or Pound name on the recommendation. The Department MOY and any award recommendation that is submitted outside the Department or MODD Pack. Unless the award is for a department award, do not list everything the person is supposed to do in their position because that's their job duties and not relevant. Do not get into detail about them being involved in the MODD if it's an MCL award. If it's an MODD award, then expand on this. If they are in a paid position this is not relevant either.

The cover letter should state in the opening line what the name of the award is and the year. Example: Letter of Nomination for 2022 Department, Mideast Division or National Marine of the Year Award. Plus, there should be a statement with the members full name and that the recommendation was approved at a regular membership meeting which was approved by a majority or more of the members present with the date listed.

The Commandant and Adjutant must sign and date the recommendation. If the Commandant is being nominated the Sr Vice Commandant must sign. If the Adjutant is being nominated the Sr Vice Commandant must sign.

Next have the name of the Award at the top of the next page as per the example listed. 2022 MARINE OF THE YEAR AWARD RECOMMENDATION Start your write up with the full name of the member and whether he is life member in good standing and total number of years in the League. State detachment or Pound name and number, city and state and repeat the name of the award and recommended for the following accomplishments: Example:

John Wayne is a life member in good standing of Cowboy County Detachment 1945 Tucson, AZ Department of Arizona and is recommended for the 2022 Marine of the Year for the following accomplishments:

Start off by listing full name and what position the member is currently serving and have an impact statement on why the member is being nominated. Expand on what the member did to be nominated. Do not just write what the duties of the position involved or required. What did the member do to stand out?

Next list all positions and committees the member held in his detachment.

Next list all positions and committees the member held in his departments

Next list what previous awards the member received, MOY, C4C Award, Various department awards and high-level awards from national, division, or department with date. Example: 2009 Detachment MOY, 2010 Department MOY, 2020 Mideast Division MOY

Next list the total number of detachment meetings, department quarterly meeting, department, division, or national conventions the member attended and any other significant event they participated in Midwinter or Modern-Day Marine Expo. Anything where the member represented their detachment and or department.

Next use bullets to outline what the member did to be recommended for the award. Tell a good story about your accomplishments because a weak write up does not help you. It's important that the accomplishments stand out in separate paragraphs so that they are readable and engaging Do not have waste a lot of words on irrelevant activities. Look back over your detachment minutes to see what activities your detachment participated in and the role of the awardee. Think outside the box and what did the nominee do to better his detachment or get them recognition. Was there any civic or community involvement from the member? Look over your theme holidays or military tributes for reference. Examples: toys for tots, youth sports, fundraisers, special projects, flag classes and or decorating graves, honor guard, birthday ball or BBQ planning, parades, festivals, recruiting booths, career history projects, public speaking, church projects, assisting veterans in need, nursing home visits, VAVS and or other projects.

Organize activities and events into separate sentences. Veteran or military activities together, civic or community projects or activities together, committee projects or detachment activities together, special, or significant impact projects into separate sentences.

Summary page should list why you think this member should receive the award and repeat at the end the members full name and the name of the award and that he was approved by the membership and date approved. Read it over, looking for proper wording, spelling and punctuation mistakes before mailing.

Last ensure you follow the instruction for addressing and mailing the nomination paying attention to postmark deadline and how the envelope is addressed.

For writing department awards – select those members for designated awards in January depending on what awards you nominate them for. Have selected committee start to write down bullet comments about their nominates and ensure you have one writer for every award recommended. Meet in two -three weeks and go over each award where committee members can comment about each award being recommended. In February start to finalize the write ups for submission in early March. Go back over the detachment meeting minutes and look for activities or events where one of the nominees may have participated. Look at the award recommended and tailor the write up to match your nominee with the write up. Brainstorming ensures a good write up for every candidate

Department Officer Nominations

Department Sr Vice Commandant Mike McLain is Chairman of the Department Nominating Committee. The following Department Officers will be elected during the Department Convention in Gallipolis, OH on May 21, 2022. Commandant, Sr Vice Commandant, Jr Vice Commandant and Judge Advocate. Nominations for these positions can be submitted to Sr Vice Commandant McLain commencing January 2022. Floor nominations will be taken at the Department Convention.

Hershel "Woody" Williams Scholarship Foundation Applications

Foundation Chairman John Nanny will distribute application packets to every detachment Commandant in the Department at the January Meeting. Any Detachment not represented at the meeting will receive their packet in the mail soon after the meeting. Be sure to let Adjutant Leib know where to mail your packet if you cannot attend the meeting. The applications may be reproduced as needed. The Foundation normally awards about 4 to 10 scholarships each year in the amount of \$1,000.00. This is a onetime scholarship so prior recipients are not eligible. The deadline for applications must be postmarked no later than March 15th, 2022. Please assure that all portions of the application are completed, all requested materials are included and proof of eligibility from the local Marine Corps League Detachment is verified. The application includes additional information required to complete and submit the application properly. Paying attention to detail is necessary in submission of an application. In the eighteen years since the Scholarship Foundation was instituted, 150 scholarships totaling \$132,000 have been awarded.

Department Awards

Department Awards Chairman Rick Shank will distribute nomination forms for the following department awards at the January 2022 Meeting in Princeton. Detachments should be considering those individuals who they desire to nominate for one or more of these awards. All nominations must be postmarked by March 30, 2022, to be considered. If your Detachment cannot be present at the January Department Meeting, be sure to let Adjutant Leib know where she should mail your packets after the meeting.

DEPARTMENT HEART & SOUL AWARD is presented in recognition of this Marine Corps League member's outstanding spirit and enhancement of the mission and principles of the U. S. Marine Corps and Marine Corps League from May 2021 to March 2022

COMMANDANT OF THE YEAR AWARD is presented in recognition of this Marine Corps League member's outstanding leadership and guidance in meeting all department and national guidelines, policies, and procedures from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY AWARD is presented in recognition of this Detachment's outstanding public relations contributions and community involvement from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT AMERICANISM AWARD is presented in recognition of promoting patriotism, citizenship, participating in parade activities, and observing all traditions of U.S. Marine Corps and Marine Corps League from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT/PAYMASTER AWARD is presented in recognition of this Marine Corps League member's outstanding administrative and fiscal practices and procedures in the Marine Corps League from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER AWARD is presented in recognition of this Marine Corps League member's outstanding service performance and volunteer work to veterans and their dependents from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AWARD is presented to Detachment_____ in recognition for publishing an outstanding newsletter that conforms to the National Newsletter guidelines from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT COMMENDATION AWARD is presented in recognition for displaying outstanding principles and purposes of the U. S. Marine Corps and Marine Corps League from May 2021 to March 2022

DEPARTMENT RECRUITER OF THE YEAR AWARD is presented in recognition to this Marine Corps League member for recruiting the highest number of new Marine Corps League members for the period May 2021 to March 2022

Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year, Associate Member of the Year Awards

Greg Irwin President, Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year Society, will distribute an announcement for the 2022 Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year and Associate Member of the Year at the January 2022 Department of WV Quarterly meeting. Detachments should be considering and submitting a member for nomination for this prestigious award upon receipt of the announcement letter. All nominations must meet the requirements in the announcement, and be postmarked no later than March 1, 2022, to be considered.

2022 VA Compensation Rates

	Single	Married
10 %	152.64	
20%	301.74	
30%	467.39	522.466
40%	673.28	747.41
50%	958.44	1,050.57
60%	1,214.03	1,325.22
70%	1,529.95	1,659.15
80%	1,778.43	1,926.69
90%	1,098.52	2,164.70
100%	3,332.06	3,517.84

VA Benefits Eligibility Based on Disability Rating

Take a look at the eligibility matrix below to see what benefits you are eligible for based on your disability rating:

Rating of 0% - 20%

Certification of Eligibility for home loan guaranty.

Home loan guaranty fee exemption.

VA Priority medical treatment card.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling under Title 38 USC Chapter 31 (must be at least 10%).

Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance (Maximum of \$10,000 coverage) must file within 2 years from the date of new service connection.

10-point Civil Service preference (10 points added to Civil Service test score).

Clothing allowance for veterans who use or wear a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance (artificial limb, braces, wheelchair) or use prescribed medications for skin condition, which tend to wear, tear or soil clothing.

Temporary total evaluation (100%) based on hospitalization for a service-connected disability in excess of 21 days; or surgical treatment for a service-connected disability necessitating at least 1 month of convalescence or immobilization by cast, without surgery of more major joints.

Rating of 30%

Additional allowance for dependent (spouse, child(ren), stepchild(ren), helpless child(ren), full-time students between the ages of 18 and 23 and parent(s).

Additional allowances for a spouse who is a patient in a nursing home or helpless, blind, or so nearly helpless or blind as to require the regular aid and attendance of another person.

Rating of 40%

Automobile grant and/or special adaptive equipment for an automobile provided there is loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet, loss, or permanent loss of one or both hands or permanent impaired vision in both eyes with central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in better eye.

Special adaptive equipment may also be applied for if there is ankylosis of one or both knees or one or both hips.

Rating of 50%

VA Medical outpatient treatment for any condition except dental.

Preventative health care services.

Hospital care and medical services in non-VA facilities under an authorized fee basis agreement.

Rating of 60% - 80%

Increased compensation (100%) based on Individual Unemployability (IU) (applies to veterans who are unable to obtain or maintain substantially gainful employment due to service-connected disability).

Rating of 100%

Dental treatment.

Department of Defense Commissary privileges.

Veteran's employment preference for spouse.

Waiver of National Service Life Insurance premiums.

National Service Life Insurance total disability income provisions.

Specially adapted housing for veterans who have loss or permanent loss of use of both lower extremities or the loss of blindness in both eyes having light perception only plus loss of use of one lower extremity or the loss or permanent loss of use of one lower extremity with loss or permanent loss of use of one upper extremity or the loss or permanent loss of use of one extremity together with an organic disease which affects the functions of balance and propulsion as to preclude locomotion without the aid of braces, crutches, canes or wheelchair.

Special home adaptation grant (for veterans who don't qualify for Specially Adapted Housing) may be applied for if the veteran is permanently and totally disabled due to blindness in both eyes with visual acuity of 5/200 or less or loss or permanent loss of use of both hands.

Rating of 100% (Permanent and Total)

In Addition to the Above:

Civilian Health and Medical Program for Dependents and Survivors (CHAMPVA). Survivors and dependents education assistance under Title 38 USC Chapter 35.

Associate Member of the Year

Associate Member of the Year Award Ribbon has been approved at the National, Division, Department and Detachment levels. This change/addition would be for a RIBBON ONLY. **APPROVED WITH "A" IN RIBBON VICE EGA.** Department Chief of Staff Roger Ware has the letter "A" for the Associate Member of the Year and the Eagle/Globe/Anchor for the Member of the Year awards.

Bronze A Device



Department Ribbon with A Device



**Detachment
ribbon
with A device**



Mideast Division Marine of the Year

Section 300 (h) of the National Administrative Procedures outlines the criteria for selection of the National Marine of the Year. Using these provisions, the following Mideast Division MOY recipients are the committee

to select a 2022 Mideast Division Marine of the Year. The Chairman is Frank Mathers - Department of Delaware. The other committee members are: Richard Tanner - Department of Delaware, Roger Ware, Mike McLain, Rick Shank and Scott Kirby - Department of West Virginia and Jeffrey Jones and Rick Thomason - Department of North Carolina. The guidelines in Section 300 (h) (2) of the above reference must be followed for each nomination. Please insert "Division" in lieu of "National", as appropriate. Any regular member from the Mideast Division can be nominated and the Mideast Division MOY will be presented at the 2022 Mideast Division Conference. Each letter of nomination must be mailed to the above chairman, registered return receipt, post marked not later than May 15, 2022. Mail to Frank Mathers, Mideast Division Chairperson Marine of the Year Committee, 17 Fairway Drive, Ocean View, Delaware 18870. Telephone: 301-520-8051. It must have a cover letter signed by the Commandant and Adjutant or other officers if one of them is nominated. An inner envelope must be addressed to the Mideast Division Chairperson Marine of the Year Committee. A second envelope must be addressed to the Chairperson. It must be sent Certified, Return Receipt Requested for your records, before the postmark deadline. The Marine of the Year Committee will announce the 2022 recipient during the Mideast Division Conference. The above provisions are for 2022 Marine of the Year selection only.

Division Marine of the Year Criteria

This award shall be presented to a REGULAR MEMBER of the Marine Corps League who has rendered service(s) and/or performed a deed(s) above and beyond the duties and obligations required of a member of the Marine Corps League, or a meritorious deed(s) so identified as being within the scope of these rules shall be of such substance that the weight will or shall have brought acclaim and prestige to the Marine Corps League; or has enhanced and/or furthered the concepts of the duties of being a citizen of the United States of America; or a deed(s) of courage or valor without regard for his/her own safety

Letters of nomination must originate only at the DETACHMENT LEVEL. No individual nor any subsidiary unit of the Marine Corps League shall submit a letter of nomination.

All letters of nomination shall include a letter signed by the Detachment Commandant and Adjutant, stating that the nominee for Division Marine of the Year was approved at a regular meeting of the detachment by a majority vote. (In the event a nominee is the Commandant, the letter of nomination shall be signed by the Senior Vice Commandant and the Adjutant. In the event a nominee is the Detachment Adjutant, the letter of nomination shall be signed by the Detachment Commandant and Senior Vice Commandant).

Each nomination submitted shall be placed in a sealed envelope and addressed to "Chairperson, Division Marine of the Year Society". THIS ENVELOPE SHALL THEN BE PLACED IN ANOTHER ENVELOPE and mailed, certified/return receipt requested, to: the Chairman at the address listed on the announcement.

The member must be a member in good standing and have served at least either an elected or appointed position within his detachment and department. List how many years he has been a member. List his positions and what was the significance of each if any. Is he a Detachment or Department Marine of the Year?

The recommendation should summarize what the member has done in his detachment, and or department. It should be brief and only impact areas where the candidate performed that brought credit upon his detachment and not merely list that he performed the duties expected of his position and or attended meetings. What were the results of any activities he participated in that were above the normal expected duties of his position?

List those activities where he was the chairman or committee lead. Examples: Toys for Tots for 15 years and how many toys collected and how many children benefited. Chairman of numerous fund-raising events that benefited detachment or selected charities. What was the total amount generated? Did he teach flag etiquette or flag folding to children, how many classes and how many kids for how many years.

What civic projects or volunteer did he do to enhance the league. If he did not participate as a league member in an event or activity, do not list it. What did he do as a volunteer outside of his detachment for the league? Was he recognized within his community for a project?

The nomination should be a snapshot of the member's achievements and not just listing his MCL awards. Did

he attend his department quarterly meetings or convention, Mideast Division Conference, National Mid-Winter Staff Conference, National Convention?

The Division MOY Committee has developed a point system to aid them in their selection process. Consideration can be giving a point for each event, and a point giving for participation outside his detachment for either serving on department, division, or national level and on any committee.

Bust presented during USMC Birthday Celebration

A life like bust of Hershel “Woody” Williams was presented by sculptor Cliff Leonard to Brent Casey, grandson of Woody during the Marine Corps 246th Birthday Ball Banquet in Gallipolis, Ohio on November 11, 2021. Mr. Leonard has spent more than a decade using his sculpting talents to create life-size clay busts to memorialize fellow Marines and Navy corpsmen killed in combat in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Using his Jacksonville, Fla., home as his art studio, Cliff Leonard, with his keen eye, steady hand, and depth of understanding, carves clay from the earth into the essence of each of these brave servicemen who gave their lives for their country. These sculptures are lasting tributes given to the service men’s families at no cost. He was asked if he would carve one for the last living Medal of Honor recipient from Iwo Jima battle during World War II. Here are Cliff’s comments:

Cliff Leonard comments during ceremony at USMC 246th Birthday Ball

“For all of you that have supported our Armed Forces THANK YOU!

For all you that have served in our Armed Forces – THANK YOU
for your service.

For all you that have served in a Combat Zone WELCOME Home.

A little over 15 years and almost 4000 pounds of clay ago I began sculpting all the Marines and Navy Corpsmen from Jacksonville, Florida that were killed in our last three Middle East Wars.

Once they were completed, I began sculpting all the Marines and Navy Corpsmen killed in action from Florida. During this time, I also sculpted all the Brothers I knew killed in 3rd Recon during my time in Vietnam. All the busts are given to the Marine’s or Corpsman’s Family as a gift, there is no charge. To date fifty busts have been given to Deserving Gold Star Families.

Six months or so ago I delivered a bust of a young Marine, Sgt RJ Jimenez. During that time, I became friends with Roger Ware. About two weeks later Roger called and asked for a favor. As a Marine, you know when a fellow Vet calls you out of the blue and asks for a favor - your first thought is to run toward the closest exit.

I didn’t run and Roger began to explain the favor.

As I listened, I realized I had to take him up on his offer. There were several reasons why I could not turn Roger down. 1.) He did not ask for something to benefit himself. 2.) He wanted something for a fellow Marine. 3.) The person he was asking for has spent the past 30-40 years serving other vets. 4.) The one he was asking for served in the South Pacific as my Dad did and finally, 5.) He was asking for a bust for the generation that saved the world from tyranny.

The bust is a likeness of this outstanding Marine - and every day that I worked the clay - all the Men that went through the Hell of fighting the Japanese were on my mind - my Dad, included.

While making the bust I got a handful of Iwo Jima sand Brent Casey sent me, and a handful of West Virginia clay from Judy Ware, and I worked both those soils into the clay I used to sculpt this piece. Both soils add special meaning to this piece.

I do not have my Marines looking straight head; I have them in an eyes-right gaze. I sculpt my Marines passing through the Gates of Heaven giving an eyes-right salute to St. Peter as they take their new post, guarding the streets of Heaven. When Woody 20-30 years from now crosses over I know he, too, will be standing guard on Heaven’s gate and streets.

God Bless America – and may God Bless each one of you.

Semper Fi Marines Semper Fi

Here's Woody”

Mr. Leonard (R) then presented the bust to Brent Casey (L) who would deliver it to Woody Williams. Also pictured are Mrs. Leonard, their daughter and two grandsons, who all traveled to WV/OH for this presentation.



Well, since that night, Brent was able to take the Bust to the rehab center in Huntington the very next day, where Woody was being treated for his injuries. Brent said Woody was ‘totally speechless’ at first and became teary-eyed as he realized what had been done for him. He was absolutely humbled and amazed and he seemed to just continue to gaze at it for quite some time that evening. It was a really neat thing to watch happen. Woody said that he is so grateful to Roger Ware and Cliff, and to the Detachments and Department and all of those involved in making this possible. He is so thankful to be a part of such a wonderful, caring and loving supportive group of Marines and Great American Patriots!!

Woody has asked that the Woody Williams VA Medical Center in Huntington display the bust and make it a part of the new entryway that they are creating and constructing at the Medical Center. Director Brian Nemo has agreed that they would accept the bust and do exactly that.

As Woody is still healing from his injuries, there haven't been any pictures taken of him with the bust yet... he was still lying in the hospital bed and still looked pretty rough when he saw the bust. We will plan to do a follow up with Woody once he gets healed enough and can be back at the VA for pictures in the near future. Woody is so pleased to receive everyone's cards and letters, and takes a few phone calls now, but pre-planned visits can also be arranged as he continues to recover. Woody was discharged and able to come home on Thanksgiving weekend, is on a walker or uses a cane to get around the house and continues his physical therapy with in-home health care therapists; he continues to improve and is getting stronger every day and is grateful for all the love and prayers.

Cards and letters can be mailed directly to his home – please send them to:

Hershel Woody Williams, CWO4, Retired
3450 Wire Branch Road
Ona, WV 25545



Brent Casey and Cliff Leonard with the Bust



Dept of WV Officers with Cliff Leonard and the Bust

WWI ACE Rickenbacker's WWII Ditching 21 Days Lost at Sea

One of the most intriguing stories to emerge during World War II occurred just shy of a year after the Pearl Harbor attack and involved an American icon. The incident captured the attention of the free world and has been described as the first American epic of the war. Captain Edward Vernon Rickenbacker had gained fame as a daring race car driver before becoming the United States' top scoring fighter ace of World War I and awarded the Medal of Honor and 7 Distinguished Services Crosses. After the war he delved first into the automobile industry and then wound his way back to aviation, eventually becoming president of Eastern Air Lines. Rickenbacker was a strong voice for aviation, on several occasions testifying before congressional committees about actions he felt would be detrimental to both military and civilian aviation. In late 1942 Secretary of War Henry Stimson and Army Air Forces chief of staff General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold asked the 52-year-old airline executive to travel to the Pacific theater as a \$1-a day nonmilitary observer. His mission was to evaluate and report on the status of U.S. Army Air Forces combat units stationed there. His itinerary included visits to Australia, New Guinea, and Guadalcanal. Rickenbacker was accompanied on the mission by his aide, Colonel Hans Adamson. On October 20, 1942, they climbed aboard a well-worn Boeing B-17 in Hawaii that had been converted into a transport plane.

The B-17 was crewed by Captain William Cherry Jr. of Abilene, Texas, pilot; Lieutenant James Whittaker of Burlingame, Calif., co-pilot; Lieutenant John De Angelis of Nesquehoning, Pa., navigator; Private John Bartek of Freehold, N.J., engineer; and Sergeant James Reynolds of Fort Jones, Calif., radio operator. Also along was Staff Sgt. Alexander Kaczmarczyk from Torrington, Conn., an enlisted airman who was returning to his outfit in Australia after recovering from a lengthy illness. The plane was also loaded with a large number of bags of high-priority mail and secret documents.

Thanks to a broken hydraulic line, the takeoff on the 20th had to be aborted. All onboard plus luggage, mail bags and navigation equipment were transferred to another B-17. They finally took off at 1:30 a.m. on October 21, bound for island 'X' (so designated for security reasons; actually, Canton Island), about 1,800 miles to the southwest. But they would never reach that destination. Their plane with its seven occupants would ditch in the Pacific Ocean. To read how they survived afloat in three rafts for 21 days refer to the attachment to this Bulletin titled, "Rickenbacker Lost at Sea"

Widowhood & SSA Financial Impact

When a spouse dies, not only is there the profound emotional loss but also there's frequently a financial one as well. While a widow receives Social Security survivors' benefits, she can't receive the same amount of Social Security income that she and her deceased spouse enjoyed before. And, while Social Security income drops, the effective tax rate tends to increase due to the change in filing status. To top it all off, there are a host of bureaucratic hoops to jump through when a spouse passes away. Here's a few of the most important:

You must return the Social Security benefit that your deceased spouse received for the month of death, and any received thereafter. You are not allowed to keep Social Security checks received for the month a person dies, even when the death was on the last day of the month. If your spouse passed away in September, the September benefit is the check received in October. That money must be returned to the Social Security Administration, even if you were dealing with piles of medical bills in your spouse's last month of life.

You will not receive a survivor benefit in addition to your own retirement benefit. You receive the higher of the two and, for the overwhelming majority of women, that means giving up your own retirement benefit to receive the higher survivors benefit.

If you receive your own retirement benefit, rather than a spouse benefit, your benefit will not automatically convert to a survivors benefit — you must apply. You cannot apply online however, and you must get an appointment from the Social Security Administration. Survivors must contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to request an appointment. News reports suggest this has been huge problem for many eligible beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to staffing shortages and closed local offices. TSCL is still sorting through Social Security survivor data, which appears to be lower than the 5,886,000 forecast by the Social Security Trustees in 2020. We are not certain whether some of this is because of deaths due to COVID-19, or problems that eligible beneficiaries may have had in scheduling appointments to file claims for survivor benefits, or both.

Your tax filing status and exemptions change. Tax rates and exemptions tend to be more favorable for married couples filing jointly. When a spouse passes away, you will file as a "single" taxpayer in the following tax year. Single taxpayers often must pay a higher - - effective rate than married couples, and you don't qualify for the more generous standard exemption for joint filers

Several approaches to modify Social Security benefits in order to aid widows are available to Congress. One widely discussed option would boost the widow's benefit to a percentage of the couple's combined Social Security benefit (such as 75% of the combined benefit) when the deceased spouse was alive, allowing the widow to choose the higher of the new boosted benefit or what she would otherwise receive as a widow's benefit.

New "Ask VA" portal allows anyone to contact VA securely - Vantage Point

The [Ask VA online question portal](#), launched on October 18, 2021, was created to provide the Veteran community with an easier, faster, and more convenient way to get their questions answered. It replaces VA's outdated Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) and the GI Bill Help Portal.

"Do what you do best, partner for the rest"

1-800-MyVA411 is a national, toll-free number that serves as a "front door" to VA.

[New "Ask VA" portal allows anyone to contact VA securely - Vantage Point](#)

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[AVA Q&A](#)

Pending Calendar

Department of WV Spring Quarterly Meeting will be January 15, 2022 hosted by Mountaineer Marine Detachment 957 at Vietnam Veterans of America Building, 113 Straley Ave Princeton, WV, 24740, Telephone: 304-487-0082 in Princeton, WV Staff Officers Meeting is 0930 AM with general business meeting at 1000 AM. WV Pack Growl will immediately follow Dept. Meeting.

2022 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference will be February 23– 27 2022 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. 2/24/2022 – 2/26/2022 (check in 2/23, check out 2/26) Thursday arrivals & stores are open in the afternoon, Friday opening session & agenda items, Saturday sessions continue

2022 Marine South will be March 30-31, 2022, at Camp LeJeune, NC – **CANCELED** until 2023?

2022 Department of Maryland Convention will be 6-8 May 2022 at the Fenwick Inn 13801 Coastal Hwy Ocean City MD 1-800-641- 0011 (Code MCL) \$125.00/room. <https://www.fenwickinn.com>

2022 Department of Delaware Convention will be 7 May 2022 at the Heritage Shores Golf Club One Heritage Shores Cir, Bridgeville, DE 19933. Coffee Mess 0930, Business meeting 1000, lunch will be served after the close of the business meeting.

2022 Modern Day Marine Expo will be 10 – 12 May 2022 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC.

2022 Department of North Carolina Convention will be May 13-14, 2022, it will be hosted by RDU Det #1482 in Durham, NC.

2022 Department of West Virginia Convention will be May 20-21, 2022, at The Quality Inn Gallipolis, 577 State Route 7 North, Gallipolis, OH 45769. Phone: (740) 446-0090. MGM Detachment 1180 will be the host detachment. Rooms rate: \$85.00 plus tax Banquet includes choice of: Prime Rib \$25, Chicken \$20 Dinners include salad, two vegetables, rolls, beverage, and dessert. Amenities: Group Rate includes free WiFi, free parking, free cable, free in-room coffee, free breakfast for two guests per room (each additional guest in a room pays \$6) Breakfast is 6 a.m. – 10 a.m. Pre-registration due by April 15, 2022. For information call Jim Doss - 740-441-5638, Jerry Bain –304-593-9519, Patti Leib 740-591-8611

2022 Department of Virginia Convention will be TBD

2022 MCL Mideast Division Conference hosted by the Department of North Carolina in 17-18 June 2022. DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle Park, 4810 Page Creek Lane, Durham, North Carolina 27703, phone 855-605-0318 or 919-941-6000 The host Detachment is Cpl Alan D Lamm from Burlington. Costs TBD

2022 MCL National Convention Will be August 15-19, 2022, at Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, 100 North Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL, 32118 Phone: 800-774-1500 code MCL22 Room rate: \$127.00 plus 12.5% Room reservation open 0800 August 16, 2021. Rates good 4 days prior and 4 days after convention. Self-Parking: \$21.30 per car per night (includes 6.5% sales tax) Valet Parking: \$31.95 per car per night (includes 6.5% sales tax) This hotel is nearly full. ALTERNATE HOTEL INFORMATION: The Plaza Resort & Spa Daytona Beach's Grand Resort. 600 North Atlantic Ave, Daytona Beach, FL 32118, Phone: (866) 500-5630 and

as for MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, All-in Rate is \$142.88 per night includes two breakfasts per room per night. Self (\$15) and Valet (\$25) Parking is separate per day cost.

2023 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference will be 2/23/2023 – 2/25/2023 (check in 2/22, check out 2/26) Sheraton Norfolk Waterside, 777 Waterside Drive Norfolk, VA <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/orfsi-sheraton-norfolkwaterside-hotel/> Group Code: MCL Phone: (757-622-6664) Room rate includes up to four breakfast vouchers per occupancy. \$129.00 per night + prevailing tax (currently 14%) Please make your room reservation directly to the hotel.

2023 MCL National Convention will be August 14-18, 2023, in Oklahoma City, OK. At Omni Oklahoma City Hotel, 100 W Oklahoma City Blvd, Oklahoma City, OK 73109, (405) 438-6500 Room rate \$165.48 includes tax. Parking not included but is \$10 per day. Pet friendly with service animals no charge but others is \$165.00 per week. Rate good for 3 days prior and afterwards.

AROUND THE STATE:

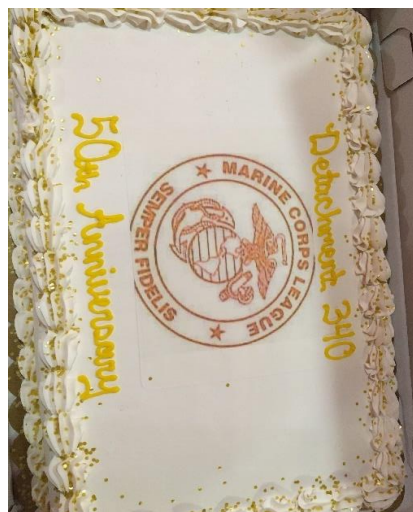
The Huntington Det 340 has just celebrated their 50th Anniversary Dec 4, 2021!! Congratulations, Huntington!! (Actual Anniversary was November 12, 1971)



Members and Guests of Huntington Det 340



Doc Thomas, Jane Legge, Ron Wroblewski (Denny Wood, far left)



~ The Cake ~



Commandant Doc Thomas and Ron Wroblewski



Brent Casey and Cliff Leonard, sculptor



Backside of the Bust (Ruby, Woody's wife)



Greg Irwin (956), Shaun Scott (1065), Cliff Leonard, Dan Clarkson (1065) George Gill (1065)



MC 246th Birthday Ball @ MGM 1180



Ann Berent (1180) Xavier Camden, National Anthem Soloist (Grandson of Nick & Ann Berent 1180)



Jean Lamb (947) Buddy Winter (947)



Oldest Marine Robert Holcomb (1180) & youngest Marine Johnnie Wamsley (1180) cutting the cake



The Layered Cake



Woody's Bust up close



Det 577 246th MC Birthday



Commandant Mike Mounts and 2021 Det 577 MOY Larry Goff



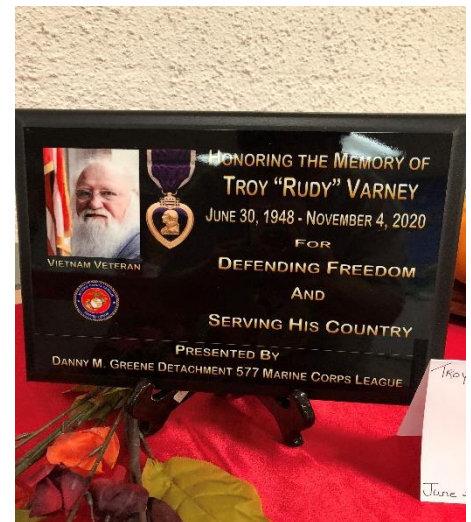
Mike Mounts, Larry Goff, Danny Hopson, Det 577 MC Birthday Ball



Tribute to Fallen Marines Det 577



Tribute to Fallen Members 577



Tribute to Troy "Rudy" Varney Det 577



Past Commandant Dave Finley



Tribute to James Lackey Det 577



Tribute to John Hancock Det 577



Thanks to Special Guest Speaker
Scott Kirby, National MOY



Kim & Rick Shank, Rick read the
National Commandant's Letter



Johnnie Wamsley read the MCL
Commandant's Birthday Letter



Members of Ripley Det 1065



Members and Guest of Huntington Det 340



Rick Shank and 246th Birthday
Challenge Coin (reading gift)



Maria Cain, Stephanie Thomas,
Janie Legge, Det 340



Debbie & Mike McLain, Det 1087
Shaun Scott, Det 1065 (background)



Jim McDade, Adjutant-Paymaster Hurricane Det 1474 presenting donation of \$200 to Putnam County Animal Shelter Chief Jeff Dixon behalf of MODD WV Pack



Judge Advocate Warren Bryant and Commandant Will Miller, Hurricane Det 1474 conduct the 13 Flag Fold Ceremony at the Putnam County Veterans' Appreciation Day

Celebrating MOH Woody Williams' 98th Birthday Party in Huntington, October 6th





The Marine Corps League also donated \$500 to Shop with a Cop, the Children's Home Society and Heart Behind the Badge. The donations are to assist the groups with Christmas programs, Scot Heckert with the Marine Corps League said, *"The Marine Corps League 1087 is honored to help with these organizations during the Christmas season."* Sponsors of Shop with a Cop are the Parkersburg Area Board of Realtors, Mary Anne Ketelsen, Mister Bee Potato Chips, Impact Realty, McDonald's, Bob Nichols, Marine Corps League 1087, the Polymer Alliance Zone, McClinton Chevrolet, Walmart, and Taco Bell.



Stan Legge (340) Donald Grooms (947) Randy Doc Thomas (340) Jim Doss (1180/Dept of WV Commandant) Ben Edwards (1180) Buddy Winter (947) laid a 246th Marine Corps Birthday wreath at the Donel C Kinnard State Veteran's Cemetery, Dunbar, WV –November 10, 2021

The West Virginia Marine Corps League will be required to provide numbers concerning how many Certificates have been presented so far for the fiscal year. The information must be passed along before the mid-winter Conference in February. I would also like to know how many Certificates may be presented after the Conference. I would appreciate having this information forwarded to me in January 2022.

Merry Christmas!

Semper Fi!

Fred Brunner
Boy Scout Coordinator.

Morgantown Detachment 342 held their 246th Birthday Ball Saturday, November 13, 2021



Commandant Jamie Summerlin,
wife Tiffany, daughter Logan



Guest Speaker Brandon Rumbaugh,
Past NVC Mike McLain (1087)



The "Commndant's Dance"
Jamie Summerlin & Shaun Scott



Al and Lesa Reitz, Judy Lyons, Jimmy Kirchmar



Members and Guests of Det 342's MC Birthday Ball