



# *The Straight Scoop*

Department of WV Newsletter Marine  
Corps League  
PO Box 1224  
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Volume 14, Issue 5, May 2021

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## Commandant's Letter

July, 2021

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

I hope everyone was able to attend a **MEMORIAL DAY** service to honor our departed and missing brothers and sisters who have served our country.

July 4<sup>th</sup> is almost here and there will be parades and fireworks honoring our American Independence.

Remember to remind those that are watching the parades or celebrations that as our American Flag passes they need to remove their hats and place their hands over their hearts or as a service man or woman they need to offer a salute.

I was able to attend the unveiling of the Gold Star Family Memorial in Charleston, WV on Sunday June 20<sup>th</sup>. This is the largest Gold Star Family Monument and it is in West Virginia. It is really beautiful. It stands around 7 feet tall and is about 15 to 20 feet long. It is definitely something to see. We had at least 25 to 30 Marine Corps League members from at least 7 Detachments in attendance. I was really proud of the Department of West Virginia's representation. Thanks "MARINES". Every time we were called to attention

and to give a hand salute everyone knew the Marine Corps League was there as we had our very own Drill Instructor Mike McLain giving the commands.  
Our National Convention is coming up August 9-13 and I hope those planning to attend have reserved their hotel room and have registered as a Delegate for their Detachment. We need significant representation at National as well as local events.  
Remember to make plans to attend the Fall Quarterly meeting on Saturday September 18<sup>th</sup> at the Winfield Community Center, 178 Second St. Winfield, WV. Cpl. William B. Fulks Detachment 1474 in Hurricane, WV is the host Detachment and it promises to be a good time for all.  
**Please keep all members of our Armed Forces in your thoughts and prayers as they serve around the world in harms' way.**

Semper Fi  
Jim Doss, Commandant  
Department of West Virginia, Marine Corps League

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**Chaplain's Corner**

A prayer for encouragement

Father,

This is the day you have made, we will rejoice and be glad in it! For You promise Your beloved rest between Your shoulders. You are ever so close to us, Father. We can do all things through You ...for You are the source of our strength. Let all we do honor You, Father. As you encourage us, let us be an encouragement to those around us.

Remind us when we falter and fail that You uphold us. Your merciful hand has purposed our lives, and we cannot outrun your love or free gift of salvation by Jesus' sacrifice for us. Father, you weave our stories throughout ancient history and onto tomorrow. You number our days and surround us with Your love.

When we are down, send Your Holy Spirit to remind us of Your loving kindness. There is much to fear and be frustrated about in this life on earth. There is grave injustice, oppression, and unfairness everywhere we look; disastrous weather events and horrific acts of violence. We fear losing our lives and our loved ones to disease and disaster.

You are our comforter through it all. In Your Word we are upheld and in Your arms we throw our anxieties, and find safety and protection. When the world seems to press into our lives harder than we can bear, we know we are never holding on alone. You remind us to be strong and courageous, to rely on You for strength, and not to fear. You promise to strengthen us and uphold us.

Through every heartache and conflict, continue to broadcast the truth of Your word into our hearts. Encourage us, Father, always. Help us to navigate the tricky waters of relationships on this earth and hurdle the stumbling blocks the enemy lines our daily paths with. We know in this world we will have trouble, but we do not want to let it steal our joy! For You have overcome this world! Though it can be hard and discouraging, let us take heart in Your truth. Squash every distorted thought and lie with the encouraging words of Christ. "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" ([Matthew 11:28](#))

King David stated, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" ([Psalm 27:1](#)) He, and so many other Biblical hallmarks have left their legacies of Your encouraging word despite their sins and shortcomings. Let us fall in their footsteps, Father, following You despite our imperfections. Adjust our expectations through Your perspective. Help us to keep getting up, keep following You, keep hoping, and holding onto the joy and peace Jesus died to give us. He is our ultimate source of encouragement.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

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## **Annual Financial Audit, Weapons Audit and Detachment Property Inventory**

A financial audit must be performed prior to the change of Commandants yearly. A report should be sent to the Department Adjutant-Paymaster, along with the Report of Officer Installation (ROI). If your detachment has any weapons, they are required to conduct an inventory and file a report with TACOM every three years. During the Oath of Installation for all Officers, they are stating that they will turn over all property in their possession to their relief. A detachment should have a property inventory performed yearly that lists all material, files, equipment, banners, flags, trailers and any other items that belong to the detachment. The location of the item should be listed as well as who maintains it. This is important in the event of fire, theft, or in an emergency or death of a member who has custody of detachment property. A copy of this inventory should be kept in the detachment files.

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### **Annual dues**

Paymasters, it's time to generate and mail a letter to all your dues paying members with a reminder that their dues expire August 31. National does not send out a reminder notice so you have to be proactive and send them one. Be sure to inform them of the amount of their dues payment and to make the check payable to your detachment. Most important is to include your mailing address so they know where to send their payment. You need to track all those who pay and it's a good idea is to use a copy of the last quarterly roster you received from National as a guide, and just mark paid in the margin beside each name as the members pay. In addition, if you join new members they should be included on your list, and if a member passes away make a notation on your list. If you have any address changes this must be changed on your master list too. Each month your Member Retention Team should review your list and make contact with all those who do not pay their dues with your initial mailings

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## **VA plans expansion of benefits for disability claims for conditions related to certain toxic exposures New evaluation process to be applied in identifying future presumptive conditions**

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced Thursday May 27, 2021 two major decisions related to presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange and particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia.

### **Agent Orange**

The VA will begin implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283), adding three conditions to the list of those presumptively associated with exposure to herbicide agents, more commonly known as Agent Orange. Those conditions are bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and Parkinsonism.

“Many of our Nation’s Veterans have waited a long time for these benefits,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough. “VA will not make them wait any longer. This is absolutely the right thing to do for Veterans and their families.”

The VA will apply the provisions of court orders related to *Nehmer v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, which may result in an earlier date for entitlement to benefits for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Vietnam War era Veterans and their survivors, who previously filed and were denied benefits for one of these three new presumptive conditions, will have their cases automatically reviewed without the need to refile a claim. VA will send letters to impacted Veterans and survivors.

### **Particulate Matter Exposures**

The Secretary recently concluded the first iteration of a newly formed internal VA process to review scientific evidence to support rule making, resulting in the recommendation to consider creation of new presumptions of service connection for respiratory conditions based on VA’s evaluation of a National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine report and other evidence. VA’s review supports initiation of rule making to address the role that particulate matter pollution plays in generating chronic respiratory conditions, which may include asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis, for Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War and/or after September 19, 2001, or in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the Persian Gulf

War “VA is establishing a holistic approach to determining toxic exposure presumption going forward. We are moving out smartly in initiating action to consider these and other potential new presumptions, grounded in science and in keeping with my authority as Secretary of VA,” said Secretary McDonough.

VA is initiating rule making to consider adding respiratory conditions, which may include asthma, sinusitis, and rhinitis, to the list of chronic disabilities, based on an association with military service in Southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan during the covered periods of conflict.. VA will conduct broad outreach efforts to reach impacted Veterans and encourages them to participate in the rule making process.

For more information, visit our website at Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures - Public Health (va.gov).

If you have questions contact Susan.Carter2@va.gov, Randal.Noller@va.gov and Tatjana.Christian@va.gov

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## **Professional Development Training**

### **Finance**

The Fiscal Year shall end at the close of business on June 30th of each year. The revenue of the Detachment shall be derived from membership dues and such other sources as may be properly established at regular meetings or by the Board of Trustees. Disbursement of Detachment funds shall be made as established for payment of National Membership per capita and Department per capita dues, annual Application to Change or Appoint Officers, Corporate Annual Report and those items previously approved by the membership.

Donations to non-profit organizations or members in distress can be made by approval of Board of Trustees or during regular member meetings. A letter should be received from any non-profit organization or school requesting a donation in support of a function. The letter should be read during a membership meeting and any donation must be approved or denied by the membership. A budget will be established as necessary. Each Detachment shall fix the amount of its annual membership dues. Annual dues shall include the Department and National per-capita dues and fees.

All other disbursements will be approved during normal business meetings. The maximum amount of funds that the Commandant is authorized to disburse without getting general membership approval should be specified. The maximum amount for the Board of Trustees should be specified. The Paymaster will reimburse members for approved items upon paid receipts if funds are available.

The Detachment will maintain a checking account and all funds received will be deposited in that account. The Paymaster will draw all checks and ensure proper signatures are obtained. Two signatures are required on each check. This account will be audited with the monthly bank statement and a report will be given during the general membership meeting by the Paymaster. An annual audit will be conducted by the Audit Committee prior to the Officer Installation.

A motion should be made by the Paymaster to change bank signature cards during a regular meeting upon Installation of Officers and this must be included in the minutes, a copy of which shall be provided to the bank to obtain the new signature cards.

The annual per capita dues shall be provided for by the National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures plus an additional Department per capita dues as determined by the Department Convention. The sum of these two accounts shall be forwarded with every membership application or renewal thereof by the Detachment Paymaster directly to the Department Paymaster who will remit the National per capita dues in each instance to the National Paymaster. The current annual per capita of \$5.00 is effective as of 1/1/2003. A member resigning from membership shall not be entitled to any refund of per capita paid.

The Detachment Commandant and Detachment Adjutant/Paymaster or Paymaster will be bonded by a commercial crime policy paid for and administered by National. The bond limit will be in the amount of \$10,000 with deductible of \$1,000. Any other signatures for the Detachment account will not be covered by this bond and the Detachment must provide the bond for any additional member/Officer signing.

Checks drawn against Detachment funds shall be valid only if they cover disbursements authorized and jointly bear the signatures of the Commandant and Paymaster. The Detachment financial records will include the Detachment corporation name, address, telephone number and Employer Identification Number (EIN).

No Officer or member of the Detachment shall obligate the Detachment financially in any manner whatsoever without the prior consent of the membership or Board of Trustees.

To assure the financial integrity and credibility of the Detachment, any funds received for a charitable purpose or for a specific purpose will be deposited into the Detachment funds and will be reserved for that respective charity or specific purpose.

**Detachment Audits and Reports** - An annual audit of detachment finances will be conducted prior to the Annual Installation of Officers. Monthly audits can be conducted with monthly bank statements and be combined to satisfy the annual audit required by this section if these audits are included in detachment meeting minutes and approved by members. A copy of the audit and all the minutes from the last Installation will be sent to the Department Commandant.

## **Fund Raising**

Two of the most important tasks of every detachment are the recruiting and retention of members and raising funds to run the operation and to support detachment programs and objectives. A detachment cannot make the mistake of continually relying on its own membership to fund operations and projects. Brainstorming on numerous methods and ideas to generate funds will benefit the success of your detachment.

Any fund-raising must be discussed during your membership meetings. When deciding to do your event, have the membership approve the event and document it in your meeting minutes. This makes it officially under the Corporation and under the Insurance Policy. In conducting a fund raiser ensure you specify what the funds are being collected for. If collecting funds for your Detachment Operating Funds or for Veterans Assistance, you can keep those funds in your detachment General Fund as long as you desire and disburse them when you want. If collecting funds for an IRS registered non-profit charity you can hold those funds in your account and disburse indefinitely either yearly or all at once. **However, if you collect funds for a local non-registered charity or for a local benefit, these funds must be liquidated before the end of your Detachment's Fiscal Year. Any of these type funds held over past your fiscal year can be counted as profit in the event of an audit by IRS or the state.**

If you do a raffle to benefit a charity, then those funds must be dedicated toward that respective purpose. The net proceeds from a drawing need to be applied to that program or project for which the money was received. From the total revenue, the cost of merchandise, printing of tickets, and an amount for the reserve fund of the detachment may be deducted.

Don't forget, when your Detachment is Incorporated, this is your authority to conduct fund raisers within your respective area and your general Business License from the state of WV supports your activity. I would highly suggest that each detachment file a copy of their detachment Bylaws and Corporate papers with its respective County Clerk's office as this makes everything a matter of record in the event an issue on fund raising develops.

Make posters listing your prizes and drawing dates, set up a small table at a mall entrance or large department store -- Wal-Mart, Kmart, Tractor Supply Company, etc. You might even have a donation jar for anyone who wants to make a donation to a local charity, such as Humane Society, Relay for Life, Make a Wish, or any other non-profit organization (ensure any funds collected this way go to that organization). When you collect these funds and then make the donation, be sure to get a photo of event in your local paper as it gets your Detachment some visibility in the community and further supports future events.

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## **Required reports following Officer Installation**

Following reports pending:

- \* Report of Officer Installation (ROI) completed and mailed to Department Adjutant
- \* Annual Corporate Report will be completed on line (after officers are installed); using the WV Secretary of State website at cost of \$25.00 each year. A copy of the receipt is to be submitted to the Department Paymaster.
- \* Paymaster Report due each membership meeting
- \* Department Convention Report from Detachment for ending Quarter
- \* National Convention Delegate Registration Form
- \* Annual IRS 990N e-file due after June 30 or 5 ½ months after your Detachment's fiscal year expires

- \* Paid Life Member (PLM) Audit June 30
  - \* Financial audit and property inventory should be conducted before your Annual Installation of Officers
  - \* Letters mailed to all dues paying members in June informing them that their dues expire August 31
  - \* Letter to Bank to change signature cards adding new Commandant and Paymaster along with the monthly minutes showing this action is approved after a motion to make changes is approved by members.
  - \* Copy of Monthly Detachment Minutes must be forwarded to Department Commandant and Department Adjutant-Paymaster following every meeting as per Department Bylaws.
  - \* Membership update to Department Jr. Vice Commandant monthly
  - \* Department Quarterly Meeting Report due September and January every year
  - \* **Dues transmittals are submitted when members pay their dues to the Department Paymaster as all dues expire August 31 yearly.**
  - \* **Death notices are filled out and a dues transmittal form coded NOD is sent to the Department Paymaster for submission to National HQ (the Department Paymaster will copy the Department Chaplain)**
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## IRS 990 -N -e-file - postcard

All Detachments, MODD Pounds, WV Pack, & Department of WV are required to file an annual IRS990N e-file. It should be filed after your fiscal year ends. For most it is June 30. You can file commencing July 1. Below is the information required. Read over the info and then log onto this site to get a new user name and password.

<https://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Annual-Electronic-Filing-Requirement-for-Small-Exempt-Organizations-Form-990-N-e-Postcard>

**NOTE:** IRS has changed how they accept the filings and does not send a confirmation back to your mail so when you finally get logged into the site and answer all the questions and file, make a copy of what you entered before sending. IRS does not send you a confirmation copy or acceptance. Once you create a user name and password, Be sure to write it down. Log into your email account and you will be given a code to enter your information. It's only good for 15 minutes. When you try to log into the site, you can enter your user name okay but you will have to enter your password twice as it will deny you on the first attempt. After logging in and answering all the question, copy off what you entered. After filing, wait for about an hour and log back into the site and see if IRS accepted your file. Copy off the IRS acceptance and send a copy to your Paymaster and or Dog Robber.

Annual Electronic Filing Requirement for Small Exempt Organizations — Form 990-N (e- Postcard)

### How to file

To electronically submit Form 990-N, *Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for Tax-Exempt Organizations Not Required to File Form 990 or Form 990EZ*, use the Form 990-N Electronic Filing system (e-Postcard).

All organizations are required to register at IRS.gov prior to filing Form 990-N. You won't be asked to register again the next time you file.

Form 990-N must be completed and filed electronically. **There is no paper form.** Form 990-N filers may choose to file a complete Form 990 or Form 990-EZ instead.

Use the Form 990-N Electronic Filing System (e-Postcard) User Guide while registering and filing.

**For filing system and website issues, refer to the second question on the How to File: Frequently Asked Questions page.**

**Prior to filing your form, please review the following information:**

**Who must file:** Most small tax-exempt organizations whose annual gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less can satisfy their annual reporting requirement by electronically submitting Form 990-N if they choose not to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ instead.

Exceptions to this requirement include:

Organizations that are included in a group return,

Churches, their integrated auxiliaries, and conventions or associations of churches, and Organizations required to file a different return

### **Form 990-N filing due date**

Form 990-N is due every year by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of your tax year. **You cannot file the e-Postcard until after your tax year ends.**

**Example:** If your tax year ended on December 31, the *e-Postcard* is due May 15 of the following year. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the due date is the next business day. If your tax year ends June 30, the *e-Postcard* is due November 15.

If your 990-N is late, the IRS will send a reminder notice to the last address on file. While there is no penalty assessment for filing Form 990-N late, organizations that fail to file required Forms 990, 990-EZ or 990-N for three consecutive years will automatically lose their tax-exempt status. Revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status will happen on the filing due date of the third consecutively-missed year. Watch this IRS [YouTube presentation](#) for more information.

### **Information you will need when filing Form 990-N**

Form 990-N is easy to complete. You'll need only eight items of basic information about your organization.

**Search for Form 990-N filings:** To search for organizations that have filed Form 990-N and to view their filings, see *Exempt Organizations Select Check*. You can also download the entire database of Form 990-N filing

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### **Make Annual Verification of Paid Life Members (PLM)**

Paymaster Patti Leib sends a reminder to all detachments to verify their Paid Life Members (PLM) listed on the PLM Audit dated 6/30/21 from National. Upon receipt is the best time to do this so it's not forgotten.

These are due at National before Dec. 31. If a detachment does not certify its PLM roster is true and accurate before the deadline, it will not receive its annual residual interest for its life members. Take the original copy of the PLM Audit and verify the PLM members. The Commandant and Paymaster must sign a statement on the original that they certify and annotate that the life member list is audited and is true and accurate and that there are no changes. This must also be dated. Make a copy after signing and then forward the original to Dept Paymaster Patti Leib. She will send this to the National Adjutant/Paymaster. You must send this signed roster to Paymaster Leib with enough lead time for her to send it to National and arrive there by Dec. 31. Bear in mind, Paymaster Leib usually spends the Christmas holidays in Arizona with her family, and is gone by December 15<sup>th</sup>. She Must receive your audit prior to her departure, so try to have it mailed to her no later than November 30<sup>th</sup>. Mail to PO Box 1224, Athens, OH 45701-1224

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### **VA Herbicide Related Claims Previously Denied Vet & Survivor Ones to be Re adjudicated**

Veterans who were previously denied service connection for an herbicide related presumptive condition due to lack of in-country Vietnam service will have their claims automatically re adjudicated by VA. The department began re adjudicating claims in April for Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War but were denied for one or more herbicide related conditions, on the basis that military service was not performed on the landmass of the Republic of Vietnam or on its inland waterways. "Re adjudication means VA will review the evidence of record and provide replacement decisions in the cases of Veterans who were previously denied service connection benefits," said Acting VA Under Secretary for Benefits Thomas Murphy. "We have the proper resources in place to meet the needs of our Veteran community and will ensure all eligible Veterans' and their survivors' claims are examined thoroughly and fairly."

The review also applies to eligible survivors of deceased Vietnam-era Veterans and is part of the Veterans Benefits Administration's implementation of the Nov. 5, 2020,

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California order in *Nehmer vs. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, requiring VA to re adjudicate previously denied claims. VA will determine if benefits for qualifying disabilities can now be paid retroactively to the date of previously denied claims. The court's decision requires automatic re adjudication in such cases without requiring a new claim, and potentially paying benefits to the survivors or estates of deceased beneficiaries. More information is available regarding VA disability benefits based on Agent Orange exposure. [Source: VA News Release | May 14, 2021 ++]

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## **MCL: Proper Vetting of MCL membership Applications**

To all members recruiting new members please ensure that all information on the application is thoroughly vetted for true and accurate information, especially DD-214. Please do not accept the DD-214 without completely reviewing it to ensure that the applicant has in fact earned the title Marine and served honorably, which is determined by the last DD Form 214 or certificate of discharge that the applicant received. A General Discharge under Honorable Conditions is acceptable. The DD-214 should be reviewed by your Paymaster and Judge Advocate prior to accepting the new member, or at least by two (2) members.

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## **MCL: National Bylaws Reminder- Membership Listings of the MCL are Proprietary**

MCL Bylaws reminder: All MCL membership information is for MCL business only and not to be disseminated outside of the MCL.

Section 530. Membership Listing. The membership listing of the MCL is proprietary information and under the direct control of the National Headquarters of the MCL. Applicable portions of the membership listing shall be periodically provided to appropriate departments and detachments exclusively for internal usage in administration of membership of such departments and detachments. The membership listing will not be sold, leased, copied, loaned or assigned without the expressed permission in writing from the Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) upon approval of the National Board of Trustees of the MCL.

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## **To understand a Military Veteran you must know:**

We left home as teenagers or in our early twenties for an unknown adventure. We loved our country enough to defend it and protect it with our own lives.

We said goodbye to friends and family and everything we knew.

We learned the basics and then we scattered in the wind to the far corners of the Earth. We found new friends and new family.

We became brothers and sisters regardless of color, race, or creed. We had plenty of good times, and plenty of bad times.

We didn't get enough sleep.

We smoked and drank too much.

We picked up both good and bad habits.

We worked hard and played harder.

We didn't earn a great wage.

We got Christmas cookies in March, or I should say Christmas crumbs. When we got mail, we opened the best smelling ones first.

We experienced the happiness of mail calls and the sadness of missing important events. We didn't know when, or even if, we were ever going to see home again.

We grew up fast, and yet somehow, we never grew up at all. We fought for our freedom, as well as the freedom of others. Some of us saw actual combat, and some of us didn't.

Some of us saw the world, and some of us didn't.

Some of us dealt with physical warfare, most of us dealt with psychological warfare.

We have seen and experienced and dealt with things that we can't fully describe or explain, as not all of our sacrifices were physical.



We participated in time-honored ceremonies and rituals with each other, strengthening our bonds and camaraderie.

We counted on each other to get our jobs done and sometimes to survive it at all. We have dealt with victory and tragedy.

We have celebrated and mourned. We lost a few along the way.

When our adventure was over, some of us went back home, some of us started somewhere new and some of us never came home at all.

We have told amazing and hilarious stories of our exploits and adventures.

We share an unspoken bond with each other, that most people don't experience, and few will understand.

We speak highly of our own branch of service and poke fun at the other branches.

We know, however, that, if needed, we will be there for our brothers and sisters and stand together as one, in a heartbeat.

Being a Veteran is something that had to be earned, and it can never be taken away.

It has no monetary value, but at the same time, it is a priceless gift. People see a Veteran and they thank them for their service.

When we see each other, we give that little upwards head nod, or a slight smile, knowing that we have shared and experienced things that most people have not.

So, from myself to the rest of the veterans out there, I commend and thank you for all that you have done and sacrificed for your country.

Try to remember the good times and make peace with the bad times. Share your stories.

But most importantly, stand tall and proud, for you have earned the right to be called a Veteran. I'm a VETERAN! I WOULD DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN AND AGAIN!

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## **VA & Medicare Combined Coverage How They Work Together**

It's possible to have VA and Medicare benefits at the same time. Having both types of coverage is helpful if you need specialized care, if you have a condition not connected to your military service, or if you want to use non-VA providers. Because the Department of Veterans Affairs assigns each beneficiary to a priority group that determines how much you pay for services, having Medicare is especially helpful if you're in one of the lower priority groups with higher out-of-pocket costs. If you decide to enroll in Medicare, your VA benefits pay for VA-authorized services, and Medicare pays for Medicare-covered services.

Medicare Part A Covers care at a non-VA facility and gives you more flexibility when seeking medical care.

Medicare Part B may pay for services not covered by your VA benefits, allows you to use non VA doctors, and can help reduce your out-of-pocket costs if your VA benefits don't cover some services.

Medicare Part C may cover more services than your VA benefits and since Medicare Part C combines the benefits available under Original Medicare into a single plan that may cover more than your VA plan.

Medicare Part D covers prescriptions filled at non-VA pharmacies/facilities. VA benefits typically cover the same prescriptions Medicare does, but some plans may have a lower copay for prescriptions than VA.

Medigap pays for copays and other expenses not covered by Original Medicare. Can help you reduce your out-of-pocket costs if you decide to use Medicare instead of your VA benefits if you have to seek care from a non-VA provider

VA benefits and Medicare Part A Medicare Part A covers the care you receive in an inpatient facility, such as a hospital or skilled nursing center. Services covered include nursing care, laboratory tests, X-rays, and surgical procedures. Because VA benefits and Medicare benefits are separate, you should enroll in Medicare Part A if there's any chance you'll ever need to go to a non-VA facility for inpatient care. If you go to a non-VA facility and don't have Medicare or some other type of insurance, your VA benefits may not cover your stay. Enrolling in Medicare Part A ensures you have coverage for ailments not connected to your military service. Many veterans qualify for premium-free Part A. You may also qualify for assistance on Part B premiums.

VA benefits and Medicare Part B Medicare Part B covers preventive and medically necessary services, including ambulance services, doctors' services, durable medical equipment, clinical research, and mental health treatment. You should enroll in Medicare Part B to ensure you have adequate coverage for your health care needs, whether they're service-connected or otherwise. Should you ever lose some of your VA benefits, or your VA benefits don't cover everything you need, you'll be able to use Medicare Part B instead of paying 100% of the expenses out of your own pocket. Although Medicare Part B has a monthly premium, it's well worth it if it helps you avoid high out-of-pocket costs. It's wise to enroll in Part B during your initial enrollment period – you'll incur penalties if you enroll later.

VA benefits and Medicare Part C Medicare Advantage Plans, also known as Medicare Part C, combine the benefits of Medicare Parts A and B – and in most cases, Part D – into a single plan offered by a private health insurance company instead of the federal government. All Medicare Advantage Plans must offer the same level of coverage as Original Medicare, but some insurers cover additional services, such as dental or vision care. Enrolling in Medicare Part C can help you reduce your out-of-pocket medical expenses by covering services that aren't covered by your VA benefits. You may also gain access to a larger network of doctors and other health professionals.

VA benefits and Medicare Part D Medicare Part D, whether a standalone plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan with drug coverage, covers at least two prescription medications per drug category. Because VA drug coverage applies only to prescriptions filled at a VA pharmacy or other VA facility, enrolling in Medicare Part D is a good idea if you don't live near a VA pharmacy or you want more flexibility in choosing a pharmacy. Depending on the plan you select, Medicare Part D may also cover a wider variety of medications, often with a lower copayment. If you live near a VA pharmacy and don't mind going there to pick up your prescriptions, then you may not need to enroll in Medicare Part D.

Your VA drug benefit counts as creditable coverage for Medicare Part D purposes. If you decide to defer enrollment in Part D, you will not incur late penalty charges if you join a Medicare drug plan at a later time.

VA benefits and Medigap, also known as Medicare Supplement Insurance, covers copays, coinsurance, and most deductibles for services covered by Original Medicare. Medigap often has a lower copayment than Medicare. To purchase one of these plans, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B.

You should consider a Medigap plan if there's a chance you'll need care at a non-VA facility, as your VA benefits only cover services through VA providers. If you need to visit a non-VA hospital or clinic, you'll be able to use your Original Medicare benefits. Then Medigap will pay its share of the remaining costs, leaving you with fewer unpredictable out-of-pocket medical expenses. You will pay a monthly premium for a Medigap policy

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## VA CLAIM TIPS

A lot of claims get denied even though you have the disability. What is most important is what you WRITE. The disability could exist, but your claim could be denied if your doctor is not writing the correct verbiage to match your medical documentation.

Every veteran needs to review [CFR 38, Part 4, Sub part B](#). This regulation explains how VA rates each disability in accordance to severity.

If you believe you deserve 50 percent for a certain disability, you must ensure all of your documentation meets the requirement for 50 percent according to [CFR 38, Part 4, Sub part B](#).

There is a lot of necessary leg work each veteran must do. To simply give your record to a VSO and have them

figure out what is in your record is not the approach that should be taken.

Each veteran needs to go through each page in their record with a fine-tooth comb. Identify all disabilities that started or were aggravated by military service. Then sort out every page that relates to a disability and put them all together. It is easier to organize your information, so it won't be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Put the information together so VA can find it easy.

If you have secondary conditions, make sure you have a nexus letter from your doctor connecting the secondary condition to the condition that started while you were in the military.

Make sure you get Buddy Statements. They will help your case. You can also research VBA decisions related to your disability to understand how other veterans are getting positive decisions.

Also, have your doctor fill out DBQ forms. Sometimes they may not. It may be worth getting a 2nd opinion and paying for the DBQ to be filled out.

Each veteran is their best advocate, so you have to put in some work!

If you follow this advice, it will save you from your claim being held up in the appeals process for years.

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## Pending Calendar

**2021 Department Fall Meeting** will be September 18, 2021 at 10 AM hosted by Cpl. William B Fulks Detachment 1474 in the Winfield Community Center, 178 Second Street, Winfield WV 25213. Staff Officers Meeting is 0930 AM with general business meeting at 1000 AM. WV Pack Growl will immediately follow the Dept. Meeting. The uniform code has been modified for the department regular meetings as members can wear polo shirts and black pants, with fore and aft cover. The uniform code must be followed for the Department Convention.

**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 Reservations open August 17, 2020. Overflow hotel is the Doubletree by Hilton, 701 E. Adams St, Springfield, IL Phone: (217) 544-8800 Website: [doubletree1.hilton.com](http://doubletree1.hilton.com) . Contract rate for MCL started Aug 31, 2020.

**2021 Modern Day Marine Expo** will be Sept 21-23, 2021 at MCB, Quantico, VA

**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 with the hotel.

**2022 Marine South** will be March 30-31, 2022 at Camp LeJeune, 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. Room rate: \$85.00 plus tax Banquet includes choice of: Prime Rib \$25, Chicken \$20. Dinners include salad, 2 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 MCL National Convention** will be August 15-20, 2022 at Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, 100 North Atlantic Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL, 32118 Phone: 866-536-8477 or 1-800-HILTONS (toll free, 24-hour reservation center); 386-254-8200. Room rate: \$127.00 plus 12.5%.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

Staff nationwide and local VA Medical Centers are working with the manufacturer of medical devices that have recently been **recalled**.

A release said the VA has learned about the recall on Philips Respironics CPAP and BiPAP's. Veterans who are noticing problems with their device or any new respiratory symptoms should contact their medical team immediately. The release said otherwise, they should continue using the device as prescribed, pending additional guidance.

The VA said it will provide additional information about the situation, as it becomes available. Call the VA at 440-1000 for more information.

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## **A MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

### **VA Stories of Note: June 18 – June 24**

#### **Military Times, June 23: [VA telehealth options here to stay, secretary vows](#)**

Telehealth and online medical appointments will remain a key part of Veteran's health care even after the pandemic disappears, the Veterans Affairs secretary promised on Wednesday. But department officials may need Congress' help to ensure that. During an appearance before the Senate Appropriations Committee, VA Secretary Denis McDonough noted that online video appointments between department physicians and patients are about 18 times higher now than at the start of the coronavirus pandemic in spring 2020.

#### **Daily Herald (Arlington Heights, Ill.), June 22: [Let It Ring: Cancer Patient's Final Treatment Ends with a Victory Bell](#)**

For eight weeks, Anthony J. Thomas battled throat cancer at suburban Chicago's Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital, hoping to make it through a diagnosis that claims thousands of American lives each year. On June 14, 2021, after 39 radiation treatments and six chemotherapies, Thomas received his last radiation dose but still had one final step before recovery.

#### **WNCN (CBS-17, Video) (Raleigh, N.C.), June 23: [Durham VA says COVID-19 vaccine lottery leading to rise in vaccinations at clinics](#)**

It's only been a few days since people who got their vaccine through the VA and tribal health clinics became eligible for the vaccine lottery. The Durham VA Healthcare System says turnout at its clinics was down significantly in recent weeks but the lottery news is leading to an uptick in vaccinations, especially at its Greenville clinic.

#### **KTVT/KTXA (CBS-11/21) (Dallas, Texas), June 22: [North Texas Nonprofit Brings Joy Of Scuba Diving To Veterans With Disabilities](#)**

A North Texas nonprofit is working to bring the joy of scuba diving to veterans with disabilities. The founders of Adapt-Able Scuba believe time in the water can be life-changing for those with physical or emotional challenges. [...] Adapt-Able Scuba is launching a new partnership with the VA North Texas Healthcare System's recreational therapy program to introduce veterans to scuba diving.

#### **WJAR (NBC-10, Video) (Cranston, R.I.), June 22: [Possible game changer in the treatment of depression and anxiety](#)**

There is a possible game changer in the treatment of depression and anxiety. It's a first-of-its-kind, first in-human research that involves the use of an MRI and special ultrasound. This research will be

conducted at the Providence VA Medical Center, thanks to a \$2.3 million award from the National Institute of Mental Health.

**KSAZ (FOX-10, Video) (Phoenix, Ariz.), June 22:** [Phoenix VA enriches lives through healthy eating called 'Veggie for Vets'](#)

Four-minute video: The Phoenix VA is giving away fresh produce to veterans and active military members as part of its "Veggies for Vets" giveaway that promotes healthy eating habits. FOX 10's Desiree Fluellen has the story.

**WLOS (ABC-13) (Asheville, N.C.), June 22:** [Asheville VA one of 50 VA centers participating in national study on effects of statins](#)

Clinicians with Charles George VA Medical Center (CGVAMC) in Asheville are participating in a study looking at the effects statins have on the elderly. Asheville's VA is one of 50 VA medical centers across the nation taking part in the study focused on older people.

**Military Times, June 21:** [VA promises renewed focus on preventing homelessness amid pandemic impact concerns](#)

Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough on Monday acknowledged the possibility of a spike in veterans experiencing homelessness later this year and vowed "to do everything we can to prevent that from happening" in coming months. "Our country's most sacred obligation is to prepare and equip the troops we send into harm's way, and then to care for them and their families when they come home," he said during a speech at the annual National Coalition of Homeless Veterans conference. "

**The Advocate, June 21:** [Veterans Affairs to Offer Gender Confirming Surgery to Trans Veterans](#)

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough announced on Saturday that the V.A. will offer gender confirmation surgery to trans veterans. McDonough cautioned that the change would take time, according to The New York Times. "This process will require changing V.A.'s regulations and establishing policy that will ensure the equitable treatment and safety of transgender veterans," McDonough said at a Pride event at the Orlando Vet Center.

**Spectrum News 1 (Raleigh, N.C.), June 21:** [Going for gold without going: N.C. veteran competes in contest online](#)

Over the course of a lifetime, a veteran can see and endure many things. One of those is war. There's a lot of life to live once your service comes to an end, and Richard Arthur works hard to keep a sharp mind. Now, he fights for his country in another way. Through the VA hospital, Arthur participates in the National Veterans Golden Age Games.

**PLEASE PRODUCE LOCALLY FOR ALL THOSE WHO DO NOT ROUTINELY ACCESS EMAIL DUE TO THEIR SPECIALTIES**

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### **Chapel of the Four Chaplains Award**

Department of West Virginia Past Commandant Scott Kirby, second from right, receives the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Bronze Medallion on May 15 during the 2021 MCL Department of West Virginia Convention in Elkins. Previous recipients are, from left, Roger Ware, Jerry Smith, Mike McLain and Rick Shank. The Chapel of the Four Chaplains was established to memorialize four clergymen who gave away their lifejackets to save crewmen aboard the USAT Dorchester, which sank after it was torpedoed by a German submarine on Feb. 3, 1943, during World War II. The Bronze Medallion Award was presented to Kirby in honor of his extraordinary contributions to the well-being of others; for his giving spirit and unconditional service to the Marine Corps League, his church, community and humanity as exemplified by the Four Chaplains; and for upholding America's precious values and traditions. (Photo by Judith Ware)



### **2021 Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year**

Stan Legge, front row, left, is named the 2021 Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year on May 15 during the MCL Department State Convention in Elkins, WV. Congratulating Legge are previous recipients including John Nanny, center, and Roger Ware, right; and background from left, George Gill, Chuck Cooper, Greg Irwin, Steve Swenton, Mike McLain, Scott Kirby and Rick Shank. (Photo by Judith Ware)





A hand-carved clay bust, created free of charge by a Florida sculptor in memory of the late U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Romulo J. "R.J." Jimenez, was presented in a recent ceremony at the home of Jimenez's family on Fraternal Cemetery Road near Belington, WV. Jimenez's mother, Alesia Swartz, second from right, and sculptor Cliff Leonard, right, are joined by members of Elkins Marine Corps League Detachment 956 during the bust presentation. From left are Paymaster Greg Irwin, Jr. Vice Commandant Jack Marteney and Commandant Roger Ware, who served as master of ceremonies. Swartz and her husband, Lee, are associate members of the Det. 956. (Photo by Judith Ware)



Marine Corps League members from detachments throughout the Department of West Virginia were joined by Gold Star mothers on June 20 at the State Capitol Complex in Charleston for the dedication of the largest Gold Star Family monument in the nation. Spearheading the installation of Gold Star Family monuments in each U.S. state is MCL member Hershel W. "Woody" Williams, 97, of Ona, WV, the nation's only living Medal of Honor recipient from World War II.



## More ~ Around the State:



Medal of Honor Recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams, dedication of the largest Gold Star Family Memorial Monument, June 20, 2021, Charleston, WV



Marines with Carole Ertle who's a devoted follower of the Marine Corps League and Woody Williams. Her son, stepson, and brother are all Marines.



Marines at the Dedication of the super-size Gold Star Family Memorial Monument in Charleston, WV



West Virginia Gold Star Mothers with the Marines at the Dedication of the super-size Gold Star Family Memorial Monument, Charleston, WV June 20, 2021



Carole Ertle got to meet her hero, MOH Woody Williams





Oldest and Youngest living Medal of Honor Marines, Kyle Carpenter and Woody Williams



Cpl William B Fulks, Hurricane Det 1474 at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade in Hurricane, WV (left to right: Judge Advocate Warren Griffin, Commandant Will Miller, Adjutant-Paymaster Jim McDade and Sr. Vice Commandant Vince Turley)



Detachment 1474 with their Boy Scouts Troup 236 from Hurricane, WV – 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade



MOH Woody Williams, Memorial Day Parade, Gallipolis, OH



Landau Eugene Murphy, Jr. (winner of America's Got Talent) sings John Denver's "Country Roads" song about West Virginia at the Gold Star Family Memorial Monument Dedication, Charleston, WV 6/20/2021

## WV Pack and Miss WV Pack Contest

May 14, 2021 - The 1st Miss WV Pack Contest was held during the WV Pack Growl in conjunction with the Department of WV Convention. Over 40 dogs showed up and they were entertained by 4 beautiful ladies who entered the Miss WV Pack Contest. One of the ladies (PDD Jerry "Jeri" Bain) was a former Victoria's Secret model and she no longer has a secret. Another (PDD Greg "Grettee" Irwin) was a convict who escaped from death row somewhere and was trying to hide in the Growl. The third lady PDD Don "Donnetta" Dearth) was a manure sales representative who brought samples for everyone. The last lady PDD Richard "Hot Lips" Lipscomb was a former television evangelist who answered her calling and found the light. They were all introduced by a former "New York pimp daddy" who found a new gig working as a limo driver for Kennel Deputy Mad Dog PDD Greg Irwin. His service provided rides for the ladies, and they complained that his limo was lacking as he only has 3 mules. The Pack Leader PDD Mike McLain fined the ladies for voicing their displeasure and the escort for trying to pawn off the ladies to the highest bidder. The ladies tried to do a can dance but all fell down and were fined. Due to their provocative clothing, they accidentally mooned the Pack Leader several times and he is now almost blind. They got fined for that too. The manure saleslady received 5 marriage proposals and is currently engaged to one of them. Their makeup artist and hair stylist were both fined as one wore a wig backwards but looked much better that way. DD Maria Cain was the style consultant and was fined for performing a transformation miracle.

One of the ladies was accused of being a ringer and petitioned one of the finest minds, PDD Wayne Sarapata in the MODD to represent her. He was suffering from a Viagra overdose and could hardly stand for any prolonged periods. He was fined multiple times for making false statements. Several of the Pack dogs were fined for leering and making crude remarks about the appearance of the ladies. PDD Irwin was fined several times for trying to bring his mules into the Growl. The Pack leader asked the Pack Veterinarian PDD Roger Ware to check out the ladies for wearing enhancement attire. He was fined for accepting a small bribe from one of the ladies. The ladies danced and sang a variety of songs including, "Pretty Woman", "I'm a Red Neck Woman", "Evil Woman" and "You Can't Touch This". Their singing sounded like a group of frogs during mating season. They were fined for failing to entertain anyone. The Pack Leader even made them give their tips back as fines. One of the Pack Dogs PDD Scott Kirby failed to grasp the moment, so he ran out of the Growl, and returned wearing the shortest Daisy Dukes in history and won the contest. The Pack Leader lost control of the Growl as the 4 ladies kept hitting PDD Kirby with their purses for stealing their moment and bribing the dogs to vote for him. The power went out and someone stole some clothing from some of the ladies, but everyone had a good time and raised \$612 in fines. Prior to the contest MODD Jeopardy was played by several of the smartest dogs in the Pack and no one got any answers right and all were heavily fined for being too smart. No one got hurt or married so things got back to normal. The photos prove the stories.

Woof,  
PDD Roger Ware  
WV Pack Dog Robber.



