



The Straight Scoop

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



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Department Officers:

Commandant: Scott Kirby, 304-588-0318

Sr. Vice Commandant: Jim Doss, 740-441-5638

Jr. Vice Commandant: Jerry Bain, 304-675-1905

Judge Advocate: Rodney Mayberry, 304-922-2150

Jr. Past Commandant: Michael McLain, 304-464-5049

Legislative: Hershel Williams, 304-743-1026

Chief of Staff: Roger Ware, 304-636-4365

Web Sgt: Steven Swenton, 304-277-8872

Adjutant: Patti Leib 740-591-8611

Paymaster: Patti Leib 740-591-8611

Chaplain: Frank Armentrout, 304-837-4011

Sgt.-at-Arms: Chuck Ghuste, 304-692-0334

Asst Sgt-at-Arms: Greg Irwin, 304-704-5758

Service/VAVS: Roger L. Estep, 304-380-7930

Public Relations: Jean Lamb, 304-595-1482

Historian: Mike Lynon, 304-419-0982

Department E-mail contact: ronald_kirby@yahoo.com

Department Web site: <http://www.mcleaguedeptofwv.org/> Department Adjutant/Paymaster:

pattileib024@gmail.com

PO Box 1224 Athens, OH 45701-1224

Newsletter Editor: Roger Ware, 181 Weese Street, Elkins, WV 26241 E-mail: rware@yahoo.com

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE



COMMANDANT'S MESSAGE

Marines, FMF Corpsmen, FMF Chaplains and Associate Members. I hope this finds you well.

Tis the season to be Merry and Bright. With that being said, I would like to invite everyone to the Charter Ceremony for the Sgt Mecot Camara Detachment 1461 in Beckley WV on December 15, 2018 at 1200. The Department Adjutant will be putting out the details via email very soon. The Department Fire Team has done a great job in Beckley and have started the assault in Hurricane WV. If you like to be part of this great venture, please reach out to PDC Rick Shank and inquire as to how you can be part of the action.

Many things are on the horizon. The Department Quarterly meeting is coming up next month in Parkersburg WV. Detachment Commandants are asked to bring their reports and as many Marines from their Detachments as possible. I am told that there will be great chow during the meeting with a Pack Growl to follow. During the meeting packets will be handed out for Department Awards and for the Department Marine of the Year to be given out at the Department Convention in May. We will also be handing out the tickets for the Department pistol raffle.

During this holiday season, remember to reach out to those members or widows and children of those that we have lost. It is always a tough time to experience the first Christmas without your loved one. We can make a difference in their lives by sending a card or a kind word during this time. It has been an honor serving as your Commandant these past six months and I look forward to what the New Year holds for each of us. Merry Christmas to you and your families. Hold them close.

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

Semper Fidelis,

Scott Kirby

Commandant

Dept. of WV

Marine Corps League

Department of WV MCL Detachment Commandant's Report

2019 Department of WV Regular Meeting will be held on January 5, 2019 hosted by Wood county Det 1087 at the VFW Post 1212, 1630 Garfield Ave, Parkersburg, WV 26101. Staff Officers Meeting is 0930 AM with general business meeting at 1000 AM. WV Pack Growl will immediately follow Dept. Meeting.

The uniform code has been modified for the department regular meetings as members can wear polo shirts and pants, with fore and aft cover. The uniform code must be followed for the Department Convention.

Department Regular Meeting Reports Sept 8, 2018 to Jan 5, 2019. Detachment Commandants. The Dept. of WV requests that each detachment Commandant or appointed representative attend the department regular meeting to submit their detachment report. In the event that attendance by your detachment is not possible, please contact the Department Commandant to be excused and mail or email a copy of your report to the Dept. Adjutant/Paymaster Patti Leib before the date of the regular meeting. Bring 15 copies of your detachment report to set out on the reports table for other detachment Commandants and Officers to view. Ensure the Dept. Adjutant/Paymaster, Sr. Vice Commandant, Jr. Vice Commandant, Judge Advocate and Chaplain get a copy of your report Professional Development training classes will be conducted during this meeting. Commandants are advised to bring their Adjutant/Paymaster or Adjutant and Paymaster with them for the training.

Use the following when submitting your reports:

Membership and Retention Team:

List number of paid life members: paid members: total paid: and total unpaid as of Dec 31, 2018

Do you have a roster of every member that includes mailing address, phone number, date of birth, and email address? Do you have an accurate data base for all members?

Does your detachments MRT report membership totals in your business meetings and list the unpaid members.?

How do they contact the unpaid members? How often do they contact all members?

How many new members have joined your detachment since Sept 8, 2018 and has each new member been assigned a mentor?

What recruiting events has the detachment conducted since Sept 8, 2018?

Do you send your monthly meeting minutes to those members who do not attend meetings and to the Dept Adjutant?

Professional Development Training:

Is your detachment implementing Professional Development Training into your membership? Are you using the Guidebook for Det. Officers, Dept. DVD training disc to assist in training? What PDT classes have been conducted in your detachment meetings since Sept 8, 2018?

What type of training would you like for the dept to conduct during the Dept Convention?

Chaplain's Report:

List deceased members from Sept 8, 2018 to Jan 5, 2019.

Have death notices for these members been filed by your detachment Chaplain and forwarded to the Dept. Chaplain?

Funerals

What was the total numbers of funerals that your detachment participated in for the entire year 2018.

Detachment Awards:

How do you recognize your members? Do you submit recommendations for department awards?

Department Marine Of Year (MOY) and Department Awards:

Is your detachment going to submit a nomination for the Dept MOY?

Is your detachment going to submit nominations for the various Dept Awards?

Dept Convention in Morgantown

How many members are considering attending to support the Dept Convention? How many members are considering attending to support the Mideast Division Conference in Princeton hosted by the Dept of WV?

Americanism and Civic Events:

Summarize your most important activities or significant events.

Detachment Commandants additional Comments:

In this section of your report the Detachment Commandant can make any comments, requests and or suggestions to the Dept. of WV Staff

Chaplain's Corner
A Poem Worth Reading

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast,
and 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,
All his buddies listened quietly for they knew where of he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer, for ol' Joe has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer
For a Veteran 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 Veteran 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 Veteran Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land?
Some jerk who breaks his promises 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 Veteran, 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 Veteran His home, his country, his kin,
Just a common Veteran, who would fight until the end.

He was just a common Veteran, 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 Veteran'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 VETERAN DIED TODAY."

Author 'Unknown'

Department Awards

Chairman Rodney Mayberry will send out nomination forms for the following department awards after January 1, 2019. 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, 2019 in order to be considered.

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 the Marine Corps League from May 2018 to March 2019

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 2018 to March 2019

DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY AWARD is presented in recognition of this Detachment's outstanding public relations contributions and community involvement from May 2018 to March 2019

DEPARTMENT AMERICANISM AWARD is presented in recognition of promoting patriotism, citizenship, participating in parade activities, and observing all traditions of the U.S. Marine Corps and the Marine Corps League from May 2018 to March 2019

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 2018 to March 2019

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 2018 to March 2019

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER AWARD is presented to Detachment _____ in recognition for publishing an outstanding newsletter that conforms to the National Newsletter Guidelines from May 2018 to March 2019

DEPARTMENT COMMENDATION AWARD is presented in recognition for displaying outstanding principles and purposes of the U. S. Marine Corps and the Marine Corps League from May 2018 to March 2019

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 2018 to March 2019

Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year Award

Roger Ware, President, Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year Society, will be sending out an announcement for the 2019 Department of West Virginia Marine of the Year after January 1, 2019. Detachments should be considering and submitting a member for nomination for this prestigious award upon receipt of the announcement letter. All nominations must be postmarked by March 1, 2019 to be considered.

Hershel “Woody” Williams Scholarship Foundation Applications

Foundation Chairman John Nanny has mailed out applications to every detachment Commandant in the Department. The applications may be reproduced as needed. The Foundation normally awards four scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. This is a one-time scholarship so prior recipients are not eligible to re-apply. The deadline for applications must be postmarked no later than March 15th 2019. Please assure that all portions of the applications 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 when submitting an application. In the 17 years since the Scholarship Foundation was instituted, 117 scholarships totaling \$99,000 have been awarded.

Department Officer Nominations

Department Sr. Vice Commandant Jim Doss is Chairman of the Department Nominating Committee. The following Department Officers will be elected during the Department Convention in Morgantown, WV on May 18, 2019. Commandant, Sr Vice Commandant, Jr Vice Commandant and Judge Advocate will be voted on. Nominations for these positions can be submitted to Sr. Vice Commandant Doss commencing January 2019. Floor nominations will be taken at the Department Convention.

VA Claim Filing – Suggestions for a Successful Outcome

Many Veterans filing a disability claim Many Veterans filing a disability claim with VA simply fill in the 21-526EZ, Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits, list the disabilities they are filing a claim for, cross their fingers and hope for the best. Unless you are just leaving the military, with well-documented and easily accessible service treatment records, this isn't the best approach. Here are some suggestions to help you be successful with your claim the first time it's submitted.

Intent to file. It may take some time for you to gather the information to support your fully developed claim, such as private treatment records and written statements. You can hold your effective date by filing a VA Form 21-0966, Intent To File A Claim For Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors Pension and/or DIC. The date this form is received by VA is used as your potential effective date for payment purposes. You have a year after it's received by VA to file your completed claim application.

To receive VA disability compensation, you must meet three criteria: 1) an event in service that caused or aggravated a disability or illness; 2) a current diagnosed medical disability or illness; and 3) a medical opinion connecting the two. Without all three items, a claim can't be granted. It's like a three-legged stool – without any one of these legs, the stool will fall over. If you provide evidence of the first two items, the VA exam will provide the doctor's opinion for the third. Be aware that just because a doctor's opinion is requested on service connection, doesn't mean that the opinion will be favorable to you.

There are some things you need to know about the people rating your claims. First, most are Veterans, or family members of Veterans. They should always give the benefit of the doubt to the Veteran. This is by regulation, by training, and frankly, that's what they want to do. But, you have to give them something to work with. The rater's motto is, “Approve if you can, deny if you must.”

Write a Statement in Support of Claim. When filing your claim, include a VA Form 21- 4138, Statement in Support of Claim. Do a separate paragraph for each disability you are claiming, and explain the event in service

(be specific) and your current disability or symptoms related to your injury or illness. Provide any evidence available on the event, such as personnel records, award narrative, and medical records. If you don't think this event is in your service personnel or medical records, see if you can find someone you served with to fill out a form to provide their witness statement for the event. While a witness statement alone usually is not enough to grant a claim, it can be combined with other evidence to strengthen a claim for service connection.

Your statement is considered evidence, just like your military or treatment records, and the rater will use it to make the decision. It also tells the rating team where to look, and the time frame for information to validate your claim.

Include medical records. VA can access treatment records from other VA and military medical facilities. Just make sure you include where you've been treated on your application (name of treatment facility) so the records can be found and added to your electronic record. It may take some time to retrieve service personnel and treatment records from the military archives, and records from private physicians. If you can include copies of your service records showing treatment or an event in service, and private physician records, including lab results, showing your current diagnosis, it may eliminate weeks or even months of processing time. Providing all of this information with your claim will help the rating team process your claim more quickly.

Compensation and Pension (C&P) Exam. Even if you submit all of your medical records, you may be scheduled for a C&P exam. This is not a typical doctor's exam, and in some cases, the doctor may just review your records – including any statements in your file – and ask you a few questions. While this may seem unusual for an exam, the doctor is actually filling in a Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ), which the rater will use to determine if your claim can be granted, and at what percentage. Some information for the form will come from your medical records, and additional information is gathered from you.

Part of the DBQ is a statement from the doctor that your disability is either more or less likely than not connected to your service. That's the third leg of the stool. Be honest and specific with your answers. For example, if the doctor asks about an injury, instead of saying, "I hurt my back in the service," be specific and say, "I was getting something off of a shelf in the warehouse and fell off a ladder. There is an accident report. My back has given me problems ever since." This allows the doctor to connect an incident in service to the current disability.

To check on the status of your claim, sign on to eBenefits and review your messages. When your status is updated, or if additional information is needed, a message will be posted. By providing a more complete picture of your situation to the rating team when you file your application, you not only make it easier for the raters to find your information and process your claim, you increase your chances of having your claim granted. Although it will take a little more effort on your part, it can pay off with faster VA processing and will increase your chances of a successful claim the first time.

Remember, the rating team is on your side, but you can help them by including everything they need to approve your claim.

VA Compensation Rates

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Single</u>	<u>Veteran with Spouse</u>
10 percent	\$140.05	\$140.05
20 percent	\$276.84	\$276.84
30 percent	\$428.83	\$479.83
40 percent	\$617.73	\$685.73
50 percent	\$879.36	\$964.36
60 percent	\$1,113.86	\$1,215.86
70 percent	\$1,403.71	\$1,522.71
80 percent	\$1,631.69	\$1,767.69
90 percent	\$1,833.62	\$1,986.62
100 percent	\$3,057.13	\$3,227.58

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find your information and process your claim, you increase your chances of having your claim granted. Although it will take a little more effort on your part, it can pay off with faster VA processing and will increase your chances of a successful claim the first time.

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End of Life Care - Options | Palliative or Hospice

Many Americans die in facilities such as hospitals or nursing homes receiving care that is not consistent with their wishes. To make sure that doesn't happen, older people need to know what their end-of-life care options are and state their preferences to their caregivers in advance. For example, if an older person wants to die at home, receiving end-of-life care for pain and other symptoms, and makes this known to healthcare providers and family, it is less likely he or she will die in a hospital receiving unwanted treatments.

Caregivers have several factors to consider when choosing end-of-life care, including the older person's desire to pursue life-extending or curative treatments, how long he or she has left to live, and the preferred setting for care.

Palliative Care

Palliative care is a resource for anyone living with a serious illness, such as heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cancer, dementia, Parkinson's disease, and many others. Palliative care can be helpful at any stage of illness and is best provided from the point of diagnosis. In addition to improving quality of life and helping with symptoms, palliative care can help patients understand their choices for medical treatment. The organized services available through palliative care may be helpful to any older person having a lot of general discomfort and disability very late in life.

Palliative care can be provided along with curative treatment and does not depend on prognosis. Doctors can provide treatment to seriously ill patients in the hopes of a cure for as long as possible. These patients may also receive medical care for their symptoms, or palliative care, along with curative treatment. A palliative care consultation team is a multidisciplinary team that works with the patient, family, and the patient's other doctors to provide medical, social, emotional, and practical support. The team is made of palliative care specialist doctors and nurses, and includes others such as social workers, nutritionists, and chaplains.

Palliative care can be provided in hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient palliative care clinics and certain other specialized clinics, or at home. Medicare, Medicaid, and insurance policies may cover palliative care. Veterans may be eligible for palliative care through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Private health insurance might pay for some services. Health insurance providers can answer questions about what they will cover.

Check to see if insurance will cover your particular situation.

In palliative care, you do not have to give up treatment that might cure a serious illness. Palliative care can be provided along with curative treatment and may begin at the time of diagnosis. Over time, if the doctor or the palliative care team believes ongoing treatment is no longer helping, there are two possibilities. Palliative care could transition to hospice care if the doctor believes the person is likely to die within 6 months (see "What does the hospice 6-month requirement mean?"). Or, the palliative care team could continue to help with increasing emphasis on comfort care.

Hospice Care

Increasingly, people are choosing hospice care at the end of life. Hospice can be provided in any setting—home, nursing home, assisted living facility, or inpatient hospital. At some point, it may not be possible to cure a serious illness, or a patient may choose not to undergo certain treatments. Hospice is designed for this situation. The patient beginning hospice care understands that his or her illness is not responding to medical attempts to cure it or to slow the disease's progress.

Like palliative care, hospice provides comprehensive comfort care as well as support for the family, but, in hospice, attempts to cure the person's illness are stopped. Hospice is provided for a person with a terminal illness whose doctor believes he or she has 6 months or less to live if the illness runs its natural course.

Hospice is an approach to care, so it is not tied to a specific place. It can be offered in two types of settings—at home or in a facility such as a nursing home, hospital, or even in a separate hospice center. (Read more about where end-of-life care can be provided).

Hospice care brings together a team of people with special skills—among them nurses, doctors, social workers, spiritual advisors, and trained volunteers. Everyone works together with the person who is dying, the caregiver, and/or the family to provide the medical, emotional, and spiritual support needed. A member of the hospice team visits regularly, and someone is always available by phone—24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Hospice may be covered by Medicare and other insurance companies; check to see if insurance will cover your particular situation

It is important to remember that stopping treatment aimed at curing an illness does not mean discontinuing all treatment. A good example is an older person with cancer. If the doctor determines that the cancer is not responding to chemotherapy and the patient chooses to enter into hospice care, then the chemotherapy will stop. Other medical care may continue as long as it is helpful. For example, if the person has high blood pressure, he or she will still receive medication for that.

Some Differences Between Palliative Care and Hospice:

Palliative Care

Who can be treated?

Anyone with a serious illness short time to live, often less than 6 months

Will my symptoms be relieved?

Yes, as much as possible

Can I continue to receive treatments to cure my illness?

Yes, if you wish

Will Medicare pay?

It depends on your benefits and treatment plan

Does private insurance pay?

It depends on the plan

How long will I be cared for?

This depends on what care you need and what your insurance plan will cover

Where will I receive this care?

- Home
- Assisted living facility
- Nursing home
- Hospital
- Hospital

Hospice

Anyone with a serious illness whom doctors think has only a

Yes, as much as possible

No, only symptom relief will be provided

Yes, it pays all hospice charges

It depends on the plan

As long as you meet the hospice's insurance plan criteria of an illness with a life expectancy of months, not years

- Home
- Assisted living facility
- Nursing home
- Hospice facility

VA Presumptive AO Diseases Hypertension Recommended

New research linking veterans' high blood pressure with wartime exposure to chemical defoliants could dramatically expand federal disability benefits for tens of thousands of Vietnam-era troops. The findings, from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, conclude that "sufficient evidence" exists linking hypertension and related illnesses in veterans to Agent Orange and other defoliants used in Vietnam, Thailand and South Korea in the 1960s and 1970s. They recommend adding the condition to the list of 14 presumptive diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure, a group that includes Hodgkin's Disease, prostate cancer and Parkinson's Disease. That's an upgrade from past research that showed a possible but not conclusive link between the toxic exposures and high blood pressure problems later in life.

If Veterans Affairs officials follow through with the recommendation, it could open up new or additional

disability benefits to thousands of aging veterans who served in those areas and who are now struggling with heart problems. Veterans who struggle with high blood pressure issues are eligible for health care at VA facilities. But the illness is eligible for disability benefits in only select cases. Adding an illness to VA's presumptive list means that veterans applying for disability benefits need not prove that their sickness is directly connected to their time in service. Instead, they only need show that they served in areas where the defoliant was used and that they now suffer from the diseases. That's a significant difference, since proving direct exposure and clear health links can be nearly impossible for ailing veterans searching for decades-old paper records.

A change in the designation of hypertension by VA could also add significant new costs to the department's disability payout expenses. In 2010, when then Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki expanded the list of presumptive illnesses for Agent Orange exposure to include ischemic heart disease and Parkinson's, the department estimated additional costs of more than \$42 billion over a decade. It's unclear how many veterans suffer from high blood pressure and would be eligible for disability payments if the change is made. In a statement, VA spokesman Curt Cashour said the department "is in the process of evaluating this report and appreciates the work" of the group.

Regardless the cost, officials from the Veterans of Foreign Wars are already calling for VA officials to move ahead with adding hypertension to the list. "There is no doubt in anyone's mind that Agent Orange made veterans sick, it made their children sick, and it brought pain and suffering and premature death to many," VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence said in a statement. "Even though it's been a half century since they were exposed, the results of that exposure is something they continue to live with daily." The new study is available at the National Academies Press website.

Social Security Q & A

(Q) Social Security Disability-What's It Really About?

A: Social Security disability is all about your ability to work. And in most cases about ability to do any kind of work. It is not about, "Nobody will hire me." "There are not any jobs like that." Or, "I don't have any skills and can't pass a physical

(Q) Social Security Disability Benefits-What difference does my age make?

A: Whether you win your claim for Social Security disability or SSI benefits, will always depend in some degree on your age. Social Security regulations divide age as follows: age 49 and under is a younger individual, age 50-54 is someone approaching advanced age, age 55-59 is someone of advanced age, and someone who is age 60-64 is someone approaching retirement age. Each age level along with other vocational issues determines whether you will be approved. Find out how your age will affect your claim.

(Q) Does my past work count in my Social Security Disability claim?

A: Social security will consider the kind of work that you did during the 15 years before you became disabled. This is called Past Relevant Work (PRW). Why is this important? It's important because, generally, if you can perform any of your past work or other work, your claim will be denied. This is particularly true, if you can still do the lightest, less strenuous, and simplest of past jobs. Also, skills that you acquired in past jobs that can be used in a different, possibly less strenuous job will be considered. It's clear to see that most claimants will need advice from a Social Security representative or attorney who knows what Social Security is looking for.

Killing Admiral Yamamoto WWII Operation Vengeance

Not only did the Pearl Harbor attack of December 7th, 1941 deal a devastating blow to the United States' Navy and draw the nation into World War II, but it also gave the Japanese Imperial Navy some six months to further their control of the Pacific without U.S. interference. This was, of course, the plan. Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto was the architect of the Pearl Harbor pre-emptive assault. So, when U.S. Naval Intelligence initiative code-named "Magic" intercepted communications that Yamamoto would be doing an inspection tour of his forces on the Solomon Islands, the U.S. seized the opportunity for vengeance. "Get Yamamoto," commanded President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Operation Vengeance was a go.

Magic had long since broken the cipher of the Japanese navy, JN-25D, which had reaped a lot of disaster upon their fight in the Pacific. This was through the efforts of Navy cryptographers and Japanese-Americans translating

the complicated and very context-based language. On April 14, 1943, messages detailing Yamamoto's tour of the Solomon Islands were intercepted. Eighteen P-38G Lightnings of the 339th Fighter Squadron, 347th Fighter group, were chosen as the aircraft for the mission. They would be flying out of Guadalcanal, south and west of the Solomon Islands and rounding back northeast again to intercept Yamamoto flying from Reboul to Bougainville.

The mission would be about 1,000 miles round trip with more fuel expended in the firefight with the two Mitsubishi G4M Betty bombers and six Mitsubishi A6M Zero Navy fighters. Only the P-38G's, equipped with drop tanks with extra fuel could make the trip. The mission would have to be flown in radio silence, to avoid detection. Major John W. Mitchell, therefore, requested that each plane was outfitted with a ship's compass to navigate. At 7:25 in the morning on April 18, the Lightnings took off for two hours of silent flight, 50 feet above the waves to avoid radar detection.

Odd as it may sound, the man they were going to shoot down was one of Japan's most outspoken opponents of war with the U.S. In fact, Yamamoto had spent many years in the country he was now fighting, including for two years as a naval attaché in Washington, from 1926-28. He was critical of Japan's ongoing war with China and with the drive to engage in combat with the U.S., a stance that led to powerful pro-war interests in Japan calling for his head. Admiral Yonai Mitsumasa, to save Yamamoto's life, promoted him to commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet and sent him out to sea in 1939. Yamamoto had also warned the Japanese government that war with the U.S. could only be successful for six months to a year before the tides turned, but he was given no choice.

He planned the Pearl Harbor attack to buy time for Japan to wrest control of the Pacific before drawing the U.S. Navy into a decisive battle that would force them to negotiate for peace. Yamamoto convinced the Naval General Staff to move for this great battle after the Doolittle Raid of April 1942 struck Tokyo. He sailed for Midway Island with four aircraft carriers. However, by this point, the U.S. had broken the Japanese cipher and, with a force of three aircraft carriers, counter-attacked and sunk all four of the Japanese ships. The tides in the Pacific had already taken a massive turn.

At the time Operation Vengeance was set in motion, Yamamoto had been trying, and slowly failing to control the Solomon Islands. After landing troops on Guadalcanal, he was met by U.S. forces landing in August 1942 in what would be a long and very costly battle, ending in a U.S. victory in February the next year. Thus, in April 1943, the inspection tour of forces on the Solomon Islands was planned to invoke a very much needed morale boost. At 9:34 a.m. on April 18th, after two hours of navigating by flight plan and, as Mitchell puts it, "dead reckoning," the 18 P38Gs spotted Yamamoto's transport and escorts. The planes jettisoned their extra fuel tanks and tore into a power climb to engage the enemy.

The "killer flight" group, consisting of Lt. Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr., Lt. Rex T. Barber, Lt. Besby F. Holmes, and Lt. Raymond K. Hine headed for the bombers. Holmes' auxiliary fuel tanks didn't detach, and he had to draw back. Lanphier turned to engage the escort Zero fighters diving to defend Yamamoto and his staff while Barber chased down the bombers. As Barber came around, he fired his .50-caliber machine guns into the right engine, fuselage, and tail assembly of the bomber Yamamoto was flying in, which crashed into the jungle. Barber also hit the second bomber, which crash-landed in the water. Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki and two others in the second bomber survived.

According to the search and rescue party who found Yamamoto, his body had been thrown from the plane, still in his seat, his hand on his katana and two bullet holes in his shoulder and head. Operation Vengeance was the longest fighter-intercept mission of the war. Lt. Hine lost his life when his plane was shot down by a Japanese Zero. It is well agreed, now, that Lt. Barber is credited with shooting down Yamamoto, but Lanphier claimed it was he until the day he died. This discrepancy was fought over between the two for many years. But forensic evidence of bullet trajectory in the wreckage of Yamamoto's downed bomber concurs with Barber's account

VA Mobilizes Federal Agencies to Offer Free Legal Services to help Veterans

On November 6 2018 the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) together with representatives from the Departments of Labor, Justice, Defense, Homeland Security, the U.S. Navy and others, signed a joint statement

aimed at improving access to free legal services for Veterans in need.

Federal agencies and the Veterans legal services community came together at VA Headquarters in Washington D.C. to celebrate the VA's Medical Legal Partnerships and to recognize volunteers who serve at VA-based free legal clinics.

Currently, VA hosts at least 170 free legal clinics in its VA Medical Centers, Community Based Outpatient Clinics and Vet Centers across the country, by partnering with external legal service providers, such as local bar associations, legal aid organizations and law school clinics.

“Legal assistance stands high on the list of many Veterans’ important but unmet needs,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Our goal is to make sure our Veterans have access to not only health care and disability benefits, but to community legal services that are central to their overall well-being.”

Veterans often face stressful legal situations — such as eviction, foreclosure, child support or driver’s license revocations — that can affect their ability to gain or maintain employment and housing, or focus on medical treatment. At the VA-hosted event today, VA and other federal agencies committed to encourage and further the provision of volunteer legal services to Veterans.

As a prime example of the VA-based legal clinics nationwide, attorneys and paralegals from VA and 13 other federal agencies have provided pro bono legal assistance on their own time to Veterans at the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center’s legal clinic, run by the Veterans Pro Bono Consortium. During the past year, the legal clinic at that facility has served more than 800 Veterans.

For more information about VA’s coordination of legal services for Veterans at VA facilities visit <https://www.va.gov/OGC/LegalServices.asp>.

Thank You for Your Service... Now What?

Startups and incubators are helping Veterans survive the return to civilian life the same way they did at war: by never leaving anyone behind.

It is warm in the WeWork on Manhattan’s 28th Street, in part because it is stuffed with people, and in part because it is also stuffed with boxes of pizza. Young men and women mill around with slices on paper plates, sloshing plastic cups of a delightful black IPA from the veteran-owned Backward Flag Brewing Company every time they slap a back or administer a fist bump. Everyone is friendlier than you’d expect at a networking event, and as diverse as a college admissions brochure. They’ve got better posture than a room full of chiropractors.

Another thing: no name tags. There’s no need. Everyone here has an automatic conversation starter. “I don’t know about 75 percent of the people in this room, but they’re Veterans, and I can walk up to anybody and say, *Oh, you served?* Says Torie Fisher, a former Army Black Hawk crew chief and the beermaker behind that tasty IPA. Fisher has piercing eyes and a fantastic husky voice. “I’ll ask him what branch he served in. Maybe it’s the same branch I did”, she says. “He might say he’s Air Force. Then I’m gonna make fun of him, cause that’s what we do in the military. And he’s gonna laugh and we’re gonna connect.”

Tonight’s event, called Bunker Brews, is a meetup for a rare group of veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars—those who return to the U.S. with ideas for their own second chapter in life. It’s hosted by Bunker Labs, a four-year-old nonprofit started by Navy veteran Todd Connor that offers financial and logistical support, networking events, and informational classes for veterans who want to become entrepreneurs. Split into 22 local chapters across the country, Bunker has helped more than 500 startups. It’s just one of the organizations veterans have created to help other service members navigate the tricky transition between military and civilian careers, which can be long and demoralizing and surprisingly complicated.

There are the obvious challenges, of course—service injuries, post-traumatic stress, drug addiction, homelessness—but many veterans return to the U.S. ready and able to begin productive post-service lives, only to run into problems securing a job. Most have few connections in civilian industries. They can be bewildered by career progressions that are nonlinear or based on social networks. HR representatives may not know the

differences between ranks or military responsibilities. And, like ballerinas and professional football players, veterans who have spent their formative years training to be protectors are forced to contend with a sudden shift in their professional identity at a much later age than the rest of the population. As a result, one third of veterans end up taking jobs that are below their skill level, and 44 percent leave their first post-military jobs within a year. You have people in their 30s trying to figure out what they want to be when they grow up. Take Daniel Rau, a former Marine sergeant who returned from active duty in 2008, after two years as a comms technician and three years protecting embassies in India, Japan, and Yemen. “I had my plan: I was gonna get out, I was gonna study finance,” he says. Rau had always been successful in the Marines: He followed all the rules, was always in the top percentage of his peers, and was promoted every year—“all your basic Good Marine wickets that folks hit,” he says. But by the time Rau finished college, the recession had cratered the banking industry. He didn’t know anyone who worked in finance, and submitting his resume through internet job sites was starting to feel like firing it off a cliff and then into a black hole. “My entire mental model was a bit skewed. It was something along the lines of, Get good grades, stay out of trouble, and interview well and you’ll get hired,” he says. “I was pretty frustrated.”

Rau did what a lot of veterans do when faced with such a situation. He took a job as a military contractor and went to Afghanistan. In between deployments, he completed an M.B.A. at Emory University in Atlanta, and spent long nights on LinkedIn trying to find someone to help him start his own business. Eventually, he connected with a successful serial entrepreneur named Diana Tsai—whom he went on to marry, and with whom he cofounded, along with another Marine, a tech company called [Veterati](#) to connect veterans with mentors who could help them find jobs. Today, Veterati has 11,000 users, and has partnered with companies such as USAA, Microsoft, Oracle, and Lincoln Financial Group to help attract and retain employees who’ve served.

VA recognizes Vietnam Veteran with first Medal of Honor Medallion during ceremony at Mississippi cemetery

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnished the first Medal of Honor (MOH) Medallion for the private headstone of [Pfc. Milton L. Olive III](#), a decorated Vietnam-era war hero, during a ceremony Nov. 1 at West Grove Cemetery in Lexington, Mississippi.

With the passage of [Public Law 114-315](#) on Dec. 16, 2016, Congress authorized VA’s National Cemetery Administration (NCA) to issue, upon request, a medallion, headstone or marker signifying a Veteran as an MOH recipient who served on or after April 6, 1917, and is buried in a private cemetery with a private headstone or marker.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie saluted Olive for his selfless bravery during a battle in the Vietnam conflict. “Private First Class Olive was posthumously awarded a Medal of Honor for his service during the Vietnam War after he heroically used his body to cover a grenade to save the life of his fellow soldiers,” Wilkie said. “The Medal of Honor Medallion illustrates VA’s commitment to ensuring all who see this symbol will know of the courageous sacrifice of our nation’s distinguished service members.”

For information on applying for the MOH Medallion, visit [this link](#). Information on all types of VA headstones, markers and medallions can be found at [this link](#) VA operates 136 national cemeteries and 33 soldiers’ lots and monument sites in 40 states and Puerto Rico. More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA’s national cemeteries. VA also provides funding to establish, expand, improve and maintain 111 Veterans cemeteries in 48 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam, and Saipan. For Veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, VA provides headstones, markers or medallions to commemorate their service.



November 12, 2018 Huntington Detachment #340 had the honor of being the Color Guard Detail for the Veterans Day Parade in Huntington WV. Color Guard members pictured left to right: Asst. Sgt-at-Arms Josh Ransbottom, COS Mike Bass, JVC Zeb Lane, Sgt-at-Arms John Lafferty and Capt. of the Color Guard Roy G. Marcum.



November 8, 2018 Huntington Detachment 340 Marine Corps League conducted a flag etiquette class for the first graders at Ceredo Elementary School. Marines pictured left to right are Marines John Roberts, Rick Shank, Harry Bunyan, Roy Marcum, John Proctor and Det. 340 Commandant Shirley Ball Jr.



The second Department *Meet and Greet* was a success. Past Department Commandant Rick Shank gave the oath for the new officers of the Hurricane detachment. We have appointed an acting Commandant, Marine William Miller, and we swore in the first three Marines. The third *Meet and Greet* will be in January, at a date to be announced. Special thanks to Dept. Fireteam Committee members Marines Chuck Cooper, Jerry Bain, Jim Doss and Denny Wood for attending this event.

VA Benefits Chief: "Every Single Veteran Will Be Made Whole"

On November 29, 2019 during a hearing before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, VA Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence delivered the following statement:

Before I get into my opening statement on the subject of this morning's hearing, I want to address a misleading NBC news story from late yesterday that gives the false impression that some Veterans on the GI Bill will not be made whole with respect to their housing payments based [on an announcement VA made](#) yesterday. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each and every Veteran on the post-9/11 GI Bill will be made 100 percent whole retroactively if need be -- for their housing benefits for this academic year based on the current uncapped DoD rates, and, beginning in spring 2020, we will be in a position to provide Veterans with the new rates where applicable to meet the law known as the Forever GI Bill.

Once again – each and every, and I mean **every single Veteran**, will be made whole for their housing benefits this year. As we announced yesterday, the rates we are providing are the current academic year uncapped DoD Basic Allowance for Housing rates based on the location of a school's main campus, rather than the physical location of the student.

For many students, this DoD BAH rate will be equal to or higher than their current payment. If a student was

overpaid due to the changes in law or because of VBA's challenges in implementing the law, the student will not be held liable for the debt.

And, starting in the Spring term of 2020, VA will have solved its current technology difficulties so that the department is in a position to provide post-9/11 GI Bill Veterans the new rates, where applicable, to comply with the Forever GI Bill

Sincerely,

Heather J. Patterson
Special Assistant to the VSO Liaison Office of the Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs

Pending Calendar

2019 Department of WV Spring Quarterly Meeting will be January 5, 2019 hosted by Wood County Detachment 1087 at VFW Post 1212, 1630 Garfield Ave, Parkersburg, WV 26101. Staff Officers Meeting is 0930 AM with general business meeting at 1000 AM. WV Pack Growl will immediately follow Dept. Meeting.

2019 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference will be Feb 28 – Mar 2, 2019 at the Fredericksburg Hospitality House and Conf Center, 2801 Plank Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. group code: MCLMDWINTER17 Phone: (540) 786-8321 Room rate includes up to 4 breakfast vouchers per occupancy. TBA per night + prevailing tax (currently 11.3%) Please make your room reservation direct to the hotel no later than TBA at 540-786-8321.

2019 Department of Delaware Department Convention will be 11 May 2019 at the Heritage Shores Golf Club, Bridgeville, DE.

2019 Department of Maryland Department Convention will be 10-12 May 2019 at the Princess Royale in Ocean City, Maryland.

2019 Department of WV Department Convention will be May 17-19, 2019 at the Morgantown Marriott at Waterfront Place, 2 Waterfront Place, Morgantown, West Virginia 26501. Hosted by Earl Anderson Detachment 342. Room rate: \$97.00 plus tax. Phone: 304-296-1700. For reservations by phone please use the code "2019 Marine Corps League State Convention". Rate available **05/17/19** to **05/19/19**. The reservation link is live as of now. Book by **04/27/19** For online reservations please follow this link: [Book your group rate for 2019 Marine Corps League State Convention](#)

2019 Department of Virginia Department Convention will be May 17 – 19 2019 hosted by John A. Lejeune detachment at Holiday Inn Virginia Beach- Norfolk and Conference Center, 5655 Greenwich Road, Virginia Beach, VA. 23462. Room cost \$99.00 per night plus tax. Reservations: Call 757-499-4400, Reservation Code is MCC. CUT OFF Date is 18 April 2019. Telephone Don coons POC at 757-510-0435 (c)

2019 Department of NC Department Convention will be June 7th & 8th in Jacksonville @ the Hilton Garden Inn 1016 Jacksonville Pkwy. Jacksonville, NC 28546 Tel: 910) 346-2400

2019 Mideast Division Conference will be June 21-23, 2019 hosted by Mountaineer Marine Detachment 957 and the Department of WV at the Days Inn, 347 Meadow Field Lane, Princeton, WV, 24739, Telephone: 304-425-8100.

2019 MCL National Convention will be August 4-10, 2019 hosted by Eugene Sara Detachment 418 at the Billings Hotel & Convention Center, Billings, Montana. Telephone: 1-406-248-7151. Room rate: \$99.50 plus tax. **Reservation open on Monday August 20, 2018 at 10 AM EST.** Free breakfast, parking and WI fi. Link: www.mclnationalconvention2019