



# The Straight Scoop

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



Volume 9, Issue 7, July 2016

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

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Jr. Past Commandant: Roger Ware, 304-636-4365

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Legislative: Hershel Williams, 304-743-1026

Chief of Staff: Benjamin Fetty, 740-894-6864

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Department Financial Report Marine Corps League, Department of West Virginia Hershel "Woody" Williams Scholarship Foundation: 18 May 2016 beginning balance:

\$18,233.38 Deposits: \$0.00 Debits: \$6,000.00 Interest: \$3.21. 15 June 2016 ending balance: \$12,236.59.

Please send all scholarship donations to John Nanny, P.O. Box 2121, Wheeling, WV 26003-0234.

Marine Corps League, Department of West Virginia General Account and Paymaster Report: 18 May 2016 statement beginning balance: \$19,171.72. Deposits: \$50.00 Debits: \$461.36. 15 June 2016 statement ending balance: \$18,760.36.

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## Commandants Message:

Members of the Department:

We had received numerous emails and calls regarding the severe floods in southern WV. The high water caused loss of lives, missing individuals, loss of numerous homes, and hundreds misplaced. Countless families lost everything.

Our members and their families are our first priority. I am tasking all Commandants to check on their Marines and their families and notify me by email if any of them are in distress from the flood. Please include as much contact information as you can.

We have gotten inquiries from several MCL units outside WV asking what they can do to assist. Due to the lack of storage space in some of these devastated areas, trucks and

supplies are being turned away. The community responses have been immediate and timely with the primary goods needed. The initial surge has been steady and FEMA is on location in most of the hardest hit areas. Once the basic items are obtained, financial assistance will be necessary.

Due to the calls and emails regarding offers to assist, our Department is listing our mailing address for any MCL unit or individual that wants to make a donation for the flood victims. Some of our detachments are accepting donations in their areas or plan on conducting a fund raiser to support the flood victims as well.

Donations will be recorded and funds dispersed will be reported to all donors and our membership.

Please keep our Marines and all West Virginians in your thoughts and prayers as we rebuild from this devastating storm.

Semper Fidelis,  
Richard Shank



Commandant  
Department of WV MCL  
304-633-1814

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### **Department Adjutant/Paymaster George Gill Message**

Greetings Dept of WV MCL Adjutants, Paymasters and Adjutant/Paymasters;

First, the good news! I have now received ALL of the Report of Officer Installation forms from all Detachments for the second year in a row!

Second, I have received confirmation that all Detachments have submitted their Annual Corporate Report the WV Sec of State's office except one. That one is actively working with the Sec of State office to get their Corporation problems corrected.

Third, the Life membership dues checks have been mailed. You should get it shortly if you have not already received them.

Fourth, The June Roster should be out in the next week or so. When you get it, please start working on verifying your Life Member. Make sure that you get them in to me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the last minute to do this. I must have them in time to get them to National before the end of the year.

Fifth, today is the first day of the new fiscal year. Most Detachments are now able to do their 990-N for the new year. Remember as Roger Ware reported that the process for doing the 990-N has changed. See the 2nd page of the May newsletter for the instructions. If you do not have the May newsletter, it is available here:

<http://www.mcleaguedeptofwv.org/NEWSLETTERS/Department%20of%20WV/Current%20Issue/TheStraightScoopVol9Issue5May2016.pdf>

Also all transmittals submitted as of today for this fiscal year should follow the new numbering requirements. The first transmittal should be numbered 17-01, the second should be 17-02, the third should be 17-03 etc... Any transmittals submitted not using this numbering requirement will be returned. Also any transmittal submitted with a duplicate number will be returned. Also I MUST return any transmittal that has an incorrect amount on it.

**Semper Fi**

**George O. Gill**

**Dept of WV MCL**

**Adjutant/Paymaster**

**304-377-1345**

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### **Letter from National Commandant Richard Gore**

June 28, 2016

Marines:

Sorry about the delay between messages but just let it be said that we have been busy. You may already have heard that there has been a lot of changes that have taken place at HQ. I will not get into the details of the transitions except to tell you that they have been beneficial to all of the members and allowed the league to move forward in the proper way to serve you.

Johanna Hill from membership, was terminated and replaced. Meg Thoburn adjutant/paymaster, resigned. Debbie Smith merchandise, resigned. These issues alone resulted in positive changes being made which resulted in savings in money and an increase in productivity mainly through the work habits of their replacements.

Our Comptroller Paul Hastings was replaced after many years of dedicated service by William Smith from the Dept. of Georgia. This is another positive change as he is a CPA and understands what his duties are to the membership. Allan Ferguson is remaining as the Asst. Comptroller and will handle the book work at National in concert with William Smith. Bernard Heaney has been appointed as National Auditor, Bernie is a retired IRS forensic Auditor and he is preparing to do an audit of the HQ books with the assistance of Allen, Bill, and Tom. Another event that will be happening in the near future is a new publisher will be hired for the "SEMPER FI" Magazine. We have been operating at an approximate loss of \$250,000. per year for quite a while now and were told to expect to continue to lose for many reasons. After much searching and discussion, we have agreed with Hammock Publishing to transition from them and are set to work with Chipotle Publishing, LLC., from

Henderson, NV. who has literally assured us of a quality magazine with more pages, better paper and more advertisements for a decrease in costs in the production of our Semper Fi Magazine. Chipotle is projecting a break even figure after the first year. We are not interested in an award winning magazine, but, I bet we will have one within a few years. A proposed contract from Chipotle Publishing, LLC. will soon be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

So, with the same number of employees as what we did have before the changes and the cost savings between salaries and magazine publishers, we are looking at a cost savings close to \$400,000 annually. This is what you mandated from us and I hope you like the results thus far. Some really hard work is still ahead of us, but now that the barriers have been removed we are confident of continued success in the future; I just do not know why these issues were not corrected before we got into this situation.

Your Board of Trustees and the Executive Director and myself look forward to seeing you at Convention in Tulsa, Ok.

NEWS FLASH! Our 37<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert B. Neller, has accepted the invitation of the National Commandant and the Marine Corps League and will appear at our National Convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma as our Guest of Honor!

"Semper Fi"

**Richard D. Gore, Sr.**  
*National Commandant*  
*Marine Corps League*

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#### **Mideast Division Conference Summary**

The Mideast Division Conference was held June 24-26, 2016 at the Hilton Wilmington/Christiana, Newark, Delaware and was hosted by the Department of Delaware. 65 members were in attendance. Dept of Delaware Commandant Raymond Snyder opened the conference and turned over to NVC Mike McLain who conducted the conference as per the ritual. The following MCL National officers were in attendance:

Johnny Baker - National Judge Advocate

Mike McLain - NVC Mideast Division

Gerard Devlin - National Parliamentarian

Jeffery Jones - National Asst Sgt-at-Arms

Charlie Minton - National Boy Scouts Committee member

Jack Severn - National Uniform Committee, National Color Guard Sergeant,

Resident Agent MHM and Editor National Convention Book, Mid-winter Conference Book.

Anthony "Tony" Begenwald - M-H-M Foundation, Wounded Marines Program of the MCL -

Coordinator/Director - East Coast

MCLA Mideast Division Vice President - Judy Horsenky was in attendance and introduced members of the MCLA.

Joint Opening Guest Speaker was Theresa Hancock - Director Dept of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, Veterans and Consumer Health Information Office, Silver Spring, MD

A static rotation for hosting the Mideast Division Conference is listed below as this would help all the departments in advance planning for their respective year.

1. Virginia – 2020
2. Delaware – 2021
3. North Carolina – 2017
4. Maryland – 2018
5. West Virginia - 2019

Division MOY Chairman Roger Ware discussed the Board members included himself, Bud Raines, Tony Begenwald and Richard Tanner used a point system to select the recipient. Also that better announcement of when to submit and address nomination needed in future and that nomination should be about MCL not MODD and should be for life of member in league vice single year. All nominations submitted must be in accordance

with the National MOY guidelines insuring that all nominations are sealed in an inner envelopment addressed to the Chairman. A second outer envelope must be addressed to the Chairman at the address listed in the announcement, and that it must be sent Certified, Return Receipt. The criteria for the nomination had been specified with the announcements in several bulletins or monthly emails since January..

MCL certificates were presented to New Castle County Young Marines - New Castle County, DE and Delaware State Police Pipe & Drum, Department & Division Staff, General Thomas Holcomb Detachment #814 and Committee Members and Hilton Wilmington/Christiana Hotel. Mideast Conference flag streamers presented to all detachments represented

Professional Development Training- National JA and Division Adjutant went over the 2016 National Proposed Bylaws changes and talked about voting by delegates for the bylaws and elections. all delegates must ensure they vote the wishes of their detachment. The Board of Trustee's need to be proactive at the department and detachment level as is their duty to manage the detachment administrative, clerical and financial procedures. Ensure your detachments approve all events and activities at your membership meetings so it's approved by the detachment as a corporation for legal and insurance purposes. He also suggested to document your professional Development and Leadership training in your monthly minutes as this reminds you to have ongoing training sessions.

When a member transfers to M-A-L status, he has NO voting privileges at the Detachment or Department level and can only vote at the National Convention and can not serve on any committees. If he is a Dual member and **also** belongs to a Detachment, he can vote that membership in the Detachment and Department. There is no M-A-L at the Department level as it is National only.

The 2016 Mideast Division Marine of the Year: Michael McLain - Department of West Virginia The banquet speaker was Colonel David H. Cahn, USMC (Ret)

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#### **IRS Form 990-N e-file**

All Detachments and departments are nonprofit organizations and are required to file an annual IRS Form 990-N return regardless of their income. The fiscal year ends for most detachments and departments on June 30 yearly so you can file your 990 N efile after July 1. Log on <https://www.irs.gov/Charities-&Non-Profits/Annual-Electronic-Filing-Requirement-for-Small-Exempt-Organizations-Form-990-N-e-Postcard> and then just follow the instructions to complete the form 990-N. There's only a few questions. Have your EIN to help log in. You will receive an email acceptance receipt from IRS. National Administrative Procedures Section 800 requires that each detachment and department forward a copy of this acceptance receipt to their Department Paymaster. The Department Paymaster will forward the Acceptance Receipts to National Headquarters or may consolidate these receipts into a single document showing the name of the organization, the EIN, the submission ID Number, and the date the submission was accepted by the IRS. National utilizes these 990 reports to update the annual report required by the Group Exemption filing requirements to IRS. Failure to file the 990-N to IRS, can subject your detachment to lose it's exempt non-profit status. Plus if you want to look up an organization to acquire vital information like 990-N go to [guidestar.com](http://guidestar.com).

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#### **Paid Life Members - PLM - Audit - Certification of Life Members**

The Detachment Paymaster, along with the Detachment Commandant, will annually audit the Detachment's Life Members. The Detachment Paymaster will make a copy of the 30 June Quarterly Member Listing (roster). National sends a separate listing of all life members and this list should be used to verify your detachment PLM members. Using this copy the Detachment Paymaster will annotate any additions, deletions or other adjustments to the Life Members listed. Each adjustment will include the reason and, whenever possible, will cite supporting documentation to assist in correcting the records at National Headquarters. 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.

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 your Department Paymaster so it can be mailed to MCL National Headquarters to arrive before Dec. 31. Your Department Paymaster will send your copy to the National Adjutant/Paymaster. Ref: National Bylaws Sections 645 and 646.

Note: The 2016 PLM interest amount is \$1.59 per life member on your detachment roster as of 31 August 2014. The PLM interest is always paid for those life member 2 years ago.

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## **2016 Proposed National Bylaws and AP changes**

### **Bylaws**

1. Establishes terms where National staff can serve longer except NC - 2 years, NVC 2 and elected for 1 term, all others: SVC, JVC, JA and ANVC can be elected and then reelected without restriction.
2. Divisions that host the Nat Convention would purchase \$1500 in challenge coins for the MCL Foundation for sole purpose of purchasing next set of coins.
3. Would allow 1/3 of the Nat BOT to be a quorum for emergency or immediate meetings.
4. Such member shall not vote on any regular or associate membership applications; cannot participate in the nomination process and/or elections of officers; or hold an elective office. Would allow Associate members right to vote in internal affairs of detachment but not change what is current including BL and BL changes.
5. Listing for implementation of Honorary Active Duty Member. Detachments may, issue free of charge Honorary Membership. They do not count as delegates and can not hold an elected office. Would not be issued a printed publication but will be eligible to obtain free copy of the official publication on line.
6. Would change to have all annual dues expire on Aug 31 and change membership fees for new members joining between 1 Mar and Aug 30 to \$10.00 plus \$5.00 initiation fees.
7. Upon death of life member, his detachment would continue to receive the PLM interest and not the department. Would not receive if member resigns or expelled.

### **Administrative Procedures**

1. Change would lists in the Chapter the subsidiary organizations and their relationship to the MCL as they are a separate entity with own Bylaws.
2. Would define what is criminal acts against the laws of the US and where these acts would be reported to the civil authorities and the MCL could still press charges and possible file for recovery of funds via Rust Insurance Company.

### **Enclosure 3 changes - Uniform code**

1. Allow FMF corpsmen to wear black caduceus on MCL cover
2. That only MCL ribbons can be worn vice DOD or MCL on specific uniforms
3. Authorizes American flag as lapel pin.
4. Authorizes medallion to be worn on all uniforms

### **Enclosure 4**

1. Authorizes Associate Member of the Year Medallion
2. 75th Anniversary Medal and Ribbon for Pennsylvania
3. Ceremonial Guard Ribbon authorized only after 13 Aug 2015
4. Ceremonial Guard Ribbon retroactive to 1 Jan 2010

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## **Ruling from MCL National JA on MCL covers**

May 29, 2016

From: National Judge Advocate Johnny Baker

Subj: Official National Judge Advocate Ruling on Wearing of Covers at National Convention/Conference

Background. Recently, a Department Judge Advocate requested a ruling concerning the wearing of the Marine Corps League (MCL) covers at National Conventions and National Mid-Winter Conferences. The question

concerned Marine Corps League members attending the regular meetings at both the National Convention and the Mid-Winter Conferences and wearing of the appropriate Marine Corps League cover.

After conducting extensive research, the MCL National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures Manual, does not specify any requirements to wear a particular cover at the Convention meetings.

For Marine Corps League members attending a National Convention or a National Mid-Winter Conference, it has always been the policy that all Marine Corps League members attending the National Convention or Mid-Winter Conference, must be in uniform, which simply consist of the Marine Corps League Cover.

Therefore, the ruling is that any Marine Corps League member attending a session/meeting of a National Convention or a Mid-Winter Conference, they must wear the appropriate sanctioned MCL cover. There should be no exceptions to this policy for any Marine Corps League member, unless otherwise authorized by the National Commandant, when special circumstances prevail. **This would mean that all MCL members attending the MCL's National Convention and/or the National Mid-Winter Conference official meetings, must wear the appropriate MCL cover to be admitted into the official meeting.**

This ruling would apply to all MCL members attending the regular sessions/meetings at the National Convention or National Mid-Winter Conference. Baseball style caps and/or any other type of headwear are not authorized at the above mentioned National meetings.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Johnny Baker  
National Judge Advocate

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### **SBP Beneficiary Benefits What They Should Know**

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) pays more than 2.5 million retired service members. A large portion of their customers have elected to cover one or more of their loved ones with the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP).

Although they are willing to pay to cover their loved ones, many retirees neglect to educate their loved ones about the benefits they have provided for them. Unfortunately, this can complicate or slow down the application process to receive benefits when they are eventually requested by the family member. Every member should consider educating their beneficiaries to help them better understand how SBP works. Here are a few guidelines you can cover with your beneficiaries. Suggest you print this article, share it with your designated beneficiary, and store it with other important documents.

**The Nature and Extent of the SBP Benefit** SBP provides your eligible beneficiaries with a monthly payment known as an annuity. The amount of the benefit is a percentage of your retired pay and it depends upon whether you choose full or reduced coverage. The recipient of your SBP annuity is referred to as the annuitant.

**The Benefit's Duration** The SBP entitlement begins upon your death and ends either when your elected beneficiary becomes ineligible to receive the annuity or when your beneficiary dies.

**Reasons Payments May Be Temporarily Stopped** Each year, DFAS mails annuitants a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). DFAS uses the information on that form to determine an annuitant's continued eligibility for monthly payments. If DFAS does not receive the COE by the deadline on the form, they will stop all payments until they receive a properly completed COE. If you have not received a COE from DFAS recently and feel you should have, please call their customer care center to request one at (800) 321-1080.

**Reasons Payments Can Be Stopped** Annuity payments stop when a beneficiary dies or becomes ineligible to receive the annuity. For example, payments to children normally stop when they reach age 18. Payments stop for spouses if they remarry before age 55.

**Continuing Children's Benefits after Age 18** Payments typically stop for children covered under SBP when they reach age 18. If an unmarried child attends school in a full time status at an accredited college or university, the payments will continue until they reach age 22. Each semester, DFAS mails a Child Annuitant's School Certification form to verify the child is still enrolled. If DFAS does not receive the form by the deadline listed, they will stop all payments until they receive a properly completed form. The SBP annuity will terminate at any

time if the child marries. If you have not received a School Certification recently and feel you should have, please call the DFAS customer care center to request one at (800) 321-1080. Children who became incapacitated while still eligible SBP beneficiaries could receive payments for life if the conditions are permanent.

**Effects of Remarriage on an Annuity** If the annuitant remarries before age 55, annuity payments will stop. However, if the annuitant's marriage later ends, for any reason, the annuity payment will restart from the date the marriage ends. The annuitant is responsible for notifying DFAS of any changes to their marital status.

**Benefits from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)** is an award benefit offered by the VA. Federal law prevents annuitants from receiving both SBP and DIC concurrently. When DFAS is informed that an annuitant is eligible to receive DIC from the VA, DFAS will deduct the amount of DIC received from the amount of SBP. For example, a surviving spouse is eligible for a monthly annuity of \$1500 from DFAS and a monthly DIC award of \$1254.19 from the VA, DFAS will deduct the \$1254.19 DIC from the \$1500 SBP and pay the remaining \$245.81 to the annuitant. If the SBP is greater than the DIC award, DFAS will partially refund the premiums paid into the program during the service member's retirement for the portion of the SBP that is offset. If the DIC is greater than the SBP payment, SBP will be completely offset and DFAS will refund all basic spouse premiums paid into the program during the service member's retirement.

**What initiates the SBP benefit and what will my beneficiary have to do?** Your designated beneficiary becomes eligible to receive SBP benefits on the day after your death. The first step a beneficiary must take to receive benefits is to report your death to DFAS. See page 20 for DFAS contact information.

**What happens if there is a delay in reporting a retiree's death?** Late notification of a retiree's death may result in burdensome consequences, including delays in finalizing a member's account, payment of arrears of pay and the establishment of an SBP annuity. A retiree's entitlement to retired pay ends on the date he or she dies. Therefore, delayed reporting of a retiree's death may result in an overpayment of retired pay that will be collected from a financial institution, the member's estate, or from the annuitant if the annuitant is receiving retired pay.

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### **VA Disability Rating 1 + 1 Does Not Equal 2 With the VA**

When it comes to service connected compensation claims, the VA takes the view that it should not add whole numbers together to get your rating but, instead, the VA takes percentages of percentages. It is as if the VA says if you are 10% disabled then you are 90% healthy. Therefore, the next rating is not added but is used to take a percentage of the 'healthy' 90%. So for a veteran with two 10 ratings the first ten percent rating would be 10% of 100, which is 10%. The second ten percent rating would be 10% of the 90% (again the 'healthy' percent of the veteran), which is 9%. So the combined rating would be 19%. The percentages are all rounded up or down to the nearest ten percent. Here, the rating would be rounded to 20%.

The combined rating system starts to work against a veteran when he gets closer to 100%. It gets harder and harder to get that higher rating, especially once a veteran is over 50%. For instance, if a veteran has two ratings of 50% and two of 20% the combined rating is 80%. So even though  $50+50+20+20$  equals 140 in real math; it is only 80 in VA math. The difference that it leads to in compensation is huge. According to the VA compensation rating table, a veteran, with no dependents, rated at 80% would receive \$1,551.48 per month. A single veteran rated at 100%, on the other hand, would receive \$2,903.83 per month. This veteran receiving a rating of 100%, which is only 20% greater than the 80% rating, gets almost 100% more money a month! There are other factors that make the ratings change too. For example, if a veteran has a rating on each leg or each arm then those ratings are combined together and give the overall combined rating an extra boost. Also, if a veteran has too many ratings on one arm or leg then VA stops counting those ratings. Further, a veteran can step up to 100% through total disability due to individual unemployability. That veteran must show that he cannot work and that he meets a certain rating

## **Gulf War Syndrome Finding Evidence of Physical Disease**

A single cause for Gulf War illnesses may never be found, but research is finding evidence of physical disease that could lead to better treatments, medical experts said during a forum in Washington on Operation Desert Storm exposures 16 JUN. Roughly a quarter of the nearly 700,000 troops who deployed for the 1990-91 Iraq conflict have ill-defined chronic symptoms such as joint pain, gastrointestinal disorders, fatigue, headaches, insomnia and memory problems.

Dr. James Baraniuk, an associate professor at Georgetown University who conducts imaging research on veterans with Gulf War illnesses, said his work and other studies are zeroing in on biological evidence, or biomarkers, in the brain that provide proof of damage and could lead to improved treatment. "What is going on with the brains of the Gulf War veterans, our neurotoxic exposed veterans? This research has the possibility to bring closure," Baraniuk said during a symposium hosted by the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence at Brookings and Georgetown University. According to Baraniuk, the research could have applications for understanding non-combat-related diseases like Alzheimer's, chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia.

In many cases, the causes of Gulf War illnesses are unknown. An indeterminate number of troops were exposed to chemical weapons when coalition forces destroyed a storage facility at Khamisiya, Iraq, in March 1991. Other troops were given anthrax vaccines containing an additive, squalene that may have caused a reaction. Some research indicates that some troops had bad reactions to the anti-nerve agent pyridostigmine bromide or the antibiotic ciprofloxacin, which also was administered.

At the forum, researchers, veterans and Veterans Affairs medical leadership discussed how ill veterans are faring and what is being done to help them. Dr. Carolyn Clancy, VA deputy undersecretary for health for organizational excellence, said VA, which maintains a registry of Gulf War veterans, continues to support research on unexplained chronic multisymptom illnesses, focusing on specialized care for veterans. According to Clancy, VA provides comprehensive physical exams to all Persian Gulf War veterans on request and is conducting research on diagnosis and treatment. She said the VA, which spent \$14 million on Gulf War illnesses research in 2015, must strike a balance between finding a cause and researching treatments. "It's clearly not a psychological condition, which doesn't mean that it doesn't have psychological impact," Clancy said. "We are committed to ensuring our clinical research efforts take into account physical, psychological and social health factors."

Recent discoveries at VA have led to improved treatment for insomnia, yielding better overall health outcomes for these veterans and improved understanding of the gastrointestinal symptoms, she added. Baraniuk said VA needed to ensure that its medical personnel understood Gulf War illnesses as a physical disease and also needed to improve its tracking of these veterans as they age. "Some of these veterans have lung cancers, brain cancers and yet there are no statistics on deaths. It seems like with a group that is in a registry, there should be a way of tracking people," he said.

Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., a Desert Storm veteran who served with a Marine Corps light armored reconnaissance unit and now sits on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, said he believes Gulf War veterans are a forgotten group that deserves continued attention. "The research has been inappropriately directed to psychosomatic causes and it's been of questionable quality ... and there have been questionable decisions on disability claims at VA," Coffman said. "We have a long ways to go. The fact that 25 years have elapsed and we are having this discussion today is not good."

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## **Wounded Warrior Project Gets New Leader**

The head of the military agency that searches for and identifies the remains of missing servicemen is resigning after just one year to take over a troubled nonprofit that cares for wounded troops. Michael Linnington became the director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency last summer. He plans to leave next month to become the CEO of the Wounded Warrior Project. Linnington became the leader of the POW/MIA mission at the Pentagon after Congress and groups that advocate for families of the missing had criticized the way the military was handling identifications. Since Linnington took the helm, the agency's laboratories have nearly doubled the identifications of missing servicemen. Retired Army Lt. Gen. Michael S. Linnington, director of

the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), receives a tour of an excavation site during a DPAA recovery mission near Riechelsdorf, Germany, on Sept. 1, 2015. Linnington is leaving the agency to become the CEO of the Wounded Warrior Project.

At the Wounded Warrior Project, Linnington will lead a nonprofit that has been criticized for lavish spending. The New York Times and CBS News in January reported employees, veterans and charity watchdogs were complaining the organization was profiteering off veterans. Linnington said in a phone interview he hadn't planned on leaving the POW/MIA agency so soon and wasn't looking for a new job. But he said the opportunity at the Wounded Warrior Project was for "incredibly noble work." "I'm very proud of the things we've done at the DPAA over the past year but I was approached by a group that needed some leadership in caring for our wounded warriors. I'm a 35-year soldier. I brought soldiers to combat and welcomed many of them home that were grievously wounded," Linnington said in a phone interview.

Reports on the Wounded Warrior Project by CBS News and The Times described extravagant parties and last minute, business-class air travel at the nonprofit. One former employee compared it to "what the military calls fraud, waste and abuse." The Jacksonville, Florida-based organization's directors fired two executives after hiring outside legal counsel and forensic accounting consultants to conduct an independent review of its records and interview current and former employees. The military's efforts to find and identify missing remains have suffered from many problems over many decades. In 2014, the AP disclosed an internal Pentagon report that said a DPAA predecessor organization — the Hawaii-based Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command was wasteful, acutely dysfunctional and often mismanaged. Shortly afterward, the Government Accountability Office issued a report saying the MIA accounting effort was hampered by weak leadership, infighting and a fragmented approach to planning. The Pentagon later streamlined the change of command and made other organizational changes.

Linnington, who retired from the Army as a lieutenant general before assuming a civilian role at the Pentagon, said consolidating the Defense Department agencies responsible for identifying missing servicemen has helped Ann Mills Griffiths, chairwoman of the board at the National League of POW/MIA Families, said she was surprised by Linnington's announcement. She said he had told her group last year he was at the agency for the long haul, meaning the next 10 years. "I can only say it was a total shock. Just stunning and unexpected," Mills-Griffiths said. Linnington said his successor should have compassion, integrity, teamwork, respect and innovation. "If we continue to focus on our families and providing families the fullest possible accounting of their loved ones, based on those values, I think we'll be fine," he said

## Pending Calendar

2016 MCL National Convention will be August 7-13, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency, 100 East 2nd St, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tele: 918-234-1234, contact reservations: 1-888-591-1234. after August 17, 2015. room rate: \$91.00 plus tax for total \$103.30. Free WiFi, Pets allowed, Breakfast available ( Self parking , There is no RV parking and Good Sam's RV park is about 7 miles.

**Note: Overflow Hotel** 8 - 12 August 2016 Courtyard by Marriott - Tulsa Downtown 415 South Boston Avenue, Tulsa, OK (800) 721-7033 or (918) 508-7400 Online reservations Rate \$107.00 per night (plus tax) Standard King or Double Queen includes valet parking and breakfast **Group code is MCL**

2016 Department of WV Quarterly Meeting will be September 10, 2016 hosted by Danny M. Greene Detachment 577 in Logan, WV at the old Henlawson Grade School & Vet Center.

2016 Modern Day Marine Expo will be Sept 27-29, 2016 at MCB, Quantico, VA

2017 National Midwinter Staff Conference will be March 2017 at the [Fredericksburg Hospitality House and Conf Center](#), 2801 Plank Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. · 1-866-599-6674

2017 Mideast Division Conference will be June 23-25, 2017 hosted by Department of North Carolina at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle Park, 4810 Page Creek Lane, Durham, North Carolina, 27703. Tel +1-919-941-6000 after May 17, 2016. for reservations. Room rate: \$99.00 plus room tax. Free breakfast and parking

2017 MCL National Convention will be August 2017 at the Sheraton Overland Park at the Convention Center, 6100 College Boulevard, Overland Park, KS, 66211. Book By Phone: 1-800-628-8491 Room rate: \$115.00 with 18% tax, free parking, free breakfast and free wifi.



June 18, 2016 Charleston, WV - Dept. of WV Commandant Rick Shank gave a presentation about the Dept. of WV Marine Corps League to the Delegates at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of WV State Convention.



Dept. Commandant Shank presented Dept. of WV VFW Sr. Vice Commander Bob Kish with a MCL Distinguished Service Award for the Departments meritorious service to veterans and their families.



The Department of WV VFW honored Commandant Shank with a plaque. Commandant Shank accepted the award on behalf of all the Marine Corps League members in the Department of West Virginia.

Pictures by Randall Bare