

LISTEN UP!



VOLUME XIX, Number 12

DECEMBER 2006

Commandant: WILLIAM R. MILLER

Editor: DON H. GEE

Gen. James T. Conway Becomes CMC

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13 --The Defense Department's top civilian welcomed the Marine Corps' new Commandant today during a change-of-command ceremony at the Marine Barracks here.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld watched as outgoing Commandant General Michael Hagee passed the Marine Corps' battle flag and command to Gen. James T. Conway.

Rumsfeld praised both officers at the ceremony, citing Hagee's myriad accomplishments over the retiring General's long career.



As Commandant, Hagee "left behind a Marine Corps that under his watch has become the best-trained, the best-led, and the best-equipped force in history," Rumsfeld pointed out.

Hagee has led the Marine Corps during some of the organization's most challenging times, Rumsfeld noted, citing the Marines' hard fighting in Fallujah, Ramadi and other parts of western Iraq.

As he looked at hundreds of Marines attired in their striking dress-blue uniforms, Rumsfeld remarked that heroes aren't in short supply in

(See CMC, Page 4)

National Purple Heart Hall of Honor Opens in Vails Gate, New York

The nation's roughly 1.7 million Purple Heart recipients now have a museum to call their own.

The mission of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor is to collect and preserve stories of Purple Heart recipients from all branches of the service and across the generations in an attempt to ensure that all recipients are represented.



The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor opened on Nov. 10 in Vails Gate, NY, is the first national museum dedicated to those who have received the Purple Heart.

The museum is the first facility to honor all recipients who have been wounded or killed in action. The museum will remain "the sole repository dedicated to the

(See PURPLE HEART, Page 5)

Triangle, VA

MARINE CORPORAL TO GET NATION'S HIGHEST MEDAL

"Marines keep me safe!"

That's what a five-year old boy, Sean Ladwig, wrote on a card he made to place at a makeshift memorial in honor of Corporal Jason Dunham, U. S. Marine Corps, a memorial made by his aunt and two friends.

Dunham dove on a live grenade during a fight against hostile forces at a checkpoint near Karbala, Iraq. He saved two fellow Marines, but died days later from his wounds at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland.



Corporal Jason Dunham will receive the Medal of Honor (Posthumous). President George W. Bush announced the decision during the official opening of the National Museum of the Marine Corps at the 231st anniversary of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA, on Nov. 10. Dunham will be the first Marine to receive the medal since Vietnam.

"Corporal Dunham's mom and dad are with us today on what would have

(See DUNHAM, Page 4)

COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Marines,

Our November meeting was a huge success with hosting the Young Marines, swearing in two new members, having a traditional cake cutting ceremony, and even managing to get some business accomplished as well. I wish to extend my appreciation to all the parents of the Young Marines and their instructors for their dedication to this fine program.

I mentioned that we had two new members come aboard. Retired Marine veteran **Jim Flite** from Warminster and regular **Marine LCpl. Clymer** from

MAG-49 who is one of the Young Marine Instructors. Welcome Marines! Glad to have you in our ranks.

Things appear to be moving ahead with our Anniversary Celebration to be held at the Pine Crest Country Club on Jan. 14. **Junior Vice Commandant Budd Pearce, PC**, will be sending out the official notice soon. Lets all respond and have a big showing of this historical event.

Senior Vice Commandant Jim Powell and I, along with our wives, attended the dedication of the new Marine Corps Museum at Quantico. You could not ask for better weather. There were approximately 10,000 in attendance and it ran like a well-oiled machine. **President George W. Bush** was there along with **Commandant Gen. Michael Hagee** and newsperson and former Marine **Jim Lehrer**, who gave an outstanding speech and tribute to the Corps. There was also a fly-over of Marine fighter jets (probably from Cherry Point) during the National Anthem. This was history in the making and I was proud to have been there.

The following day we were scheduled for a two-hour tour of the museum. Don't tell anyone that we cheated. No way can you see this place in two hours. We took four hours and still felt rushed. It has a fantastic gift shop with about everything you can think of. They even have rubber floor mats that you put outside your front door with "Yellow Footprints." Everything on display is on the first floor. On the second level they have a cafeteria which is called the "Mess Hall." Of course, you have to stand in a long line and go through the line to get your chow. Just like we did it in the Corps except in the Corps there was no cash register at the end. I could not tell if they were using stainless steel serving trays as it was too crowded to get a good look-see. Next to the mess hall is a "slop chute" called "Tun Tavern." They have food and beverages with beer on tap. I would have killed for a nice cold brew or two. However, it was too crowded with about an hour-and-a-half wait--Oh well, next time. I will go back again and you all

owe it to yourselves to get there as well.

On the grounds they had on display for your viewing pleasure, a huge tent set up housing some of the latest modern marvels of military fighting equipment. It was like a mini-expo. I enjoyed talking to all the young Marine officers who were explaining the equipment and calling me "Sir." I had the opportunity to try on the new style flak jacket/vest. That thing nearly took me to my knees it was so heavy. After getting up-righted, they slapped a helmet on my head and an M-16 in my hands at "port arms" and took my picture. Of course they had a recruiter standing by ready to sign me up. Just a shell of my former self I told them. We all got a good laugh out of that one.

We attended the first ever Marine Corps League Birthday Ball which was attended by Marines from all over the country. It was a grand occasion and very well organized. Our friend **Paul Hastings** was the MC, as usual. The guest of honor was the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, **General Al Gray**. Anyone remember him? Boy, is he ever crusty and salty. He knows how to work a room and had everyone on their feet a number of times. He appeared wearing a camouflage suit jacket. I hear that if he could have had it his way, the "uniform of the day" 24/7 would have been utilities/bdus. We (Jim and I) were honored to have a picture taken with Gen. Gray.

Well Marines, the wife and I have to get ready to fly to Seattle this week for the Thanksgiving holidays spending time with family out there. Looking forward to it and hope it doesn't rain too much.

I'm wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and I'll see you at the December meeting.

Semper Fi,




BILL MILLER
Commandant



CENTRAL BUCKS
DETACHMENT, Inc. #636
P. O. Box 1372
Doylestown, PA 18901-1372
Meets
7:30 p.m.
2nd Wednesday of Month
American Legion Post 210
315 North Street, Doylestown, PA

Sr. VICE COMMANDANT
JAMES POWELL

Jr. VICE COMMANDANT
ELLIS M. (BUDD) PEARCE III, PC

ADJUTANT
GARY SMITH

PAYMASTER
ROBERT J. CODY

JUDGE ADVOCATE
WILLIAM E. JERROM

QUARTERMASTER
ROBERT DUFF

CHAPLAIN
EDWARD W. HOTH, PDC

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS
BOB SUNDLING, PC

MESS SERGEANT
WIL HAAS

WEBMASTER
JAMES E. PEARCE

MARINE OF THE YEAR
ELLIS M. (BUDD) PEARCE III, PC

NOVEMBER DETACHMENT MEETING



M I N U T E S



The regular meeting of **Central Bucks Detachment #636, Inc.**, of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc., was held November 8, 2006, at Albert E. Atkinson American Legion Post #210, 315 North St., Doylestown, PA.

There were 18 members present including all officers except the Paymaster. Distinguished members in attendance included **Past Commandants Don Gee and Bob Sundling**, **Past Commandant and Marine of the Year Budd Pearce**, and **Past Department of New Jersey Commandant Ed Hoth**.

Visitors: The Liberty Young Marines Unit, Unit staff members, and parents.

New Members: **Lance Corporal Jessica A. Clymer** (of Holicong, PA) and **James E. Flite** (of Warminster, PA) were unanimously accepted as new members.

Sick Call: **Paymaster Bob Cody** is in Doylestown Hospital undergoing a procedure.

The **Minutes** of the October Meeting were unanimously accepted.

OFFICER REPORTS

Commandant Bill Miller reported on the Department Quarterly Staff Meeting. He also reported the Detachment had received a "Thank You" letter for the packages **Peggy Sundling** has been sending to the troops and another letter for the Detachment Color Guard's participation in the Beirut Memorial ceremony at Penns Landing in Philadelphia. He stated he had sent "Marine of the Year" medallions to **Paul Caprio** and **Bob Momorella**.

Senior Vice Commandant Jim Powell reported the Detachment strength at 48 including 22 Life Members, 21 Regular Members, 4 Associate Members, and 1 Honorary Member with four members delinquent in their dues.

Junior Vice Commandant Budd Pearce, PC, reported the Detachment's 20th Anniversary Party will be held at Pinecrest Country Club, Montgomeryville, on Jan. 14, 2007, from 1200 to 1500. Cost will be \$30 per person with a cash bar. The Detachment will subsidize the cost of the party. He reminded the members that "boot camp" photos should be sent to him for inclusion in the party program.

Adjutant Gary Smith reported he had received no communications from either the National or Department organizations.

Judge Advocate Bill Jerrom reported the ByLaws had been updated and distributed to the members in attendance. He further reported the Detachment had no legal problems.

Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Sundling, PC, reported the Color Guard had been requested to participate in the Central Bucks East High School "Wall of Honor" dedication on Nov. 10.

Chaplain Ed Hoth, PDC, reported **Aline Plant**, widow of **Past Commandant Bill Plant**, had died at their home in Texas. A Memorial Ceremony is tentatively scheduled for July in our area.

The **Public Relations Officer** set Nov. 20 as the deadline for the December issue of *Listen Up!* He reported he and Junior Vice Commandant Pearce had made a "Flag Folds" presentation and gave out flag pamphlets to the Young Marines Unit. He also reported a request from an Ivyland, PA, Cub Scout Pack to have the Detachment make a "Flag Folds" presentation to it on Dec. 2. He also noted Commandant Miller had presented a plaque to Tinius-Olson for the company's support of the Detachment.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Adopt-A-Highway--Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator Budd Pearce, PC, set Saturday, Nov. 18, as the date for the next highway clean-up. Members will meet at 0800 at "Back to the 50's" (corner of Old York Rd. & Edison-Furlong) for breakfast on the Detachment before beginning the clean-up.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Marine Rich Scott announced the Plumstead Christian School (Route 611N) in Plumsteadville, PA, will have a Veterans Day Ceremony on Nov. 11. He encouraged all Detachment members to attend. Breakfast will be served after the 0800 ceremony.

Junior Vice Commandant Pearce reminded the Detachment members to bring their "Toys for Tots" donations to the December Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned until 1930 on December 13.

DUNHAM from Page 1

been this brave young man's 25th birthday," President Bush said. "We remember that the Marine who so freely gave his life was your beloved son. We ask a loving God to comfort you for a loss that can never be replaced. And on this special birthday, in the company of his fellow Marines, I'm proud to announce that our nation will recognize Corporal Jason Dunham's action with America's highest decoration for valor, the Medal of Honor. As long as we have Marines like Corporal Dunham, America will never fear for her liberty. And as long as we have this fine museum, America will never forget their sacrifice."

On April 14, 2004, Corporal (Cpl) Jason Dunham, of Scio, NY, and 4th

Platoon, K Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division, (I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), jumped on a live grenade during a fight with Iraqis, saved several fellow Marines, and died at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland on April 22 from the explosion that resulted.

Jason Dunham was the son of Deb and Dan Dunham and the product of Scio, NY, a town of about 2,000 people in Allegany County in Western New York, about 70 miles from Buffalo, in New York's beautiful southern tier. Scio is a close-knit community. Mr. Dunham is an Air Force veteran and works in the shipping department of a company that makes industrial heaters. Mrs. Dunham is a home economics teacher.

Jason was born November 10, 1981. He grew to 6 ft., 1 in., and was a three-sport athlete for the Scio Central Tigers: baseball, soccer and basketball, all of which honed his leadership and teammanship skills.

Jason was voted best looking and best smile. He graduated from Scio Central School in 2000 and promptly joined the Marines in July. He had actually signed up for the Marines before graduation, in a delayed entry program.

His funeral was held in his school gymnasium. His casket sat beneath a basketball hoop. The gym was the largest place in the area that could hold the crowd that was expected, a crowd that turned out to be 1,500 strong.

Some 500 Marines, sailors and soldiers came to the funeral to honor Jason. Residents of the town lined the sidewalks and sat on their porches as the procession drove by. The town hung an American flag above the highway, and yellow ribbons were everywhere.

The Medal of Honor presentation will be made to Cpl. Dunham's parents at a date yet to be announced.

CMC from Page 1

the Marine Corps.

"We can say with pride that many of this nation's bravest young people are those who proudly wear the eagle, the globe and the anchor," the Defense Secretary asserted.

Rumsfeld pointed to the heroism of Marine Corps **Cpl. Jason Dunham**, of Scio, N.Y., the Medal of Honor recipient from Operation Enduring Freedom, who gave his life to save his fellow Marines. On April 14, 2004, in the Iraqi town of Karabilah, Dunham covered an about-to-explode enemy grenade with his helmet and body, saving the lives of his fellow Marines.

Dunham was seriously injured by the blast, and died of his wounds eight days later.

The Defense Secretary also recounted a meeting he'd had with a badly wounded Marine being treated at Bethesda Naval Hospital, MD. The Marine's fighting spirit was still strong despite his injuries. Rumsfeld recalled.

The wounded Marine had also expressed his wish, the Secretary noted, that the American people would grant the military the time it needed to defeat the terrorists in Iraq.

"America is truly blessed to have young men and women like him willing to risk their lives in defense of our country and the cause of human freedom," Rumsfeld said.

"Gen. Mike Hagee and I have been fortunate, we have been able to meet and know these fine, young people, every day, and see heroism up close."

The Marine Corps is also fortunate to have Gen. Conway step up to take over the reins from Gen. Hagee, Rumsfeld said. Conway led the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Iraq, the Secretary recalled, and he had also shaped the minds of promising leaders at Marine Corps University.

The Marines and other members of the U.S. military "are in the hearts and the prayers of everyone here and the people all across our country," Rumsfeld said.



PHOTOS WANTED

Send your "Boot
Camp" and/or Active
Duty photos to
Budd Pearce
for inclusion in our
**20th Anniversary
Program**

MAN CHARGED IN UNEARNED MEDALS CASE

A U. S. Attorney in Missouri has charged a former sailor with two counts of wearing unearned medals and badges while pretending to be a Marine officer.

Michael Paul Bramlett faces a year in jail and a \$10,000 fine if convicted.

Federal attorney **Bradley Schlozman** alleges that 34-year-old Bramlett, of Springfield, MO, was passing himself off at local Marine Corps League events last December as a Marine Captain with a Silver Star Medal and multiple Purple Hearts he said he earned in Iraq.

FACES JAIL & \$10,000 FINE

Bramlett was charged June 23 and was in U.S. District Court, Oct. 13.

Bramlett served in the Navy for three months in 1989 but was never a Marine, 1st Lt. Brian Donnelly, a spokesman for Manpower & Reserve Affairs at Quantico, VA, said Oct. 17.

"We have no record of Michael Paul Bramlett ever serving in the U. S.

Marine Corps," Donnelly said. "If these charges are true, it is regrettable that someone of lesser moral character would dishonor the very real sacrifices of so many Marines."



Tun Tavern

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
November 10, 1775



Captains Nicholas and Mullins, having been tasked by the 2nd Continental Congress to form two battalions of Marines, set up the Corps' first recruiting station in the tavern.

The first likely prospect was, in typical recruiter's fashion, promised a "life of high adventure in service to Country and Corps". And, as an extra bonus: If he enlisted now he would receive a free tankard of ale....

The recruit gladly accepted the challenge and, receiving the free tankard of ale, was told to wait at the corner table for orders.

The first Marine sat quietly at the table sipping the ale when he was joined by another young man, who had two tankards of ale.

The first Marine looked at the lad and asked where he had gotten the two tankards of ale?

The lad replied that he had just joined this new outfit called the Continental Marines, and as an enlistment bonus was given two tankards of ale.

The first Marine took a long hard look at the second Marine and said, "It wasn't like that in the old Corps."



PURPLE HEART from Page 1

preservation of the stories of wounded patriots' sacrifice," according to the Military Order of the Purple Heart, a veteran's service organization representing 39,000 Purple Heart recipients based in Springfield, VA.

The museum has a series of exhibits, videotaped interviews with veterans, historical photos, documentary film footage, period objects and the Roll of Honor – an interactive computer program detailing stories of each recipient. The 7,500 square foot facility houses a reception area, gallery, exhibit hall, an education center and a presentation room.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor overlooks the site of the camp (cantonment) of the Continental Army for 1782 - 1783, the final win-

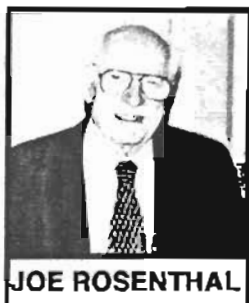
ter of the Revolutionary War.

In 1782, George Washington created the Badge of Military Merit, the inspiration for today's Purple Heart, and the following year officers met at the Cantonment to determine candidates for the award. In 1932, some of the nation's very first Purple Hearts were presented to veterans of World War I on these same grounds.

For more information about the museum or the opening ceremonies visit: http://nysparks.state.ny.us/heritage/purple_hrt.asp. To contact the hall call (845) 561-6577 or by mail: National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site, P.O. Box 207, Vails Gate, NY 12584-0207

IWO PHOTOGRAPHER AWARDED

Joe Rosenthal, the photographer who captured the enduring World War II image of six battle-weary men raising the American flag over Iwo Jima, was posthumously awarded a Navy medal for distinguished public service Sept. 15.



Presenting the medal to Rosenthal's children in San Francisco, along with a pair of flags from the Marine Corps War

Memorial, inspired by the Pulitzer Prize-winning work—MajGen. Mike Lehnert said the iconic photograph has touched generations of Marines.

WAS 94

WHEN HE DIED

Rosenthal, who was 94 when he died in California on Aug. 20, created "a true representation of the triumph of the human spirit in the face of adversity and death," Lehnert said.

Other Marines, Pulitzer Prize winners and family members tried capturing in words what Rosenthal caught with a click of his shutter on Feb. 23, 1945, as a 33-year-old combat photographer for The Associated Press.

Former White House photographer David Hume Kennedy read tribute letters from two former presidents who served during WWII, Gerald Ford and George H. W. Bush.

Bush, who recalled seeing the photo in a newspaper as a Navy pilot, said that without the shot of pride it instilled, the war might have dragged on longer.

"I wonder if Joe fully appreciated what this photograph meant and what it still means to the American people," Bush wrote.



MARINES!

**BUS TIP TO QUANTICO, VA
ON JUNE 8, 2007**

Visit the National Museum of the Marine Corps
Then on to 8th & I Marine Barracks for Dinner
and the Evening Parade

Depart:	Doylestown, PA	7:30 a.m.
Arrive:	Quantico, VA	11:30 a.m.
Depart:	Quantico, VA	3:30 p.m.
Arrive:	8th & I Marine Barracks	5:30 p.m.

For Dinner At Mess Hall)

**SNACK, SOFT DRINK & DINNER INCLUDED
IN THE PRICE OF
\$35.00 PER PERSON**

For More Information: Contact BILL HAAS at
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or
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You Can Call Bill at his Business Number
Tuesday - Friday between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m.
or at his Home Number Any Other Time

Guided Tour at the Museum for Additional Fee--
Make Your Own Arrangements

MARINE MISSING IN ACTION FROM VIETNAM IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is PFC James E. Widener, U.S. Marine Corps, of Churchville, NY. He was buried Nov. 10, at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, DC.

On June 11, 1967, Widener was one of 11 passengers on board a CH-46A Sea Knight helicopter that was inserting ground forces into Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam, when the aircraft crashed. Pilots from two nearby helicopters saw the crash and reported that none of the men on board could have survived. Aircraft flew over the site for several hours, but aircrew members did not observe any survivors. A patrol was sent the next day to confirm the status of the

11 crewmembers, but the site could not be accessed due to enemy forces in the area. Later that month, enemy activity prevented a second attempt to patrol the site.

Between 1993 and 1994, U.S. and Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted two surveys of an area that was believed to be Widener's crash site. The teams also interviewed several Vietnamese citizens who recalled the crash. Two of the citizens claimed to have seen bone fragments while scavenging the site years earlier. When the teams visited the purported crash site, they found small pieces of wreckage, but found no human remains.

In May 2005, Vietnamese officials notified U.S. specialists that possible human remains were present at a district security compound in Quang Tri province. The Vietnamese claimed to

have confiscated the remains and other items, including Widener's identification tag, from a Vietnamese local in 1996. The remains were then buried in the security compound, but the ID tag and other material evidence had supposedly been lost over the years. Later that month, a U.S./S.R.V. team excavated the burial site in the security compound and recovered a box containing human remains.

Among dental records and other forensic tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA from two known maternal relatives to confirm the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO Web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

PHOTO GALLERY SCRAPBOOK

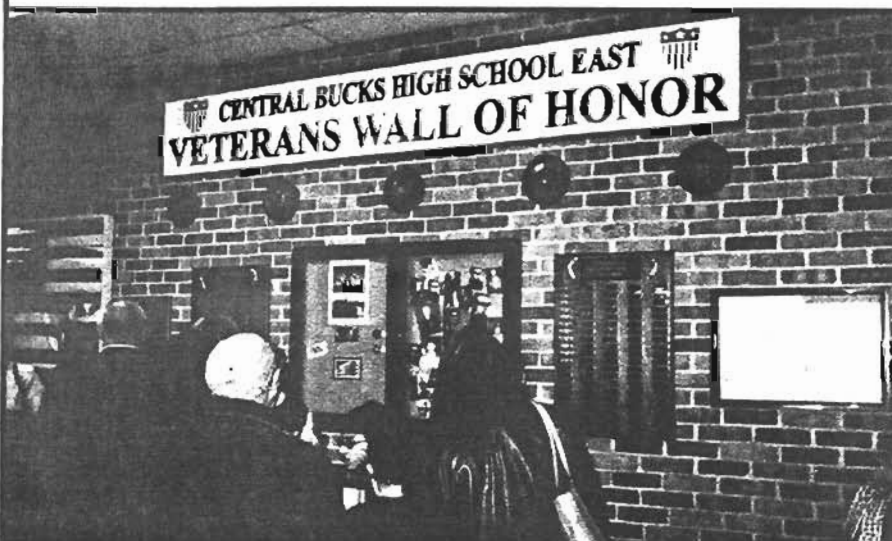


NEW MEMBERS Jessica Clymer & James Flite taking Oath



CAKE EXCHANGE—Bill Jerrom & Young Marine Vincent Vitale

WALL OF HONOR



DEDICATION—Visitors viewing Central Bucks East High School's "Wall of Honor" following its dedication ceremony on Nov. 10. Marine Rich Scott served as Master of Ceremonies for the program and Senior Vice Commandant Budd Pearce, Marine Mike Waldron and our P-R Officer served as the Color Guard.

A DIFFERENT CHRISTMAS POEM

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.
Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.
The sparkling lights in the tree I believe,
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.
My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem,
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,
But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know, Then the
sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.
My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.

A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old,
Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.
"What are you doing?" I asked without fear,
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,
You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"

For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,
Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts..
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light
Then he sighed and he said "It's really all right,
I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night."

"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line,

That separates you from the darkest of times.

No one had to ask or beg or implore me,
I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.
My Gramps died at 'Pearl on a day in December,"
Then sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers."

My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam',
And now it is my turn and so, here I am.
I've not seen my own son in more than a while,

But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.

Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,
The red, white, and blue... an American flag.
I can live through the cold and the being alone,
Away from my family, my house and my home.
I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.
I can carry the weight of killing another,
Or lay down my life with my sister and brother..
Who stand at the front against any and all,
To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."

"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright,
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,
"Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?
It seems all too little for all that you've done,
For being away from your wife and your son."
Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,

"Just tell us you love us, and never forget
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone,
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.
For when we come home, either standing or dead,
To know you remember we fought and we bled.
Is payment enough, and with that we will trust,
That we mattered to you as you mattered to us."

*LiCdr. Jeff Giles, SC, USN
30th Naval Construction Regiment
OIC, Logistics Cell One
Al Taqqadum, Iraq*

USMC TRIVIA QUIZ

1. The acronym "SALUTE" is used to outline enemy reports. What do the letters stand for?
2. Name two forms of assault maneuver employed by Marines.
3. Name three types of discharge.
4. What are the only two flags which may be flown above the American flag?
5. Who was the first Marine to receive the Medal of Honor?

Answers in next month's LISTEN UP!



Insurance Companies Owe Servicemembers

Several insurance agencies must pay back more than \$70 million to 70,000 servicemembers after allegedly using misleading business practices. American Amicable Life Insurance Company of Texas and its affiliates, Pioneer American Insurance Company and Pioneer Security Life Insurance Company, allegedly committed violations of insurance protection laws, while selling their Horizon Life and Wealth Builder insurance policies. Servicemembers and dependents who purchased life insurance products from an American Amicable Company should call the companies' customer service center at (800) 736-7311 and give their current mailing address.

Holiday Radio Special Features Stars

Country music stars Vince Gill, Toby Keith, LeeAnn Womack and George Strait share their favorite holiday memories and traditions in a "Red, White and Air Force Blue Christmas" radio special, slated for release this month. Produced and marketed by the Air Force Recruiting Service's Strategic Communications Division, the one-hour show features in-depth interviews with each of the stars along with songs from their holiday albums. The program will be sent to American Forces Radio and Television Service affiliates and more than 3,300 country radio stations, according to Jimmy Spacek, AFRS broadcasting manager.

Veterans Court on Record Pace

The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims is deciding more cases than ever, after recalling two judges to the bench earlier this year, and is now on track to issue 30 percent more decisions than any year in the Court's history. According to numbers released to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on Thursday, with 7 full time judges and 2 recalled judges

now deciding cases, the Court is on track to handle over 4400 cases this fiscal year, which is almost 800 more cases than the Court is expected to take in. The (<http://www.military.com/benefits/legal-matters/appeals-process/appeals-process-overview>) U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims reviews decisions rendered by VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals. Most of the Court's decisions deal with veterans' claims for disability compensation. To learn more about military legal matters, visit the (<http://www.military.com/benefits/military-legal-matters>) Legal Matters webpage at Military.com.

Disabled Military Veterans to Get Memorial

The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial will be the first memorial to honor the sacrifices of America's 3 million disabled military veterans. The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation has raised half the money needed to build the \$65 million marble and glass memorial, which will be located on two acres of land adjacent to the National Mall within view of the U.S. Capitol. Groundbreaking is set for 2008, with completion planned in 2010. For more information, visit the (<http://www.avdlm.com/>) American Veterans Disabled for Life Website.

Transition Workshop Valuable to Veterans

All separating servicemembers should know about Transition Assistance Program workshops, say Labor Department officials. The Labor Department teams with DOD and the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer these workshops to transitioning servicemembers. The workshops go over job search skills, writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing skills, career planning, veterans benefits, disabled veterans issues, and much more. Members retiring from the military are eligible to attend 24 months before retirement; members separating are eligible

to attend 12 months out. Officials hold the workshops at each base or installation. This year, about 140,000 servicemembers are using the workshop. To learn more about transitioning, visit the Military.com Transition Center.

Budget Reform Requested for Veterans Health Care

A coalition of national veterans service organizations has again called on House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Steve Buyer (R-Ind.) to schedule hearings on legislation that would replace the current discretionary funding mechanism that "puts patients at risk and makes it impossible for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to operate effectively." The organizations include the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the American Legion, AMVETS, Blinded Veterans Association, Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A., Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Vietnam Veterans of America. How do you feel about this action? Let your public officials know how you feel!

Most Retirees to Get Benefit Increase

Social Security payment recipients and most military retired members will receive a 3.3 percent Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) starting in January, 2007. The same (<http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/cost-of-living-allowance>) COLA will also be seen by (<http://www.military.com/benefits/survivor-benefits/survivor-benefit-plan-explained>) Survivor Benefit Plan annuitants and those getting Veterans Disability Compensation and Dependency Indemnity Compensation. The COLA will not be the same for all military retired members. Servicemembers who retired during calendar year 2006 will receive a somewhat smaller, partial COLA for this year only.

OPERATION HELMET: Funds for Combat Head Gear

As people in a Bucks County community started opening their wallets, the paper helmets on the wall began to multiply.

One paper helmet pops up on the wall for every potentially life-saving helmet insert bought by everyday citizens.

Operation Helmet began as the parents of one Marine Corporal stationed in Iraq learned that their son didn't have enough head protection to prevent a concussion.

Parents of **Cpl. Mike Farley** used to send mundane, everyday items in care packages, until they realized he didn't even have a helmet strong enough to protect him from a concussion.

Marie and Mike Farley Sr. were appalled when they learned that the helmets issued to many Marines don't have a special padded liner to protect against concussions that could be caused by explosions.

Since mortars hit their son's base every day, the Quakertown couple decided to take action.

"These guys are going into war and they should have everything they need for protection," Marie Farley, Mike's mother, said. "When I found that out ... it was devastating."

Mike's father was equally concerned for his son.

"There was the possibility that Michael could've been injured and since he did not have the insert it could've made the injury worse," Mike's father, Mike Farley Sr., said.

The Farleys turned to good friend, Rod van Pelt at the Quakertown Moose Lodge Family Center, to help raise money for the helmet liners.

"What we started doing is selling the paper helmets to all our members in here for \$5 a piece," van Pelt said. "But we can't just get him one helmet.

"We have to get the whole unit a helmet. There are 53 people in the unit -- it's close to \$40,001."

It seemed like a lofty goal, but members of the community opened up their wallets as they learned of the lack of appropriate protective gear for the troops.

"To not have something that basic is just ridiculous, utterly ridiculous," **Evelyn Kull** of Quakertown said.

The giving seems to be contagious, too.

"I'm just tickled to death that we here at the Moose are having an impact on something internationally,"

Mark Ludlow of Quakertown said. "It's just so nice to see."

Operation Helmet raised over \$10,000 so far, but they plan to raise money until Farley's entire unit has the proper helmet padding.

"When they get these inserts, there's a good possibility ... it could possibly save their lives," Mike Farley Sr. said.

His tearful mother added, "It's made me feel good inside ... that I can do something to help them."

For more information or to donate, visit Operation Helmet.

Submitted by Rich Scott

CHECK YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE

I definitely removed mine. I suggest you all do the same.

Now you can see anyone's Driver's License on the Internet, including your own! I just searched for mine and there it was...picture and all!

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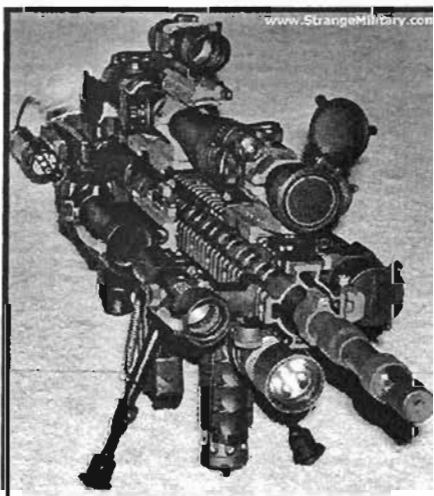
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M-18 Elite - The Future of War



The Pentagon unveiled the new M-

18 Elite, scheduled for intra-service deployment beginning in April. Making use of the latest in digital technology, the Elite will allow both military and ACLU lawyers to review all target site pictures via satellite, and give an instantaneous yay-or-nay. In addition, the President, House Committee on Military Affairs, and interactive viewers of CNN will have the ability to see, and refuse, targets that may be unnecessary, or deemed cruel. All shots will require 100% concurrence.."

Submitted by LtCol. Bill Quigley



Application for Membership Marine Corps League

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Date of Birth ____/____/____ Date of Enlistment/Commissioning _____

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