



# LISTEN UP!

**CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT #636**  
Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc.

**Commandant: ELLIS M. PEARCE III**

**Editor: DON H. GEE**

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**CENTRAL BUCKS  
DETACHMENT, Inc. #636**  
P. O. Box 1372  
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Meets  
7:30 p.m.,  
2d Wednesday of Month  
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**Jr. VICE COMMANDANT:**  
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WIL HAAS

**WEBMASTER:**  
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**MARINE OF THE YEAR:**  
WIL HAAS

## Congress Extends VA Home Loan Guarantee Improvements

By Staff Sgt. Kathleen T. Rhem, USA

*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21 - Congress has extended two 1992 improvements to the Department of Veterans Affairs Home Loan Guarantee Program that were due to expire in 2001.

Congress passed legislation earlier in this year that will allow National Guard and Reserve members to apply for the VA Home Loan Guarantee Program through December 2007.

The 1992 legislation established the benefit but made it good only through 2001, said **Keith Pedigo**, director of the VA's Loan Guarantee Service.

Veterans whose service was in the Guard or Reserve made up about 3 percent of the loans VA handles, Pedigo said.

"Because of success of the program, Congress decided it would be appropriate to extend the eligibility of the Guard and Reserve," he said. To be eligible, guardsmen and reservists must have at least six years' service in the Guard or Reserve, Pedigo said, but they need not be consecutive years.

Active-duty veterans buying their first home have paid a funding fee of two percent of the loan amount since 1992, when Congress raised it from 1.25 percent. Pedigo said the increase was to expire in 2001, but a recent change extended it three years.

Active-duty veterans buying subsequent homes are unaffected -- they pay a funding fee of 1.25 percent of the loan amount.

Reservists and Guardsmen pay a 2.5 percent funding fee. A recent improvement to the home loan guarantee program affects surviving spouses of service members who died of a service-connected disability.

Pedigo said long-standing provisions give these surviving spouses eligibility for the program, but take it away permanently if the surviving spouse remarries.

He said surviving spouses didn't regain eligibility even if the subsequent marriage ended in divorce or the subsequent spouse died.

The recent change provides for the surviving spouse to regain eligibility for the program if the subsequent marriage ends.

"They just need to be unmarried at the time the loan is made," Pedigo said.

For more information, visit <http://www.va.gov>.

THE NEXT DETACHMENT MEETING WILL BE AT  
1930 ON 14 FEBRUARY 2001 AT THE AMERICAN LEGION POST,  
315 NORTH ST., DOYLESTOWN

# COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Marines,

Well, it's February already. Soon the nice weather will be back and we can get out there and do things like clean the highway and make money--parking cars. There will also be the annual parades. What do all of these things have in common? If you guessed they all need people to make them work, I'd make that my final answer. Without the help of our Detachment members, we can't do any of these fun things. Our Detachment is rare because we do get such a good turnout for everything, usually. I have noticed the last few times we scheduled highway clean-up the attendance was lacking, to say the least. If we are to continue this and other projects, our support needs to be what it has been in the past. Central Bucks Detachment is one of the most respected Detachments in the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania--let's keep it that way. Make the effort to come and help with our projects, fund-raisers and public appearances.

The meeting in February is when we get to find out who the Nominating Committee has in mind to lead the Detachment for the coming year. If you wish to be considered for an office, get in touch with **Junior Past Commandant Don Gee** and volunteer yourself. This year, I told Don, we should do something different and elect those who don't come to all the meetings between now and the election. So, if you want to be sure to either be an officer or NOT to be an officer, you'd better make it to the meetings!!! Seriously, the Detachment needs you to think about becoming an



## LISTEN UP!

LISTEN UP! is the internal information publication of the **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT #636, Inc.** of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc. It is published monthly by and for the members of the Central Bucks Detachment.

officer. You might just have the idea in there somewhere that will get the Detachment growing and doing like no one else has done before. I truly like being Commandant, but don't let that stop you from taking the job for a while. Come out in February and keep up with what's

going on in the Detachment. See you there.

Semper Fi,

## Need A Uniform? Point, Click, It's On The Way

Sailors and Marines will be able to point, click and order uniforms and accessories on the Internet beginning next year. As of Jan. 15, sailors can order uniforms on the Navy Exchange Service Command's Web site, and **Kristine Sturkie**, spokeswoman for the command. That address is <http://www.navy-nex.com>.

By the middle of February, Marines can order uniforms on line. Marine Corps exchange officials are working closely with Navy exchange officials to set up their uniform e-commerce. That web address is <http://www.usmc-mccs.org>.

For sailors, mostly winter uniform items will be available at first, with about 60 percent of the Navy's line items available.

Service dress blues, dress khakis and work khakis, the new utility uniforms and coveralls will be available, Sturkie said, along with hats, belts, shoes, outerwear, insignia and ribbons.

"We'll gradually expand so that by the time of the shift in uniforms in April, we'll have the summer items up on the Web site. We'll be continually adding things," she said.

For Marines, about 100 items will be available by e-commerce. They will include utility uniforms, accessories and insignia. More items will be added each month until all the items provided by Defense Supply Center, Philadelphia are available, said **Bill Dornetto**, who oversees the development of online uniform shopping for Marine Corps Community Service.

The prices will be the same as in uniform stores. Shipping will be free, unless the sailor or Marine wants to pay to receive the item faster, within two busi-

ness days. Otherwise, the standard shipments will arrive within seven to 10 working days.

Soldiers and airmen have been able to order uniforms on the Army and Air Force Exchange Service Web site for about 2 1/2 years.

Those sales represent about 3 percent of the total dollar value of sales on the <http://www.aafes.com> Web site. Like the AAFES uniform sales e-commerce site, the Navy and Marines site will allow customers to view a list of merchandise, then click to see pictures of the items, information about the fabric content, sizes and prices.

Navy exchange officials conducted a test on their uniform sales Web site a few months ago in their computer lab, gathering feedback from about 10 sailors, Sturkie said.

"We've incorporated their suggestions. They liked the photos and wanted more ease in ordering. They were very excited to be able to order uniforms."

The most popular uniform item on the <http://www.aafes.com> Web site is insignia, said **Fred Bluhm**, spokesman for AAFES. Sized items of clothing requiring alterations don't sell as well as insignia and other accessories.

Across the board, soldiers buy more from the uniform e-commerce site than airmen do, Bluhm said.

For now, Marines can download and print a catalog from the Web site, browse it and phone in orders. Or, they can download an order form and fax it in. Customers will still be able to order uniforms through toll-free numbers.

And if they have questions or problems ordering online, they will be able to talk to someone by calling the toll-free number.

# Highlights

The regular meeting of the Central Bucks Detachment, Inc., of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, was held January 10, 2001, at Albert E. Atkinson American Legion Post #210, 315 North St., Doylestown, PA.

There were 20 members present including all officers except the Senior Vice Commandant and the Quartermaster. Distinguished members in attendance included **National Public relations Officer and Past Commandant Don Gee, Past Commandants Donald D. Parzanese Sr., Bill Plant, and Frank Yohe; Department of New Jersey Past Commandant Ed Hoth ; and Marine of the Year Bob Momorella .**

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

**The Paymaster's Report** was presented by **Paymaster Bob Cody**. The report was unanimously accepted.

**Sick Call: Marine Steve Weir** recently suffered a death in his family. The condolences of the detachment were sincerely expressed.

**Commandant Budd Pearce** informed the members he had received information about new veterans program from the Bucks County Department of Veterans Affairs. He also presented a "Marine of the Year" certificate to **Bob Momorella**. He also reported on the proposed Life Membership Program being put forth by the Department. The Detachment has opted to institute a Life Membership Program of its own. Members desiring to put Life Membership dues on their credit cards may do so. Contact the Junior Vice Commandant for details at (215) 822-6898.

**Junior Vice Commandant Don Gee , PC,** in the absence of **Senior Vice Commandant Bill Miller ,** reported the Detachment strength at 55, including 14 Life Members, 37 Regular Members, and 4 Associate Members. There are 2 Delinquent members. He also read correspondence from National Headquarters soliciting ads for the Mid-Winter Meeting program book.

**Adjutant Gary Smith** reported he had no correspondence other than that already reported.

**Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Sundling** reported there had been no requests for the Color Guard since the last meeting

**Staff Judge Advocate Bob Momorella** reported the Detachment had no legal problems.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Grocery Receipts Committee--Redner's Coordinator Gary Smith** reported the Detachment had received \$67.73 from Redner's "Save-A-Tape" program. **Acme Markets Coordinator Don Gee** reported he had forwarded more than \$7800 in receipts and the Detachment should be receiving a check from Acme in the near future.

**Public Relations Committee--Public Relations Officer Don Gee** set January 20 as the deadline for submitting materials for inclusion in the February issue of "*Listen Up!*" **Marine of the Year Bob Momorella** reminded the members that all of the ads for the newsletter expire on March 31. He asked that members who sold ads for this year renew their contacts to solicit ads for the coming year.

**MIA/POW Committee--MIA/POW Committee Chair Bill Plant , PC,** related an article about the possibility of MIAs in Russia.

**Nominating Committee--Commandant Pearce** activated the Nominating Committee. Junior Past Commandant Gee is the chair and all Detachment Past Commandants are members of the committee. The committee will present a slate of officers at the February meeting.

## GOOD OF THE LEAGUE

**Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Sundling** reported on the disposition of toys from "The Commandant's Table." He also reported receiving a "Thank You" note from a family which received some of the toys.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Marine Bill Plant** stated there was a chainsaw carving competition Feb. 16-18 in Ridgeway, PA.

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned until 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 14.**

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# CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT

## Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc.



### WORKSHEET FOR VETERAN'S SURVIVORS

**BE PREPARED:** Complete this form and keep it in a personal file. When needed, this information will prove most valuable in establishing veterans benefits and rights at some future time.

Veteran's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security No: \_\_\_\_\_ VA Claim No: C- \_\_\_\_\_

GI Insurance File No: \_\_\_\_\_ Service Serial No: \_\_\_\_\_

Active Duty Service Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Place(s) of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Place(s) of Separation: \_\_\_\_\_

Discharge (or DD Form 214) recorded at: City \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Vol: \_\_\_\_\_ Page: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Full Name Prior to Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Marriages of Veteran (Names, dates, places):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Marriages of Spouse (Names, dates, places):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Children (Names, dates, places of birth):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Member of Following Veterans Organizations: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you desire a veteran's burial service using the U. S. Flag, it is necessary that the veteran's Social Security Number and Military Service Number, and VA Claim Number be supplied to obtain a flag.

**FILL THIS FORM OUT, SO IT WILL BE AVAILABLE WHEN NEEDED.**

# Marine Corps Plans Replacing Five-Ton Trucks

by Cpl. Abigail B. LaBin

29 PALMS, CA--Every Marine with a bad five-ton experience in their life should have seen it. It was big, it was green, it was a truck, but as one of the Corps' newest pieces of gear growled across the desert here, it was also tolling a bell for the venerable five-ton truck.

The Marines testing the 7.1-ton Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement are traveling the continent testing it against just about every combination of elemental and operator abuse they can dream up. The truck is doing amazingly well.

"This is about 100 percent better than the five-ton," said Lance Corporal Brent Burch, a driver on the MTVR testing team. "The independent suspension and horsepower it puts out make for a smoother ride."

The smoother ride was a big selling point with 3rd Platoon, "L" Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines. The platoon volunteered their morning to take a ride in the back of the new truck and practice tactical dismounts and rapid extractions from it.

"This beats the five-ton," said Private First Class Ricky Perry, a rifleman with the platoon. "It's smoother."

After testing the ride and climbing in and out of the vehicle, the Marines of 3/7 filled out questionnaires. The Marines were asked to comment on the smooth-

ness and comfort of the ride and, also, on the degree of security they felt in the back.

Some Marines commented on the difficulty of getting in and out of the truck rapidly and safely, due to the height of the truck and placement of the single ladder. Data collecting members of the testing team encouraged the "grunts" to write down their comments, noting there was still time for some changes to be made.

Troop transport is important, but it is only one area in which the truck was tested. The drivers started out being plucked from their respective motor pools at the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center here, Camp Pendleton and Camp Lejeune. They then attended a brief drivers' course at the factory in Oshkosh, WI, where the truck is made.

Once they got their eight trucks, they began trying their best to destroy them.

"We're trying it in every condition," Burch said. "We're doing everything a Marine could do to it."

Before they came to the Combat Center, the search for extreme conditions led the testing team to Alaska, where they drove the trucks in snow and ice to try to find weak points. They also worked to get trucks stuck as thoroughly as possible, to test the side-mounted winch's ability to get the vehicles out.

So far, the truck's testing has proved it to be an excellent piece of gear, according to Burch. In the eyes of the testing team's leaders, however, the truck is not all that has proved to be outstanding.

"What I've got are the best Marines in their fields from the east and west coasts," said Staff Sergeant George Smith, MTVR Operations Chief. "They're ideal."

The 18 Marines who currently make up the testing team come not only from the motor transport field, but also from artillery and the mechanic shops of the Corps. Even as they drove their trucks and collected data in the desert of the Combat Center, more than 30 more Marines were going through the factory sponsored drivers' training. This first team of Marine to drive the new truck will probably, according to Burch, end up working as instructors in the program when the truck hits the fleet.

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# Origin of The 21-Gun Salute

Gun salutes are fired by naval guns and/or by saluting batteries with artillery pieces. Twenty-one guns are a national or royal salute. The only individuals entitled to this salute are Presidents or former Presidents of the United States, heads of foreign states and members of a reigning royal family. That's it. Some other personal gun salutes rated are 19 guns for the Vice president of the United States and the same for the Secretary of the Navy. The Commandant of the Marine Corps and Chief of Naval Operations also rate 19 guns while other Generals and Admirals rate 17. Lieutenant Generals rate 15, Major Generals 13, and Brigadier Generals rate 11. That is a very short, partial explanation of gun salutes for individuals. The real question who rates the three volleys fired at a military funeral. Anyone entitled to military honors is entitled to the volleys, subject to the availability of a firing detail. Somehow this has become confused with

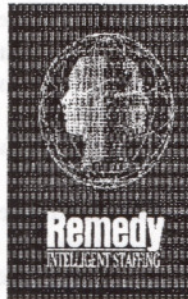
a 21-gun salute. The three volleys fired at a funeral are just that, nothing more. They are not a 21-gun salute or any other gun salute. The funeral volleys are believed to have originated as an ancient superstition where fire arms were discharged to frighten evil spirits away from the grave. Why then are so many people confused and erroneously call the three volleys a 21-gun salute? Who knows? Because someone saw a 17-member detail fire three rounds at a funeral. He may have multiplied the three rounds by seven and decided this was a 21-gun salute.

And this caught on and it spread and spread. In case you forgot when you were in Boot Camp you were taught that a rifle is not a gun. A rifle detail can consist of any number of riflemen.

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Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date of Enlistment/Commissioning \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Discharge/Separation/Retirement \_\_\_\_\_ SSN# \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Application -- New ( ) Renewal ( ) Associate ( ) Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for membership in the **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT**, Marine Corps League, and enclose \$30.00 for one year's membership (which includes subscription to **MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MAGAZINE**).

I hereby certify I have served as a U.S. Marine for more than 90 days, the character of my service has been honorable and, if discharged, I am in receipt of an Honorable Discharge. By signature on this application, I hereby agree to provide proof of Honorable Discharge/service upon request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Sponsor - where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant's Signature)

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