

# LISTEN UP!

CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT

#636

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE  
OF PENNSYLVANIA, INC.

VOLUME XX, Number 12

JANUARY 2008

Commandant: JAMES POWELL

Editor: DON H. GEE

## VA Agrees to Buy Land for New National Cemetery

WASHINGTON, Nov. 9--The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Dolington Land LP, a subsidiary of real estate developer Toll Brothers Inc. and the owner of a 205-acre site in Bucks County, PA, near Washington's Crossing Historic Park, have signed an "offer to sell" agreement under which VA will purchase for \$10.5 million the site for the construction of a new national cemetery.

"This is a key step forward in bringing a national shrine to veterans in southeastern Pennsylvania," said VA's **Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs William F. Tuerk**. "Building this cemetery is a priority for VA, and we are pleased to be moving forward with our plans."

With this step taken, VA expects to complete the formal purchase of the prop-

erty by March 2008. Once the purchase is finalized and the cemetery design is complete, initial construction will begin in mid 2008.



Burials at the new national cemetery, which will serve more than 580,000 veterans and their families who live in the area, are expected to begin in late 2008. Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, the nearest open national cemetery in Pennsylvania, is 120 miles from the site of the new cemetery.

Veterans with a discharge other than dishonorable, their spouses and dependent children are eligible for burial in a national cemetery. Other burial benefits for eligible veterans include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker—even if they are not buried in a national cemetery.

In the midst of the largest cemetery expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 125 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico, as well as 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites.

More than 3.3 million Americans, including veterans of every war and conflict—from the Revolutionary War to the current war in Iraq—are buried in VA's national cemeteries.

## MCL Detachment Renamed For Marine Killed in Iraq

A Marine Corps League Detachment in Washington state changed its name to honor the highest ranking woman killed in Iraq.

Whidbey Island's Detachment 1210 was renamed the **Major Megan McClung** Marine Corps League Detachment last month, said **Chuck Foster**, Adjutant-Paymaster for the Department of Washington Marine Corps League.

McClung, 34, was a Public Affairs Officer assigned to I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, based at Camp Pendleton, CA, when she was killed by a roadside bomb Dec. 6, 2006.

Foster said McClung's father belongs to the Detachment.

## Vietnam Marine Veteran Buried 40 Years After Death

A Marine who disappeared during the Vietnam War was buried after his remains were recently identified with DNA testing.

**LCpl. Richard W. Fisher**, 20, went to Vietnam in October 1967 and was declared missing in January 1968 while conducting military operations in Vietnam's Quang Nam province.

His remains were recovered in 1994 but weren't positively identified until earlier this year, the Marine Corps said Nov. 15.

While he was missing, Fischer was promoted to the rank of Gunnery Sergeant. He was classified as presumed "killed in action" in 1978.



# COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Hello Marines,

First, I would like to wish all Marines a Happy Holidays and prosperous New Year.

As the holiday season is upon us please keep your Marine brothers, past and present, in your thoughts and prayers. As we all know, freedom is not free and our Marine brotherhood has always been and

will always be at the forefront of that battle.

I congratulate and welcome aboard our three newest Detachment Marines. They are **Joe Doherty, Vince Hagan** and **Lou Belsito**.

We swore them in at the December meeting. We've added six new members the past couple of months and our Detachment strength is now unofficially at 51.

Keep up the great recruiting work and let's try to increase our membership even more during the next year.

Everyone should be aware that the new year will also bring thoughts of Officer elections in March.

As always, if you have any interest in serving your Detachment please talk to any of the current Officers with your interest. We are always on the lookout for new blood to fill the Officer rolls. The only restriction is that you be a Regular Member of your detachment.

As we enter the new year, I look

forward to another fulfilling and successful campaign for the Central Bucks Detachment and the Marine Corps League.

So, I'll sign off here and I'll see you next year.

Semper Fi,

Jim Powell



**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**

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**Jr. VICE COMMANDANT  
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BOB SUNDLING, PC**

**MESS SERGEANT  
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## GWOT-E MEDAL ELIGIBILITY EXPANDS

Six countries have been added to the list of designated areas of eligibility for the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, according to a recent Corps-wide message. All but one of them are in Africa.

Marines serving in Azerbaijan, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Tanzania and Tunisia may be awarded the medal, the message states.

The list of eligible countries has been expanded three times since the medal's introduction in 2004, said **1st Lt. Rob Dolan**, a spokesman for the Corps' Awards Branch at Quantico, VA.

Despite the expanded eligibility, Marines are allowed only one award of the medal, Dolan said.

## ONLY 2 ISSUES LEFT

### LISTEN UP! Seeks Editor

Someone familiar with desktop publishing is needed to edit our Detachment newsletter. If you're interested in serving your Detachment as its P-R Officer, contact **Commandant Jim Powell** (215-862-6280) or **Senior Vice Commandant Don Gee** (215-822-6898).

# DECEMBER DETACHMENT MEETING



## M I N U T E S

The regular meeting of the Central Bucks Detachment #636, Inc., of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc., was held December 12, 2007, at the Albert E. Atkinson American Legion Post #210, 315 North St., Doylestown, PA.

There were 19 members present including all officers. Distinguished members in attendance included **Past Commandants Don Gee, Budd Pearce, and Bob Sundling**; and **Past Commandant of the Department of New Jersey Ed Hoth**.

The **Minutes** of the November Meeting were unanimously accepted by the members.

The **Paymaster's Report** was presented by **Paymaster Bill Mickelson**. The report was unanimously accepted.

**Sick Call: Marine Bob Cody** is still recuperating at home but hopes to attend the January Meeting. **Past Commandant Bill Miller** is recuperating from surgery and expects to attend the January Meeting. **Past Commandant Don Parzanese Sr.** is on "light duty" because of his recent heart attack.

**New Members: Marines Louis D. Belsito** of Pipersville, **Joseph F. Dougherty** of New Hope and **Vincent J. Hagen** of Hatboro were unanimously accepted as members.

### OFFICERS REPORTS

**Commandant Jim Powell** reported the Detachment had received notice of a ceremony celebrating George Washington's Birthday to be held at Washingtons Crossing.

**Senior Vice Commandant Don Gee, PC**, reported the Detachment strength at 51 including 22 Life Members, 24 Regular Members, 4 Associate Members, and 1 Honorary Member.

**Junior Vice Commandant Budd Pearce, PC**, announced he would be distributing Department Raffle tickets at the January Meeting.

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

**Judge Advocate Bill Jerrom** reported the Detachment had no legal problems.

**Chaplain Ed Hoth, PDC**, reported his services were available but not requested since the last meeting.

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

**Quartermaster Corey Fisher** reported \$166.00 in Quartermaster sales.

**The Public Relations Officer** reported he and Quartermaster Fisher had performed a "13 Folds of the Flag" at Central Bucks East High School for Veterans Day. He set Dec. 20 as the deadline for submitting material for the January issue of *Listen Up!*

### NEW BUSINESS

Commandant Powell presented a Distinguished Service Medal to former **Quartermaster Bob Duff** for his decade of service as Detachment Quartermaster.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to donate \$100 to the *Daily Intelligencer's* "Give A Christmas" fund.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sergeant-at-Arms Sundling reported six boxes of items had been sent to the troops in Iraq by his wife **Peggy** since the last meeting.

**There being no further business, the meeting was closed until 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 9.**

## PAY IT FORWARD: LCpl. Robert M. Sundling, USMCR

Leadership is a huge responsibility. It is also, for some, the culmination of a life's wish – a true love – and an ongoing learning experience. Those few, the ones who truly love what they do and want to pass on what they have learned along the way, are the people that make the most impact on other people's lives.

I believe my instructor, **LCpl. Robert M. Sundling**, is one of those few. He is a Marine. Some may read that statement and wonder at what is actually meant by it, and some might read it and think to themselves, "He is a Marine, and...what?"

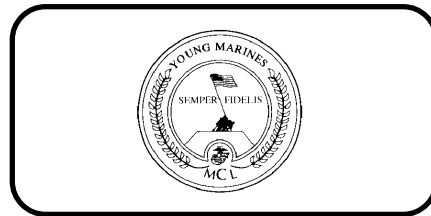
A Marine is different from other people. Eleanor Roosevelt said it best with her comment, "The Marines I have seen around the world have the cleanest bodies, the filthiest minds, the highest morale, and the lowest morals of any group of animals I have ever seen. Thank God for the United States Marine Corps!" His commitment to the Marines is so great that it has spanned the majority of his life – from his first flattop at the age of four, joining the Young Marines at the age of seven and a half to be more like his dad, a retired Marine, enlisting in the Marine Corps at the age of eighteen, to coming back to his Young Marine unit as an instructor – a leader.

LCpl. Sundling attributes a majority of his successes in the United States Marine Corps to the leadership traits and principles he learned as a Young Marine. By his own admission, his early years with the unit were not as productive as they could have been and he missed opportunities that he didn't even know about at the time because he didn't embrace the information and instruction he was given. He went up (and down) the ranks for a few years – just getting along and not really putting much effort in – which was indicative of his life (outside his family) at that point. He was lacking in social skills, unsure of himself, and shy. He had an epiphany of sorts when he was promoted to Sergeant.

All the knowledge that he'd been exposed to all of those years in the Young Marines suddenly made sense. He became a decisive leader – both in the Young Marines and in his life outside the

Young Marines. About four months after his promotion, he was also elevated to captain of his soccer team. His grades improved as his need for knowledge grew and his appreciation for those who teach matured. He became a better person. He hungered for leadership responsibilities. He began to plan out activities for his unit in his spare time.

He was promoted to Staff Sergeant, and he further improved his leadership skills. He was given appropriate responsibility, he learned how to deal with his peers – both in and out of the unit – and he learned how to approach people using tact and diplomacy. One of the true tests of a leader is a person's ability to follow when required.



LCpl. Sundling learned how to follow – how to appreciate another's knowledge or superior rank – without bitterness or disrespect. With increasing responsibilities in the unit came a natural progression of strength, courage, the ability to prioritize, and ever increasing self confidence. He was promoted to Gunnery Sergeant – one of only three ever in the unit – and was awarded unit "Young Marine of the Year."

Upon his graduation from high school and the Young Marines at the age of 18, LCpl. Sundling enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps, and reported to Parris Island, SC, for recruit training.

He was well prepared for the introduction to boot camp – he'd already been studying USMC history most of his life, he was comfortable with rank structure, people yelling at him, C-rations, his uniform, inspections, and the military way of life. He was so well prepared, he often got yelled at for having too much knowledge--"What were you, some kind of crazy Young Marine?"

He was so far ahead of the other recruits that most of his energy and time was expended on physical training and stress management skills. He graduated as a

Private First Class because of his high rank as a Young Marine.

He chose to become a reservist to stay close to his family, despite having to straddle an often difficult line between his civilian life and his military life. His current MOS is 3043 – supply administration/operations clerk. He plans to be a career Marine.

I have heard the phrase "pay it forward" for some time without ever really understanding what it meant. LCpl. Sundling is the epitome of that saying.

He has taken all of the skills, the knowledge, and the training he has received from others – his parents, his Young Marine instructors, his Marine Corps instructors, and his peers – and gives it back to all of the Young Marines in my unit every day, not just during the meetings or events, but any time, any day, whenever anyone needs him. He is proud to be a Marine. He hopes to foster the same love and commitment he feels for the Marine Corps in the Young Marines in my unit. He works hard to provide leadership lessons – and life lessons – to all of the Young Marines in his charge. He requires our best efforts and will accept nothing less. He is decisive, influential, challenging, and not tolerant of laziness or disrespect. He never asks us to do anything he isn't willing to do. He holds us to the same standards as he warrants himself.

LCpl. Sundling told me once that he starts every morning – whether he is going to his civilian job or his Marine Corps job – by looking at his cleaned and pressed uniform. He thinks of what that uniform stands for, what kind of man he is, and what it means to be a Marine. What it means to be a leader.

I am proud to learn from him, honored to have him as an instructor, and lucky to have him as a constant source of inspiration in my Young Marine career. I will work to follow in his footsteps, and I hope to one day see the pride in his eyes as I graduate and am afforded the privilege of calling myself a United States Marine. Semper Fidelis!

*LCpl. Charles A. McGrath IV*  
Liberty Unit Marines Unit  
Willow Grove, PA

# Support Grows for Separate Veterans Affairs Department

HARRISBURG--Support is growing for a proposal he first introduced in 2005 that would establish a separate cabinet-level department to oversee veterans affairs, according to **State Senator John Siptroth**, who introduced the bill in 2005.

Siptroth said the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee issued a report last month saying that a Department of Veterans Affairs ought to be established in Pennsylvania. The committee's study found that the federal government spends less on veterans in the Commonwealth than in other states.

Pennsylvania has a Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. But, Siptroth said, "The needs of our military men and women differ greatly from those of our veterans. By creating a new agency, state officials to could address veterans' issues and concerns specifically and more effectively -- a new agency would help give each veteran the attention he or she deserves and assist in properly evaluating his or her respective needs."

Siptroth, a Navy veteran, said a new department would further improve outreach to Pennsylvania's 1.15 million veterans, whose range of issues are growing in number and complexity, making it taxing on service providers.

Along with the LBFC study, the state auditor general held meetings across Pennsylvania that found that people in every region support the idea of a separate department for veterans and think their needs would be better served with the establishment of such a department.

"There is a groundswell of support growing in every corner of the state," Siptroth said. "Now is the time to make this change. A cabinet-level official would be better able to represent Pennsylvania at the federal level and lobby for increased funding."

If the plan is adopted, Pennsylvania would join 18 states that already have a Department of Veterans Affairs in place to represent their veterans and promote their needs to the federal government. Siptroth's bill (H.B. 344) has the support of more than 50 legislators, from every region and from both parties.

The bill has been referred to the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Pre-

paredness Committee for consideration.

Locally, Siptroth is asking all veterans in the 189th Legislative District to complete the survey in his newsletter that can be found online at [www.pahouse.com/Siptroth](http://www.pahouse.com/Siptroth), so that he can provide better outreach and inform them about important changes to programs effecting vet-

erans.

The 189th District includes Hamilton, Middle Smithfield, Ross, Smithfield and portions of Chestnuthill and Stroud townships and Delaware Water Gap in Monroe County, and Delaware, Lehman, Porter and part of Dingman township in Pike County.

## Pennsylvania Marine Father Wins Law Suit

BALTIMORE (AP)--A grieving father won a nearly \$11 million verdict last month against a fundamentalist Kansas church that pickets military funerals out of a belief that the war in Iraq is a punishment for the nation's tolerance of homosexuality.

**Albert Snyder** of York, PA, sued the Westboro Baptist Church for unspecified damages after members demonstrated at the March 2006 funeral of his son, **Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder**, who was killed in Iraq.

The jury first awarded \$2.9 million in compensatory damages. It returned in the afternoon with its decision to award \$6 million in punitive damages for invasion of privacy and \$2 million for causing emotional distress.

Snyder's attorney, **Craig Trebilcock**, had urged jurors to determine an amount "that says don't do this in Maryland again. Do not bring your circus of hate to Maryland again."

Church members routinely picket funerals of military personnel killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, carrying signs such as "Thank God for dead soldiers" and "God hates fags."

A number of states have passed laws regarding funeral protests, and Congress has passed a law prohibiting such protests at federal cemeteries. But the Maryland lawsuit is believed to be the first filed by the family of a fallen serviceman.

The church and three of its leaders--the **Rev. Fred Phelps** and his two daughters,

**Shirley Phelps-Roper** and **Rebecca Phelps-Davis**, were found liable for invasion of privacy and intent to inflict emotional distress.

Even the size of the award for compensating damages "far exceeds the net worth of the defendants," according to financial statements filed with the court, U.S. **District Judge Richard Bennett** noted. Snyder claimed the protests intruded upon what should have been a private ceremony and sullied his memory of the event.

The church members testified they are following their religious beliefs by spreading the message that soldiers are dying because the nation is too tolerant of homosexuality.

Their attorneys maintained in closing arguments Tuesday that the burial was a public event and that even abhorrent points of view are protected by the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech and religion.

Earlier, church members staged a demonstration outside the federal courthouse. Church founder Fred Phelps held a sign reading "God is your enemy," while Shirley Phelps-Roper stood on an American flag and carried a sign that read "God hates fag enablers."

Members of the group sang "God Hates America" to the tune of "God Bless America."

Snyder sobbed when he heard the verdict, while members of the church greeted the news with tightlipped smiles.

## DID YOU KNOW ...

The primary goal of Marine Corps leadership is to instill in all Marines that we are warriors first. The only reason the United States of America needs a Marine Corps is to fight and win war. Everything else is secondary.

**SCHEDULE  
OF EVENTS**

**CHRISTMAS DAY  
25 DECEMBER**

**NEW YEAR'S DAY  
1 JANUARY**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
9 JANUARY**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING  
DAY  
21 JANUARY**

**GROUNDHOG DAY  
2 FEBRUARY**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
13 FEBRUARY**

**VALENTINE'S DAY  
14 FEBRUARY**

**PRESIDENTS' DAY  
18 FEBRUARY**

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS  
TIME BEGINS  
9 MARCH**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
12 MARCH**

**PALM SUNDAY  
16 MARCH**

**ST. PATYRICK'S DAY  
17 MARCH**

**1ST DAY OF SPRING  
20 MARCH**

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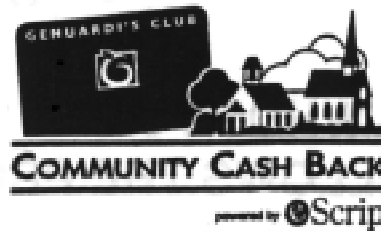
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## HOW TO PROPERLY WEAR RIBBONS AND MEDALS

- \* No pins, medals or any other devices shall be worn on the MCL Cover other than the EGA.
- \* **Either** DOD **or** MCL ribbons to be worn one-eighth inch above the left breast pocket of white short sleeve aviator shirt. **DO NOT INTERMIX!**
- \* Shooting badges will not be worn with MCL ribbons.
- \* MCL Ribbons **ONLY** on the MCL Ceremonial Uniform (khaki shirt) ). No DOD ribbons or Shooting Badges to be worn.
- \* Miniature medals may be worn on the Blazer as part of the MCL Formal Uniform (tuxedo shirt, bow tie).
- \* Large medals may be worn on the MCL Mess Jacket.

## USMC TRIVIA QUIZ



1. Name the Marine officer who served as technical advisor for the movie "Platoon."
2. Which Marine regiment conducted the successful "Operation Starlight" in Vietnam?
3. What is the defensive mission of the Marine rifle squad?
4. Identify two riot control agents which are considered irritant agents.
5. Which Continental Marine unit was identified as "Gooch's Marines?"

*Answers in Next Month's Newsletter*

### ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUIZ

1. The male Marine long-sleeve shirt should have a tolerance of plus or minus 1/2 inch.
2. The U.S. Marines fought in Korea for five years.
3. The U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis was established October 10, 1845.
4. The IRAM manual contains guidelines for assigning conduct and proficiency marks.
5. A Marine may refuse a Summary Court-Martial.



## Application for Membership Marine Corps League

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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)

Remit this form with check or money order (made payable to CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, MCL)  
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**CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, Inc.**  
**P. O. Box 1372**  
**Doylestown, PA 18901-1372**

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