



# LISTEN UP!

## CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT #636

Marine Corps League Of Pennsylvania, Inc.

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SEPTEMBER 2006

Commandant: **WILLIAM R. MILLER**

Editor: **DON H. GEE**



**CENTRAL BUCKS  
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American Legion Post 210  
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**MARINE OF THE YEAR**  
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### ***CMC Nominee Wins Over Senate Committee***

**WASHINGTON**—The man nominated to be the next Marine Corps Commandant told a Senate committee yesterday that the decisions to disband the Iraqi army and to bar all members of Saddam Hussein's Baath party from holding government jobs left U.S. commanders with too few troops and duties for which they were not prepared.

In his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, **LTGen. James T. Conway** lived up to his reputation for being brutally candid. He won glowing praise from the committee leaders and a promise of easy confirmation.

Responding to questions, Conway, who commanded the Camp Pendleton-based 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in the initial assault of Operation Iraqi Freedom and in the later attempt to pacify volatile Anbar province, said he had "sufficient forces to win (Operation Iraqi Freedom) quickly."

But, he continued, the military had planned on having the Iraqi army to help control the country after the collapse of Hussein's regime. "When the Iraqi army was not returned to duty, I was obligated to spread my forces," Conway said. "I didn't have enough troops to cover the area assigned."

Pressed by **Sen. John McCain**, Ariz., on what could have been done better in Iraq, Conway said there were many former Baath members holding government positions who "didn't have blood on their hands" and should have been left in their jobs.

When the military could not depend on those Iraqis to run the government services, "we had to resort to makeshift," he added.

Those decisions by Coalition Provisional Authority administrator **Paul Bremer**, who was appointed by President Bush, disrupted the military's prewar planning for the occupation and reconstruction of Iraq, Conway said.

A number of recent analyses have concluded that the bloody insurgency that has killed more than 2,500 Americans and wounded more than 18,000 could have been better mitigated if there had been more security forces and more Iraqis involved in the days after Baghdad fell.

Conway, currently serving as operations director for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said he believed it still was possible to begin reducing U.S. forces in Iraq, despite the upsurge in sectarian violence. He said it was essential the Iraqis know they have to assume responsibility for their security and that U.S. troops would leave.

Conway said he believed the investigation into the alleged murder by Camp Pendleton-based Marines of unarmed Iraqi civilians in Haditha was nearly completed. A separate probe into how Marine commanders handled reports of that incident is being reviewed by **Army Gen. George Casey**, the top commander in Iraq, and **LTGen. John Sattler**, the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force commander.

*(See CMC Nominee Testifies, Page 7)*

# COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Marines.

I recently returned from the 83rd National Convention held in Quincy, MA. I got there a little too late on Tuesday to attend any business session due to a bad accident which had I-95 closed down around New Haven that I happened to get caught up in. I made it just in time to catch the evening boat sunset cruise of Boston Harbor. The boat was very crowded and nothing but Marines and guests on board. They served up some pretty good chow as well. Everyone had a good time. Oh yes, I took along a tea bag which I threw overboard just for old time sake.. You know what I mean.

We witnessed the retiring of the colors at sunset on the USS Constitution and the cannon fire that followed. Every Marine on our boat stood at attention rendering a hand salute. That was awesome!

Nothing much happened on Wednesday as most of the day was taken up by the Devil Dog's Initiation followed the Supreme Growl. In the evening we climbed aboard about six big buses and headed out to Connecticut and the Mohegan Sun Casino Tour. That place was huge and fairly new. We all got \$60.00 worth of coupons which included a dinner buffet. No, we did not walk away rich. It's more like we contributed to the local economy.

Thursday was a full business day. I sat with the Pennsylvania Delegation

of which there were twenty members present including the Department Commandant, Senior Vice Commandant, Junior Vice Commandant, Junior Past Commandant, Judge Advocate, and Paymaster. I won't go into any of the details other than to inform our members that National MCL has decided to increase regular membership dues by \$6.00. This caused a real stir. They wanted to make it effective on Oct. 1st this year. It was beaten down by the delegates and extended to Jan. 1, 2007. This will be an increase in our detachment for regular members from \$25.00 per year to \$31.00. I encourage all regular members to become life members. I just hope that this will not have a negative impact on our detachment.

## *Marine of the Year Medallions Will Be Presented at January Anniversary Banquet*

Thursday was my one and only full day of convention business activity as I was on a tight schedule. I left our six delegate votes on the table for the Dept. should they need them for a vote, said my good-byes and headed for Maine to see my daughter.

Another thing that came out of this

convention was a medal and ribbon that has been authorized by National to be given to those in attendance by the Department of New Hampshire depicting their 60th anniversary. I will be wearing that ribbon.

I enjoyed my time there and am looking forward to returning back to detachment activities. I missed the last two meetings and I know that Senior Vice Commandant Jim Powell has filled in doing an excellent job. Thank you, Jim.

Speaking of ribbons, I picked up a dozen detachment Marine of the Year ribbons. They are solid red in color. I would like to distribute these ribbons to our members who have received this honor at the September meeting. It is authorized to be worn. Only problem is, I don't know where they go in the order of precedence. Until further notice, if you choose to wear it then just use your own discretion. I would think that somewhere near the top would be the way to go.

The MOY medallions are on order and will be presented in January at our anniversary banquet.

That's it for now. See you at the September meeting.

Semper Fi,



## 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.

## GOODIES FOR THE TROOPS

**Peggy Sundling**, who continues to send "Goodies to the Troops," has provided a sampling of items which are needed for the shipments. She cautions, "NO CHOCOLATE!!" Items include: Moist Wipes--with and without aloe (some people are allergic); Beef Jerky/Slim Jims--very popular; Hard Candy--no lollipops; Lotions and Moisturizers; Lip Balm; Chewing Gum; Crackers/Snacks/Granola Bars - in individual packages for easy toting; Fruit Snacks/Raisins--in individual packages; Writing Tablets/Envelopes/Pens; Crossword Puzzles; Magazines - military, automotive, hunting, etc. (used are fine); Drink Mixes - individual envelopes. **Thanks for your continued support!**

# Highlights

The regular meeting of the Central Bucks Detachment #636, Inc., of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc., was held August 9, 2006, at the Albert E. Atkinson American Legion Post #210, 315 North St., Doylestown, PA. There were 17 members present including all officers except the Commandant, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the P-R Officer. Distinguished members in attendance included **Past Commandant** and **Marine of the Year Budd Pearce** and **Past Commandant of the Department of New Jersey Ed Hoth**.

The Minutes of the July Meeting were unanimously approved.

The **Paymasters Report** was delivered by **Paymaster Bob Cody**. The report was unanimously accepted.

## OFFICER REPORTS

**Senior Vice Commandant Jim Powell** reported the Detachment strength at 47 with seven delinquent members.

**Junior Vice Commandant Budd Pearce, PC**, reported the Detachment will hold a Birthday Party in January to celebrate the Detachment's 20th anniversary.

**Adjutant Gary Smith** reported he had received no communications from either the National or Department Headquarters since the last meeting.

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

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY--Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator Budd Pearce** set Sat., Aug. 12, as the date for the next highway clean-up. Members will meet at "Back to the 50s" restaurant in Furlong at 8 a.m. for breakfast before beginning the cleanup.

**RIFLE & PISTOL TEAM--**The Department Rifle match will be held Sept. 29-Oct. 1. Anyone interested in joining the team should contact Team Captain Bill Rosenberger or Junior Vice Commandant Pearce.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE--Audit Committee Chair Budd Pearce** reported the Detachment's financial records had been examined and found to be completely in order.

**YOUNG MARINES--**In the absence of **Young Marines Coordinator Bob Sundling, PC**, Junior Vice Commandant Pearce reported the Young Marines Unit held its "Boot Camp" graduation.

## NEW BUSINESS

**NOCKAMIXON DAYS--**In the absence of **P-R Officer Don Gee, PC**, **Associate Member Corey Fisher** reported the Detachment had been asked to participate in Nockamixon Days on Sept. 23. The Detachment Color Guard and three volunteers are needed for this event. To volunteer for this event, contact Don Gee at 215-822-6898.

## GOOD OF THE LEAGUE

**DELINQUENT MEMBERS--**A motion was made and carried to form a committee to contact Delinquent Members and members who do not attend meetings. The committee will also examine the feasibility of paying first year dues for new members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned until 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 13.

## QUOTABLE QUOTE

**"Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day;  
teach that person to use the Internet  
and they won't bother you for weeks.**

# MARINES RECOVER SNIPER RIFLE

CAMP HABBANIYAH, Iraq--Scout snipers from 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, killed an enemy sniper June 16 and recovered a Marine sniper rifle lost nearly two years ago during a mission near Habbaniyah.

The rifle was the one formerly used by four Marines of 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, who were killed on a rooftop in Ramadi June 21, 2004.

Sniper Section Four was in a hide when the spotter observed a military-aged male inside a nearby parked car videotaping a passing patrol of amphibious assault vehicles. The Marines saw a rifle stock by the insurgent's side.

"We were in the right place at the right time," said **Sgt. Kevin Homestead**, an infantryman from K Company serving as a spotter for the sniper team that day.

They first radioed the passing Marines and told them they were being watched by an enemy sniper and to stay low. The insurgent then sealed his own fate by preparing the weapon. The 21-year-old Marine sniper, who declined to be interviewed – aimed in at the gunman's head behind the rear-side window.

He recited a mantra in his head.

Breathe, relax, aim, squeeze, surprise.

The enemy sniper died with the gun in his lap.

They dialed K Company – or Samurai 6 – and reported the target was dead.

"We then saw another military-aged male ... enter the passenger side door," said Homestead, 26, from Ontario, OR. "He was surprised to see the other shooter was killed."

The second insurgent scurried around the car and jumped in the driver's seat.

With the sniper now spotting for him, Homestead aimed in with his M-4 carbine and put three bullets in the driver before he could start the car.

A squad of K Company Marines came to the position and saw the sniper dead and the driver shot three times. The driver died as soon as the squad arrived on scene.

They pulled out the sniper rifle and immediately recognized that it was an M-40A1, the same used by the snipers of 2/4 in 2004.

The trunk of the car contained a pistol, a hand grenade, dozens of 7.62 mm rounds, multiple license plates and several camcorder tapes.

The rifle was missing for nearly two years – almost to the day. Marines believed the insurgent they killed, or those closely associated with him, had it all along. It is unknown how many times it was used against U.S. and Iraqi forces.

"He was a very good sniper," Homestead said. "But he got cocky and slipped up and it was our time to catch that."

The weapon came full circle, having originally belonged to the Darkhorse battalion in Operation Iraqi Freedom I, who turned it over to the "Magnificent Bastards" of 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. Coincidentally, a Darkhorse sniper killed the insurgent sniper, and a former Magnificent Bastard killed the spotter.

Darkhorse battalion had been dealing with sporadic sniper attacks since arriving in Iraq in January. Now, Marines have one less sniper to worry about.

"It's very rewarding to take them out the way we did," said Lt. Col. **Patrick G. Looney**, the battalion commander. "Doubly rewarding that it's a 2/4 sniper rifle, even though it won't bring back the

four Marines who were killed that day."

Triple rewarding that it won't be used on another Marine or soldier, he added.

"The credit has to go to Sgt. Homestead and the Sniper Section leader who made the kill," said **1st Lt. J. H. Cusack**, Sniper Platoon commander. "It was more than being in the right place at the right time.

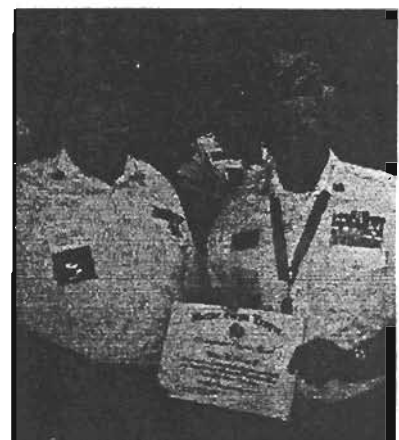
"It was the culmination of all of the training and planning the section leader had done up until that moment," Cusack added. "Being absolutely alert and focused to detect a small clue during a period of apparent inactivity and a perfectly executed shot."

Darkhorse snipers have since removed the powder and primer from the last 7.62 mm round chambered in the recaptured rifle. They will mount it on a plaque and present it to the Magnificent Bastards' snipers to honor their lost Marines.

"I would say that the guys who shot are typical of the Darkhorse snipers," said **Looney**, 43, from Oceanside, CA. "They're very proficient, very modest, very busy. They're out there almost daily doing great things in this AO and our old AO. The fact they're taking a back seat and letting the battalion reap the benefits is typical of the kind of Marines they are."



**KOREAN WAR ARMISTICE--** Chaplain Ed Hoth, PDC, and Doylestown Mayor Libby White attended the Korean War Armistice Ceremony on July 27 at the Bucks County Korean War Monument.



**DEPARTMENT AWARD--**Senior Vice Commandant **Budd Pearce**, PC (left) receives the Distinguished Citizens Medal (Silver) from Department of Pennsylvania Commandant **Tom Tanner**. Budd received the highest medal the Department can award for his "exemplary service to the Central Bucks Detachment."

## On the Bookshelf...



### "COMMAND OF THE GRILL"

U.S. Marines, renowned for prowess in fields of battle, can also grill at a Corps-worthy level of excellence. Proof comes in the recipes and photos packaged in a cookbook, "Command of the Grill: A Salute to Steak" (Weber, \$10 paperback), that will benefit Marines wounded or killed in the line of duty, as well as their families.

The cookbook is a collection of 41 grilled steak recipes comes from active, reserve and former U.S. Marines, including some famous names, along with plenty of personal stories and color photos. Cooking hints come in a chapter titled Steak Boot Camp.

All proceeds from the sale of cookbooks will go to four charities that directly benefit Marines: Wounded

Warrior Project, Injured Marines Semper Fi Fund, Fisher House and Marine Corps-Law Enforcement Foundation. The 80-page cookbook is available through the website, [www.commandofthegrill.com](http://www.commandofthegrill.com), which also lists book retailers.

The recipes include winners of what's described as last year's "serious tong-to-tong battle of the grill" – grilling competitions involving both active-duty and reserve Marines held at 10 Marine Corps Community Services installations. This year's "Command of the Grill" final grill-off took place in Times Square, New York City, during Fleet Week.

The publisher, Weber-Stephens Products Co., says the goal is to sell at least 100,000 cookbooks, raising \$1 million for donations to the funds.

## Mission Viejo Adopts Hundreds of Marines

By ERIKA I. RITCHIE

*The Orange County (Cal.) Register*

MISSION VIEJO – Hundreds of Camp Pendleton Marines just might have a new adopted home.

The Mission Viejo City Council on Monday night showed support for adopting the Marines and will make a final decision March 20.

Adopting the Headquarters Battalion of the 1st Marine Division--1,300 Marines and sailors--would mean the city and its residents have a personal commitment to specific Marines and their families.

Similar action has been taken by cities such as Laguna Niguel and Huntington Beach.

"Our Marines and sailors are at war right now," said Col. **Craig Baker**, commanding officer of the battalion. "I know the support of the American people means a lot."

Baker said 60 percent are deployed in Al Anbar--the heart of the Sunni insurgency--and many have served multiple missions.

The battalion lost four people last year; more than 100 were wounded.

"Adopting the Marines can become whatever the community wants it to be," **City Manager Dennis Wilberg** said. "It could mean Christmas presents for children, or paying the postage on letters of support from local schoolchildren. It could mean a formal dinner after they come back from deployment."

The city could help families of injured soldiers make the trip to be with their loved ones.

The military pays 80 percent of travel expenses. The city of Mission Viejo would pick up the rest.

"It's a really good idea," **Councilwoman Trish Kelley** said. "My husband was a Marine and I have insight on the Marine Corps life. I'd love to have our city do this."

"It's service above self," said resident **Larry Gilbert**. "That's the attitude of all of the Marines. This is the least we can do," Gilbert concluded.

## VA Volunteers Mark 60th Anniversary

WASHINGTON--For as long as the United States has had veterans, the nation has also had men and women who volunteered to help in the care of the wounded, the sick and the injured.

But 60 years ago, a partnership was formalized when the Veterans Administration (VA) created an office to oversee the volunteers assisting at the agency's facilities. That office now has about 140,000 volunteers on its rolls, with 94,000 contributing more than 13 million hours last year. VA would have needed 6,200 employees to replace the time donated by the volunteers, at a cost of nearly \$228 million.

"Volunteers have always been at the heart of VA," said **R. James Nicholson**, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "They free our doctors, nurses and technicians for work that only a professional can do. They are visible proof, especially to our combat-wounded, that the nation deeply appreciates the many sacrifices of our

veterans."

In April 1946, former **General of the Army Omar Bradley**, then head of the Veterans Administration, convened a meeting of veterans groups and welfare organizations to establish a national plan for volunteer assistance at VA facilities.

From that meeting grew the Voluntary Service Office that now works with more than 60 national groups to provide volunteers for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"Our volunteers take your breath away with their spirit, selflessness and dedication," said **Dr. Jonathan B. Perlin**, VA's Under Secretary for Health. "Our health care system is immeasurably better for their priceless contributions."

Volunteers assist hospital staff. They work in nursing homes, hospital wards, clinics, recreational activities, end-of-life care and many other programs. They also work in national cemeteries and benefits offices.

## **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**LABOR DAY  
4 SEPTEMBER**

**PATRIOT DAY  
11 SEPTEMBER**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
13 SEPTEMBER**

**NOCKAMIXON DAY  
23 SEPTEMBER**

**COLUMBUS DAY  
9 OCTOBER**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
11 OCTOBER**

**DEPARTMENT STAFF MEETING  
JONESTOWN, PA  
12-14 OCTOBER**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
8 NOVEMBER**

**MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY  
10 NOVEMBER**

**DETACHMENT MEETING  
13 DECEMBER**

**CHRISTMAS  
25 DECEMBER**

**NEW YEAR'S EVE  
31 DECEMBER**

**NEW YEARS DAY  
1 JANUARY**

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# Purple Heart Stamp Reissued

WASHINGTON--In continuing recognition of the sacrifices of combat-wounded veterans, the Honorable **R. James Nicholson**, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, joined with top officials from the U.S. Postal Service earlier this summer to unveil a new Purple Heart stamp.

Nicholson, a West Point alumnus and retired colonel in the Army reserves, also presented the Purple Heart medal to two soldiers being treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for combat wounds.

"This stamp will be a daily reminder of the extraordinary valor of our service members," said Nicholson during remarks at a ceremony for the first day of issue for the stamp held at Arlington National Cemetery.

"It is fitting that we have every-day testimonials to the wounds of war that, for some veterans, have occurred through their brave and selfless ser-

vice to our grateful nation," Nicholson added.

Receiving the Purple Heart were **Army Specialist Michael Hilliard** and **Army Specialist Ian Wagner**.

The new 39-cent postal stamp has the image of the military's Purple Heart medal.

Created by George Washington in 1782 for soldiers in the Continental Army, the Purple Heart now goes to military men and women wounded in combat.

Next of kin of veterans who die in combat also receive the medal.

In 2003, the U.S. Postal Service first issued a 37-cent stamp with the medal's distinctive image - a profile of George Washington on a purple background within a heart-shaped medallion. The new stamp has the same image, although it comes in the new 39-cent value set for first-class postage.

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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.

**DONALD D. PARZANESE JR.**

ELECTRICIAN

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## Application for Membership Marine Corps League

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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.

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(Sponsor - where applicable)

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Remit this form with check or money order (made payable to **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, MCL**)  
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**CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, Inc.**  
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