

LISTEN UP!

CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT

#636

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
OF PENNSYLVANIA, INC.

VOLUME XXII, Number 9

SEPTEMBER 2009

Commandant: JAMES POWELL

Editor: DON H. GEE

WARSHIP TO HONOR CPL. JASON DUNHAM, USMC

BATH, Maine - Marines flushing out Iraqi insurgents after an ambush came upon a column of vehicles. A van with a father and son. A pickup truck. A tractor. A BMW with a couple of sheiks. And a Toyota Land Cruiser with four young men, all of them insurgents.

As Marines began searching the vehicles, the driver of the Land Cruiser jumped out and attacked **Cpl. Jason Dunham**. The two men tumbled onto the dirt road. Two Marines ran up to assist but Dunham cried out, "No, no, no, watch his hand!"

A grenade exploded, rocking the narrow street.

Dunham, 22, of Scio, NY, mortally wounded as he saved his comrades that day, will be honored last month at the christening of the Navy's newest destroyer, the USS JASON DUNHAM. The young Corporal who threw his Kevlar helmet and his body onto the grenade became the first Marine since the Vietnam War to receive the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military honor.

His mother, **Deb Dunham**, said she can't think of a greater tribute.

"It keeps his name alive and his memory alive. And that, as a parent, is what's important, so that people don't forget what our men and women are doing with the fight for freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. There is a cost to pay," Deb Dunham said.

Deb Dunham, who will christened the ship with champagne at Bath Iron Works, was be joined by her husband, Dan, and

their other three children.

Dunham's company commander, **Maj. Trent Gibson**, and other Marines who served with him in Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, will attend.

1st Sgt. John Ferguson, who heard Dunham's last words before the grenade blast, saw the insurgent and the three Marines sprawled on the ground when the dust settled on April 14, 2004.

"I thought for sure all four were dead," he said. Amazingly, though, **LCpl. William Hampton** and **PFC Kelly Miller**, both suffering burns and shrapnel

wounds, rose to their feet. Dunham never regained consciousness and died eight days later.

While Dunham's name will always be synonymous with his actions on April 14, 2004, his parents remember a young man who wasn't perfect, growing up in the small town in western New York. He excelled at sports but wasn't the best student. He often forgot to take the trash out, they said.

But he always had a tendency to look

See **DUNHAM**, Page 5

Brochure Explains VA Burial Benefits

As a veteran, you may qualify for burial benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, but it's important to understand what they are and how to request them.

According to funeral industry experts, many veterans don't know all the facts when they or their families come in to plan their funeral services. The pamphlet *10 Important Facts About Your VA Burial Benefits* was created to educate veterans and correct some common misperceptions.

For example, a recent survey shows that 60% of veterans mistakenly believe the VA pays funeral, cremation and cemetery expenses for all veterans.

In truth, reimbursement of funeral or cremation expenses is limited, and

certain restrictions apply. Six out of 10 veterans also believe caskets are provided free of charge to all veterans. Actually, neither VA nor the various services provide a free casket for a deceased veteran unless death occurs while on active duty.

These and other facts are explained in the pamphlet, which also contains information on requesting a U.S. flag, military funeral honors ceremonies, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and the issuance or replacement of military service medals, awards and decorations.

For a free copy of *10 Important Facts About Your VA Burial Benefits* so you can take advantage of available VA burial benefits, call 1-800-821-2606.



COMMANDANT'S COLUMN

Hello Marines,

I hope everyone's has had a great summer as we head in to fall. Again this year **Past Commandant** and **Department SE District Vice Commandant Bill Miller** and I attended the 86th Annual Marine Corps League National Convention and 70th Military Order of Devil Dogs Supreme Growl, in Rochester, MN.

We had a great time with the Devil Dogs and this year they were

able to raise more than \$16,000 for the local Rochester Children's Hospital. We have a new Chief Devil Dog, the 53rd, **PDD Phil Ruhmshottel** from Vancouver, WA.

Hopefully by now everyone has heard that the ceremonial uniform khaki shirt has been removed as a League uniform item. They are no long to be worn as part of any League uniform. If you happen to see someone wearing one please inform them of the new rules. It is everyone's responsibility to police our own.

There were many other bylaw changes put on the floor at the convention, but too numerous to list here. If you would like to know more please give me a call and we can discuss them.

All of the National Officers were reelected to a 2nd term and our own **Past Department Commandant Dick Brown** was appointed as the National Northeast Division Vice Commandant. As we did at the Department Convention, we received some national recognition for our membership status and participation for our newsletter.

Everyone should be aware that nominations for "Marine of the Year" should be turned into the Detachment Marine of the Year Committee prior to the October Detachment meeting. If you believe that someone in the detachment has done things during the past year that warrants consideration for this great honor, please put together a nominating letter for

that Marine. Then pass it onto the Marine of the Year Committee, which consists of all of the past Marines of the Year. **Senior Vice Cmdt. Jim McComb**, being the most recent MOY is the Committee Chairman. Also **Junior Vice Cmdt. Ben Jones** is working on the possibility of holding as Birthday Ball this year. He is the Committee Chairman and is encouraging anyone with ideas or would just like to help with the planning to contact him. We will be discussing this in more detail at the next few meetings.

Have a great Labor Day weekend!!

Semper Fi,

ONE OF ORIGINAL CODE TALKERS DIES

WINDOW ROCK, AZ--**Willie K. Begay**, a Navajo Code Talker who was part of the original group recruited to develop what became an unbreakable code that con-founded the Japanese during World War II, has died. He was 88.

Begay, of Pinon, AZ, died July 7 after a battle with cancer.

The elite group of Navajo Marines transmitted messages in their native language. Begay served with the 3rd Marine Division and was overseas for 11 months.

In 2001, he received a Congressional Silver Medal in recognition of his service.



**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 McCOMB**

**Jr. VICE COMMANDANT
BEN JONES**

**ADJUTANT-PAYMASTER
DON H. GEE, PC**

**JUDGE ADVOCATE
WILLIAM MICKELSON**

**QUARTERMASTER
COREY A. FISHER**

**CHAPLAIN
ELLIS M. (BUDD) PEARCE, PC**

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS
BOB SUNDLING, PC**

**MESS SERGEANT
VINCENT J. HAGAN**

**WEB SERGEANT
JAMES POWELL**

AUGUST DETACHMENT MEETING



M I N U T E S

The regular meeting on the Central Bucks Detachment #636, Inc., of the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania, Inc., was held August 12, 2009, at the Albert E. Atkinson American Legion Post, 510 North St., Doylestown, PA.

There were 14 members present including all officers except the Senior Vice Commandant, the Junior Vice Commandant and the Mess Sergeant. Distinguished members in attendance included **Past Commandants Don Gee, Budd Pearce and Bob Sundling** and **Past Northeast Division Commandant and Past Department of New Jersey Commandant Ed Hoth**.

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

The **Paymaster's Report** by the Adjutant/Paymaster and was unanimously accepted.

New Members: **David Gentile** (Newtown, PA) was unanimously accepted as an Associate Member. **Marine Richard P. Kleva** (Point Pleasant, PA) was unanimously accepted as a transfer. He was previously a New Jersey Member-at-Large.

Sick Call: Former Detachment Member **Frank J. Kukuchka**, 90, died in July. **Marine Bill Jerrom** attended his funeral.

OFFICER REPORTS

Commandant Jim Powell reported on the National Convention. Major change was the outlawing of the khaki shirt as a part of ANY Marine Corps League uniform. The only approved uniform shirts for wear with the MCL uniform is the white shirts. Other topics included: the "Marines Helping Marines" Committee Chairman asked that people donating to the "Wounded Warrior Regiment" donate to the "Marines Helping Marines" fund instead. "Marines Helping Marines" is our organization and supports wounded Marines while the "Warriors Helping Warriors Regiment" helps the wounded from all of the services. The 2011 National Convention is scheduled for Boise, ID; the "Modern Marine Expo" will be held 29 Sept.-1 Oct. at Quantico, VA; Young Marines Units are now eligible for Meritorious Unit Commendations from the League upon recommendation from the sponsoring Detachment; and the standings of Pennsylvania Detachments in the "Toys for Tots" campaign, the "Americanism" awards, and "Chaplain of Four Chaplains" awards.

In the absence of the **Senior Vice Commandant**, the Adjutant/Paymaster reported the Detachment strength at 61 members including 28 Life Members, 25 Regular Members, 2 Dual members, 5 Associate Members, and 1 Honorary Life Member. Two members are delinquent in paying their dues.

Judge Advocate Bill Mickelson reported the Detachment had no known legal problems. He reported the Detachment can no longer maintain copies of DD-214s. Members present were able to retrieve the file copies of their discharge forms. Other members can contact the Judge Advocate to obtain theirs.

The Adjutant/Paymaster reported the Detachment had received correspondence from the "Stand Down 2009" Committee announcing the three-day annual "Hand Up, Not Hand Out" program conducted for Philadelphia's homeless veterans will be held Sept. 12-13 at the V-A Medical Center at 39th & Woodlands Ave., in Philadelphia. Anyone interested in volunteering to help with the event should contact the Adjutant/Paymaster for details. He also reported on the "Community Days at Lancaster Airport" on Saturday, Aug. 22, which will include "A Salute to U. S. Armed Forces and Veterans." The featured Air Show is free. He also reminded the members about "Nockamixon Community Day" on Sept. 19. Volunteers are needed to help staff our booth.

Chaplain Budd Pearce, PC, reported his services were available but not requested since the last meeting.

Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Sundling, PC, reported the Color Guard had not been requested since the last meeting.

Quartermaster Corey Fisher reported last month's sales at \$2.00.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rifle & Pistol Team: Team Captain Budd Pearce reported the Detachment will not be fielding a Rifle team this year because of the prohibitive costs this year to participants. Both the distance to the match and the cost of housing were unrealistic. The team will participate in next years' match when it returns to Ft. Indiantown Gap. Tentative dates for the 2010 Pistol Match are 4-6 June. Anyone wanting to join the teams should contact Budd. He also distributed 2009 pistol match participation patches to team members.

Adopt-A-Highway: The next highway cleanup will be held in October. Details later. More participation from Detachment members is necessary if the Detachment is to continue in the program.

Young Marines Unit: The Liberty Young Marines Unit held its "Boot Camp" at Lakehurst, NJ, graduating 10 new Young Marines.

Marine of the Year Committee: Commandant Powell encouraged members to nominate deserving members for this award. Nominations should be sent to **Senior Vice Commandant Jim McComb**, this year's Marine of the Year, who chairs the committee.

Float Committee: No report.

Fund-Raising Committee: No report.

Birthday Ball Committee: Members volunteering to serve on the committee will meet on Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 7 p.m. at The American Legion Post. Contact Junior Vice Commandant Jones for details.

Audit Committee: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Commandant Powell reminded the Detachment's annual IRS Form 990 had to be submitted. The Commandant also reported the Detachment has to make a revision of its Articles of Incorporation to include procedures to be taken upon dissolution of the Detachment.

NEW BUSINESS

Commandant Powell reported he had been contacted by the Past Commandant of All Divisions Detachment about forming a multi-Detachment committee to explore the possibility of holding a Department Convention in this area in 2013. Discussion was tabled until the September Meeting.

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE

GOODIES FOR THE TROOPS: **Peggy Sundling** is still sending parcels to the troops in harm's way. Please continue donating.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sergeant-at-Arms Sundling announced the "Semper Fi Families" would be meeting at the American Legion Post on Sunday, Aug. 16, at 1 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned until Wednesday, September 9, at 7:30 p.m.

**CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT
MARINES ON THE NET**

CAPRIO, Paul	midupe@aol.com
CUPITT, Steve	scupitt@aol.com
DeBELLA, Vincent	vincdebe@aol.com
DOHERTY, Joe	joedog7@verizon.net
DUFF, Bob	duffrft@verizon.net
GEE, Don	USMCCCA@aol.com
GREGAN, Ryan	ryangregan@comcast.net
HAGAN, Vincent	vincent.hagan@pnc.com
HOTH, Ed	Edhothusmc@aol.com
JONES, Ben	benjaminjones1@gmail.com
KELLER, Bruce	bruce@taylorsbucks.com
KOHLER, Bill	mustangcaptbill@aol.com
KOPP, Jacob T.	jkopp14@mac.com
McCOMB, Jim	jim_mccomb@verizon.net
McSTAY, James F.	jmcstay@comcast.net
MICKELSON, Bill	billmikelson@verizon.net
MILLER, Bill	billjae@verizon.net
MURRAY, Ken	kenmur1949@yahoo.com
MOMORELLA, Bob	mombo@starlinxcom
PARZANESE, Tony	tonyparz@hotmail.com
PARZANESE, Don, Sr.	donparzsr@comcast.net
PARZANESE, Don, Jr.	donald.parzanese@us.army.mil
PEARCE, Budd	Buddpearce@comcast.net
POWELL, Jim	usmc80@comcast.net
SCOTT, Rich	richgscott@gmail.com
SMITH, Gary	sgarysemperfi@aol.com
SUNDLING, Bob	sundling@tiniusolsen.com
WALDRON, Mike	waldron@quigleyco.com
WIMER, Lee	leewimer@aol.com

**SCHEDULE
OF EVENTS**

**LABOR DAY
7 SEPTEMBER**

**DETACHMENT
MEETING
9 SEPTEMBER**

**GRANDPARENTS DAY
13 SEPTEMBER**

**NOCKAMIXON
COMMUNITY DAY
19 SEPTEMBER**

**FIRST DAY
OF AUTUMN
22 SEPTEMBER**

**YUM KIPPUR
23 SEPTEMBER**

**COLUMBUS DAY
12 OCTOBER**

**DETACHMENT
MEETING
14 OCTOBER**

**FALL STAFF
MEETING
23-24 OCTOBER**

**HALLOWEEN
31 OCTOBER**

**ELECTION DAY
3 NOVEMBER**

**MARINE CORPS
BIRTHDAY
10 NOVEMBER**

out for others.

"Jason had the biggest heart on this planet. He was always looking out for everybody else and their welfare. When they were sad, he would make them laugh. He was that way all through his childhood growing up, and in the Marine Corps also," Dan Dunham said.

He was an unlikely choice for squad leader because he hadn't seen combat. But Ferguson, who selected him, liked what he saw: "He didn't brag or boast about his abilities. He never yelled. In fact, the whole time I knew him he only yelled once or twice. He led by example."

Dunham took his role as squad leader seriously. He extended his enlistment so he could serve a full combat tour with his fellow Marines, and he vowed to make sure his squad made it home alive. The rest of them did.

The Iraqi insurgency was gaining momentum when Dunham's unit arrived in Iraq's dangerous Anbar Province and set up shop in 2004 near the Syrian border.

Kilo Company lost its first Marine on April 9 in an ambush, so the troops were already on edge five days later when they heard explosions while on patrol in Karabilah. The battalion commander's convoy had been ambushed, so Dunham's unit set off to engage the enemy.

His squad came across a line of vehicles fleeing and decided to search them.

The old Land Cruiser was of particular interest because it had four young men in it. Miller got there first, and three Iraqis hopped out and fled, Gibson said.

Then the driver jumped out and attempted to choke Dunham. Dunham drove his knee into the man, and they fought on the ground. Miller struck the man with a telescoping baton and tried to put him in a choke hold, to no avail. Hampton, too, charged to the scene. No one but Dunham saw the grenade before the blast. Afterward, the suicide bomber got to his feet and was shot dead.

Later, Gibson, the company commander, returned to the bloody scene and found pieces of Dunham's helmet. He also found the pin from a grenade on the ground, next to the attacker's body. Another hand grenade and weapons includ-

ing rocket-propelled grenade launchers were discovered in the Land Cruiser.

Dunham's response was not by the book. Marines are taught to hit the deck, facing away, to minimize shrapnel wounds from a grenade, Gibson said.

But Dunham had his own ideas. He'd told fellow Marines he thought the best approach would be to cover the grenade with the helmet and bullet-proof body armor, they said. In fact, he even demonstrated the technique. Little did he know that he'd employ the technique two weeks later.

"Dunham had thought about it quite a bit. He decided that you could cover it with your helmet to help diffuse the blast," Gibson said.

Dunham, whose Medal of Honor was announced in 2006, is one of four soldiers to receive the medal for actions in Iraq.

Gibson said Dunham's example serves as an inspiration to Marines.

"More than just being written up for a medal, it's really what kind of example he set in sacrificing himself, in committing himself so completely to the protection of his Marines," Gibson said.

The USS JASON DUNHAM will go to sea with several mementos donated by his family, including his dress blue uniform and a baseball bat. The warship carries the motto: "Semper Fidelis, Semper Fortis," which is Latin for "Always Faithful, Always Strong."

PHOENIXVILLE

Main Street CDC
Post Office Box 64
Phoenixville, PA 19460

July 20, 2009

Dear Marine:

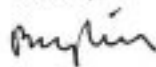
This is to inform you that August 28, 2009 will be *Marine Night in downtown Phoenixville*. There will be a short program and a proclamation read honoring all Marines past and present. At 7:00 PM we will honor John Bodnar for his service to his country.

The night will be filled with music, fun and an opportunity to sit down with other marines and chat in an open-air environment. The Pink Floyd cover group The Wall will be playing. The music gets underway at 6 PM with the main stage starting at 7: 30 PM.

It will be a nice night to get together with fellow Marines and enjoy the day.

If there was any questions concerning the event please call Barry Cassidy 484 880 1530.

Sincerely,



Barry Cassidy

Your Official Badge Order Form

Instructions - PLEASE READ FIRST

- 1) Please send separate **TYPEWRITTEN LIST** on **DETACHMENT LETTERHEAD**. Include: **LEAGUE DETACHMENT, CITY, STATE** and **NAMES, EXACTLY** as you want them to appear on the badge.
- 2) Include **DETACHMENT CHECK ONLY** with order to cover names badges, 4% sales tax (if in IOWA only), and shipping charges. Your order will be held up if any of these items are omitted.

SHIP TO:

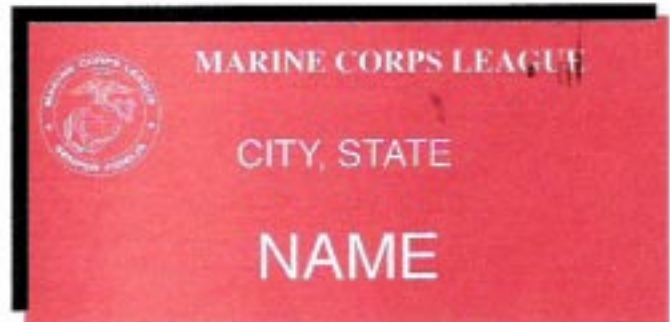
Name _____

Detachment **CENTRAL BUCKS**

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Telephone () _____



SHIPPING CHARGES

FROM	TO	RATE
\$ 1.00 -	\$ 9.99	\$ 2.75
\$ 10.00 -	\$19.99	\$ 3.50
\$ 20.00 -	\$49.99	\$ 4.00
\$ 50.00 -	\$99.99	\$ 5.00
\$100.00 -	+	\$ 6.00

_____ Badges x \$5.70 = _____

Shipping Charges = _____
See Chart

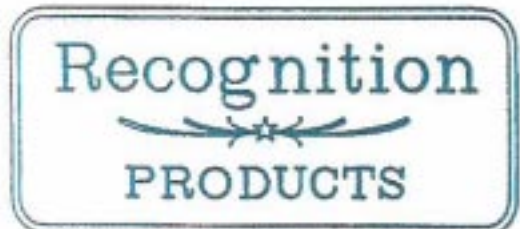
Total = _____

NAME BADGE \$5.70 each
(as shown)
Badges come with military bar.
Additional lines - \$.75 each

NO MINIMUM ORDER

REMIT TO AND MAKE DETACHMENT CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

RECOGNITION PRODUCTS
931 Blairs Ferry Rd., NE Ste B
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402-1271
319-373-1717



Quartermaster Store

DETACHMENT STRIP



\$5.00

USMC SATIN JACKET

COVER



\$22.00

LIFE MEMBER BLAZER CREST



\$25.00

DETACHMENT T-SHIRT

MCL PATCH



\$3.50

DETACHMENT LICENSE PLATE



\$10.00

\$15.00

To order any of these items or any other Marine Corps League items or Marine Corps items and have them ready for pick-up at the next Detachment Meeting, contact

Quartermaster COREY FISHER

at

ph: 215-822-6898

e-mail: cbquartermaster@aol.com

CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, Inc.
P. O. Box 1372
Doylestown, PA 18901-1372

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



"ONCE A MARINE, ALWAYS A MARINE"

**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 **\$35.00** 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**)
to: **CENTRAL BUCKS DETACHMENT, P. O. Box 1372, Doylestown, PA 18901-1372**