

Semper Fi News

For Marines and FMF Corpsman of the Greater Ogden Area

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December 1, 2006



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Last Chance to Pay Lower Dues

December is the last chance to pay our old membership price. Beginning January 2007, the new dues increase to \$31.00 per year if you become a life member, the price increases as well. Please pay dues as our paymaster must have them to National Headquarters by month's. So have them in by December 20th. In order for National to accept them with the old pay rate, they must be postmarked before December 31. **GET THEM IN EARLY!!**

Highlights of November's Meeting

November's meeting was held at the Golden Corral Restaurant in Layton. Dinner began at

1900 and the business meeting began at 2000. Topics included: Toys for Tots and whether or not the meetings at the Golden Corral have been successful. Although we have picked up several new members since September, many of our members have not been attending as they once did. It was decided that we would move the meetings back to the same time and place as we originally had them. That is the American Legion building in Clearfield. If any members wanted to stay after the meeting and visit with each other they were more than welcome to do so. It was suggested that we might want to take turns bringing something to eat after the meetings

MEETING TIME

This month's meeting

Nice turnout for USMC Birthday Ceremony at VFW

The VFW's Corporal Fred J. Grant Post 1481 in Ogden had a nice turnout of Marines and some of their wives November 10. The first piece of cake, as tradition dictates, was given to the oldest Marine present, Don Lacey a former member of MAG-13 on Guadalcanal in 1942. Don had not been to a cake cutting ceremony in years and was very

touched when he found he was to receive the first piece of cake.



Don Lacey, The Oldest Marine at ceremony (Photo by Bob Palmer)

will be Wednesday, December 20 at the American Legion Post 134, 345 South Depot St, in Clearfield.

ATTENDANCE DRAWING

The drawing was to be held immediately after adjournment, but everybody was gone before we could hold it. So, we will do the drawing after the adjournment of the December meeting.

Interested in a December Pot Luck???

Anyone interested in a Pot Luck Dinner after our December meeting, please contact me no later than 10 December. If enough members are interested I will roast a turkey and we and our families can share a meal after the meeting. Leave a message at 773-7145 or email me at ben_setter@ogdenmarines.org

Toasts were started by the program MC Dennis Holland of the VFW.

Got News?

Any Information for this newsletter? Mail it to me: Ben Setter, 3848 Prestwick Dr., Syracuse, UT 84075. Email it to me at ben_setter@ogdenmarines.org or you can fax it to me at (801)773-7145.

U.S. Senate Action Report to Veterans

November 3, 2006

From Chairman on Senate Committee
of Veterans' Affairs

Media contact: Jeff Schrade (202)224-9093

(Washington , DC) With the Senate set to reconvene, the Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs issued the following action report on Congressional efforts on behalf of veterans. This report covers the past two years of the 109th session of Congress. Inflation for 2005, and so far in 2006, has gone up a total of 6.8 percent.

It is worth noting that since 2001, while overall inflation has increased 12.9 percent, Congress has increased overall spending on veterans by 64 percent and increased spending on veterans' health care by 70 percent.

Hearings

The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs has held 52 hearings during the 109th session of Congress (2005 to 2006). Topics included reducing the backlog of veterans' benefits claims, VA research, homelessness among veterans, the theft and recovery of VA computers, Presidential nominations, employment concerns of young veterans and, of course VA's budget.

Important Bills Passed

S. 1182 - Veterans Health Care Act of 2005

S. 1235 - Veterans' Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006

S. 2694 - Veterans' Choice of Representation and Benefits Enhancement Act of 2006

H.R. 5037 - Respect for Fallen Heroes Act

Veterans Cost of Living Adjustment

Veterans Day Parade Held

A Veterans Day parade was held in Ogden and attended by many veterans in the Greater Ogden area. The parade was the first Veter-



Increased 2.7 percent in 2005, 4.1 percent in 2006 and 3.3 percent for 2007

Each year Congress has approved legislation increasing the veterans cost of living adjustment (COLA) to keep pace with rates of inflation.

VA's Overall Budget Up 27 Percent

The total VA budget will have increased from approximately \$63 billion at the end of 2004 to approximately \$80 billion for 2007. That is an increase of \$17 billion.

VA's Health Care Budget Up By 29 Percent

Spending on medical care for veterans, including collections, has risen will have risen from \$27.7 billion at the end of 2004 to approximately \$35.8 billion for 2007.

Mental Healthcare Funding To Go Up 30 Percent - Over \$3 Billion in 2007

With new surveys finding rising concerns about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Congress has increased funding for treatment, increasing the budget to over \$3 billion for 2007.

Homelessness Funding up for Sixth Straight Year

In 2006 VA will spend upward of \$221 million on grants, housing and treatment of underlying conditions. In fact, the fiscal year 2007 budget for VA will support a record level of funding for the sixth straight year for targeted programs for homeless veterans.

VA Healthcare Continues to Earn High Marks

Reviews published in two national publications gave VA high marks for its medical care - Time Magazine ran a

story entitled: "**How VA Hospitals Became The Best,**" while Business Week ran a story which referred to VA as "**The Best Medical Care In The US .**"

SGLI and VGLI Increased to \$400,000

In 2005, Congress passed and the President signed H.R. 3200 which increased coverage for both the Servicemembers' and Veterans Group Life Insurance programs. Other legislation also allows servicemembers who have been legally determined to be totally disabled when they separated from the military, to have up to two years from that date to apply for premium-free SGLI coverage and convert their coverage to VGLI or an individual plan or policy.

Veterans Employment Numbers at 96.5 percent - Younger Veterans Trending Better

The U.S. economy has done well in the past two years and the overall employment rate for all Americans is now at 95.6 percent. Veterans are doing even better - their employment rate is 96.5 percent. The unemployment numbers for younger veterans continue to be a concern, but their numbers are improving. In 2005 the unemployment rate for veterans 20 to 24 years old was 15.7 percent . . . As of October 2006, that number had improved to just over 11 percent. VA and the Department of Labor are conducting interviews of 2,000 younger veterans to explore the problems younger veterans face.

Brain Injury Funds Restored

Although not under the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, veterans should be aware that the
(continued page 3)

ans Day Parade held in Ogden in about fifty years. The parade route was fairly short about 6 blocks total, ending at Linquist Field. The Veterans Day festivities were held at the field

with lots of patriotic music and speeches.. The Air Force finished off the event with a flyover of F16s from Hill AFB. Many veterans and parade attendees braced themselves

Senate Action Report

(continued from page 2)

the Senate added \$12 million to a defense appropriations bill to treat traumatic brain injuries. The final funding level will be determined when Congress reconvenes.

Wounded Warrior Benefit Created

In 2005 Chairman Craig authored, and the Senate and House passed, legislation creating a new benefit for those wounded or seriously injured since the war on terror began in 2001. So far over 2,500 servicemembers have received over \$164 million - an average of \$65,000 each. Benefits range from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

Veterans' Housing and Benefits Act Becomes Law

In June President Bush signed into law S. 1235, bill to help severely injured veterans. It authorizes VA to make grants available ranging from \$2,000 to \$14,000. The funds assist with housing adaptations on a family member's home in which a severely disabled veteran is living. Prior to the change, severely disabled veterans had to own their homes to qualify.

Promoting Dignity at Funerals of the Fallen Becomes Law

A fringe group of protestors have disrupted funerals of our military heroes. Congress passed the Respect for Fallen Heroes Act which balances the rights of grieving families; the rights of private property owners who live near cemeter-

ies; and the rights of demonstrators to have their message heard.

As most of you know by now, we are

Some Program Ideas from the Marine Corps League

Ben Setter, Jr. Vice Commandant

well into the Toys for Tots Program for this year and many volunteers are in need, especially to finish off these last few days to get the toy to all the children. What I wanted to do this month is mention some of the programs that we can do as a detachment, depending, of course, on how many members want to get involved. I realize, too, that none of us have a lot of spare time, but many of us do have SOME spare time where they can help. We have had a couple of volunteers, so far, help out, but the difficult tasks will be coming up the month of December. Many of you have wondered just what can we do as a detachment. So I thought I'd put a list of some of the things the Marine Corps League has or is involved in. Several of these require much more manpower than we have now, so if you are interested and getting involved, help recruit more members and make us a larger detachment! Here's a partial list: I will give a little detail on some of these in future columns:

- Color Guards for Parades and Ceremonies
- Speaking engagements to

schools, events, and other organizations

- VA Hospital Volunteer Services
- Veterans support and assistance
- Support and assistance at National Cemeteries
- Marine Corps Birthday ceremonies
- Assistance to Marines, families and Marine Units
- Young Marines Program
- Youth Physical Fitness Program
- Youth, Scouting and Education support in the Community
- Hospital support within the Community
- Awards to members and citizens of the community for outstanding service
- Support of veteran affairs issues
- Public Relations and public notices for Marine, veteran and community involvement
- Prominent speakers for detachment programs.

If there is something you think we should be involved in, let's hear from you. In this case silence is NOT golden. If you like, leave a message on my voice mail at (801) 773-7145 or send me a fax to the same number.

Toys for Tots News



Jeff Sage: Toys

We are off to a good start on the Toys for Tots Program. So far we have placed several Toys from Toys R Us in the storage area. We were lucky to obtain help from one of our newest members, Marine Ken Hipwell,



Ken Hipwell unloading Toys

who had just returned home that morning from a vacation in Death Valley.

We appreciate your help Ken.

We now have drop off boxes and will begin distributing them.

The 1Lt. Serge B. Simmons
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Once A Marine, Always a Marine!

~~Weatherford~~
~~http://www.ogdenmarines.org~~

Wounded Troops Make Wish List

This is a wish list from the Armed Services YMCA in San Diego. As some of you may know. Our Department Commandant visited our wounded Marines their earlier this year. Some of you may want to help out this season. The following is a reprint of a recent letter from the Armed Services YMCA in San Diego.



October 25, 2006

Memorandum

Subject: Wish list for the Wounded

Warriors Center

1. Disabled assistance alarm (I've fallen and can't get up) --- Vendor or model unknown.
2. Portable DVD players (25)
3. Large Picnic table (4)
4. DVDs, play station and X-box games.
5. Electric Razors (25)
6. MP3 Players

Other items, not mentioned above, are always welcomed.

Gift cards are greatly appreciated.

Many times the young married Marines and Sailors go without. Gifts cards for **Wal-Mart, Target, J C Pennies, Lowes, Home Depot, and Fast Food** Gift cards or any other outlet or organization is greatly appreciated.

Toiletries, games or any everyday usable type of items are always in need.

If you are interested in making a monetary donation please contact the Armed Services YMCA.

Armed Services YMCA
760-385-4921

Thank you for helping with the establishment of the program.

This WISH LIST will be update daily. If you are about to purchase an item and want to make sure it has not already been purchased **please give us a call.**

Armed Services YMCA
760-385-4921

Wounded Warriors Center
760-725-9805