

Semper Fi

"THE SCUTTLEBUTT"

<http://www.mcltraecoheedet115.org/>

February 2017 Edition



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SSgt Walter F. "Trae" Cohee III
Detachment # 115
Salisbury, MD

DETACHMENT OFFICERS

2016 - 2017

Commandant: Bob Miller

Senior Vice Commandant: Ed Elder

Judge Advocate: Ed Hearthway

Paymaster: Andy Bouma

Sgt-At-Arms: Jeff Merritt

Junior Vice Commandant: Roger Martinson

Junior Past Commandant: Ed Elder

Adjutant: Richard Hyson

Chaplain: Rhuel Goslee

Web Sergeant: Don Elseroad

Original Charter Date May 10, 1970

MEETING TIME & PLACE

Meetings are always held on the second Wednesday of each month. The next regularly scheduled meeting would be held on March 8th, 2017 at 1900 (7:00 P.M.) at the American Legion Post 64, 1109 American Legion Road, Salisbury, MD 21801.

Please make every effort to attend.

Upcoming Holiday's & Events



2017 MCL Midwinter Staff Conference will be March 2 - 4, 2017 at the Fredericksburg Hospitality House and Conference Center, 2801 Plank Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. Group code: MCLMDWINTER17
Phone: 1-540-786-8321. Room rate includes up to 4 breakfast vouchers per occupancy.

Department of Maryland Convention

May 11-12 & 13, 2017

Princess Royale Oceanfront Hotel & Conference Center

9100 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, MD 21842-2745

Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-4-ROYALE or 1-410-524-7777

For hotel information click here: <http://princessroyale.com/>

Complete info on this ink: <http://deptofmdmcl.org/Conventions/2017ConventionPacket.pdf>

2017 Mideast Division Conference will be June 23-25, 2017 hosted by Department of North Carolina at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel Raleigh-Durham Airport at Research Triangle Park, 4810 Page Creek Lane, Durham, North Carolina, 27703. Tel: 1-919-941-6000 after May 17, 2016 for reservations. Room rate: \$99.00 plus room tax. Free breakfast and parking provided. Check out the hotel on the following link: <http://doubletree3.hilton.com/en/hotels/north-carolina/doubletree-by-hilton-hotel-raleigh-durham-airport-at-research-triangle-park-RDUDADT/index.html> More information will be provided as it becomes available.

2017 MCL National Convention

August 13 - 18, 2017

At the Sheraton Overland Park at the Convention Center, 6100 College Boulevard, Overland Park, KS, 66211. Sheraton Web-Site: <http://www.sheratonoverlandpark.com/>

Book By Phone: 1-866-837-4214. Room rate: \$115.00 with 18% tax, free parking, free breakfast and free wifi.

More information will be made available ASAP

"Sick or in Distress"

MCL Members Lee HOLLOWAY, Ed HEARTHWAY, Gloria HOWARD, Walt & Jeanne COHEE and Tom CORCORAN are having or have recently had various health problems. Please keep these folks and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

"Membership Happenings"

(Please advise the Editor of any errors or omissions)

<u>MARCH "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS"</u> 14th Paul TOMKO 23rd Barb EBAUGH 31st Diana MERRITT	<u>MARCH ANNIVERSARIES</u> 24th Renee & 'Josh' KELLEY (10 yrs)
<u>MARCH MCL ANNIVERSARIES</u> Warner SUMPTER (17 yrs) Carl EBAUGH (14 yrs) Richard HYSON (8 yrs) Jeff MERRITT (7 yr) Thomas GORMAN (2 yrs)	<u>MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE IN MARCH</u> Carl EBAUGH Thomas GORMAN Jeff MERRITT
<u>WELCOME ABOARD</u> None reported to your editor	<u>MEMBERSHIP'S RENEWED</u> None reported to your editor

DON'T LET YOUR MEMBERSHIP LAPSE

Because of recent changes made by National HQ, if your name appears above to renew your dues, please contact your paymaster shown below and he will advise you of the amount you would need to send him to renew your dues. Then make your checks made payable to "MCL Det 115" and send it to our paymaster

Andy Bouma, Paymaster

32175 Bonhill Dr

Salisbury, MD 21804-1464

410-341-4616

aboumajr@gmail.com



New address of the National Headquarters is:

3619 Jefferson Davis Highway
Suite 115
Stafford, VA 22554
703-207-9588

Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Program

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) finalized a new rule on 13 January 2017 to consider eight diseases as presumptive for service connection. This presumptive service connection provides VA disability benefits to veterans who have one of eight diseases and served for no less than 30 days (consecutive or nonconsecutive) on permanent or temporary duty at Camp Lejeune between 1 August 1953 and 31 December 1987. The eight diseases covered under the new rule are: adult leukemia; aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes; bladder cancer; kidney cancer; liver cancer; multiple myeloma; non-Hodgkin's lymphoma; and Parkinson's disease.

The rule will become effective after a 60-day Congressional review. Following the Congressional review period, the Marine Corps will mail registrants pertinent information and updates about the VA's new rule. The rule will be effective 14 March 2017.

Congress granted the VA the authority to prescribe all rules and regulations presumptively connecting a disease to service. We appreciate efforts by the VA and Congress to support our Marines and their families.

To contact the Department of Veterans Affairs to learn more about health care benefits, please visit <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/>, or call (877) 222-8387 (Healthcare), or (800) 827-1000 (Benefits).

The health and welfare of our Marines, Sailors, their families and our civilian workers are top priorities for the Marine Corps. We continue to work diligently to identify and notify individuals who may have been exposed to the chemicals in drinking water at Camp Lejeune. For more information about these efforts, or to update your contact information, please see: <http://www.marines.mil/clwater/> or contact the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Call Center at (877) 261-9782, or e-mail clwater@usmc.mil. Please share this information with anyone that may have been at Camp Lejeune between the dates noted and encourage them to register with us.

VA Claim Filing - How to Do It

The author of this article is a public affairs officer for the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), who wanted to learn more about the VA compensation claim process. So, he went to school and recently completed training as a rater so that he could share with you the information and tips and tricks and suggestions he learned while working with those who rate claims for VBA.

There are two ways to file a VA compensation claim: print the 526 EZ and mail/fax it, or submit it electronically through VA and DoD's eBenefits web portal. Most Veterans opt for the former, cross their fingers, and hope for the best. But unless you are just leaving the military, with well-documented and easily accessible service treatment records, this isn't the best approach.

Intent to file The Intent to File (<http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0966-ARE.pdf>) form is required, but here's why it's a good thing: It immediately establishes your effective date for pay purposes. Best of all, it only takes a few minutes to complete online in eBenefits. At <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/about/feature?feature=disabilitycompensation> you can submit your Intent to File online in eBenefits. VA knows that it may take you some time to gather all the evidence you need to support your fully developed claim (FDC), such as your service treatment records, private treatment

records and DBQs, and written witness/buddy/commander/spouse/lay statements. The Intent to File for a VA compensation claim lets VA know that you are planning to file a claim, and it locks in your “back pay” date. You then have one year to complete your claim application.

What info does VA need from you? To receive VA disability compensation, you must meet three criteria: an event in service that caused or aggravated a disability or illness; a current diagnosis of a medical disability or illness; and a medical opinion connecting the two (the latter as a result/because of the former). Event in service is something that happened in service that caused or aggravated your current disability. For example, you fractured an ankle in service and now have arthritis in that ankle. Or, you served in Vietnam, were exposed to Agent Orange, and now have a disease that is considered presumptive for Agent Orange exposure; A current VA or private doctor’s diagnosis showing that you have a medical condition related to the service event; and A doctor’s opinion that the event in service and current diagnosis are connected. This is called the nexus. Unless the connection is obvious through your medical records, this opinion, or nexus, will usually come from your VA-scheduled Compensation & Pension (C&P) exam.

Without all three of these items, a VA compensation claim can’t be granted. It’s like a three legged stool – without any one of these legs, the stool will fall over. If you provide evidence of the first two items but not the third, VA will schedule you for a C&P exam to determine a doctor’s opinion for the third. Be aware that just because a doctor’s opinion is requested on service connection that that doesn’t mean a doctor will agree that your current condition is related to your service.

Write a statement in support of your claim. When filing your VA compensation claim, include a VA Form 21-4138. This is called the Statement in Support of Claim. It’s important to write a separate paragraph for each disability you are claiming. It’s equally important to explain how the event in service (be specific) affects your current disability or symptoms related to your injury or illness. Provide every piece of evidence from the event that you can think of, such as personnel records, award narratives, pictures, medical records, unit profiles, prescriptions, etc. If you don’t think this event is in your service personnel or medical records, find someone you served with to fill out a form to provide their witness statement to the event. While a witness statement alone usually is not enough to grant a claim, it can be combined with other evidence to strengthen a claim for service connection. Your statement is considered evidence, just like your military or treatment records, and the rater will use it to make the decision. It also tells the rating team where to look in your records, and the timeframe for information to validate your claim.

Include medical records VA can access treatment records from other VA and military medical facilities, but don’t assume that “VA has everything it needs.” Remember above: VA and military records are just one leg of the three-legged stool. If you have your service medical records, include them as evidence. It also helps VA if you include where it was that you’ve been treated for your medical conditions on your application (name of treatment facility). You should also highlight the pages and passages that refer to your medical conditions, such as lab results and diagnoses, which may eliminate weeks or even months of processing time. Providing all of this information with your claim, will help the rating team process your claim more quickly. If you don’t have your service records, VA will request them from your military branch archives, but this can take several weeks or more. If you don’t have them and would prefer to request them yourself, refer to <https://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel> to contact the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) yourself.

Compensation and Pension: Your C&P exam Even if you submit all of your medical records, you may still be asked to go to a C&P exam. This is not a typical doctor’s exam. You won’t be diagnosed or treated, and in some cases, the doctor may just review your records— including any statements in your file—and ask you a few questions. While this may seem unusual for an exam, the doctor is actually filling in a Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ), which the rater will use to determine if your claim can be granted, and at what percentage.

So, in the exam, be honest and specific with your answers. For example, if the doctor asks about an injury, instead of saying “I hurt my back in the service,” you should say “I was getting something off of a shelf in the warehouse and fell off a ladder. There is an accident report. My back has given me problems ever since.” This allows the doctor to connect an incident in service to the current disability, and the DBQ the doctor submits will contain an opinion that your disability is either more- or less-likely than not connected to your service. That’s the third leg of the stool.

What if you need help? If all of this sounds like Greek to you, then you should either follow VA's helpful tutorials on You Tube at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrrh23QvVVYjNLjTmx8rMUUkrt-vZXrv7> that walk you through the VA compensation claim application process, or enlist the help (FREE) of a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) to assist you at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/vso-search>

Then what? Once you or your VSO has submitted your VA compensation claim, you can check on its current status in eBenefits (hover over "Manage," then click on "View or update your Compensation and Pension (C&P) claim"). On the status page, you can view more detailed information by clicking on the claim date. It's important to note that, once you have submitted your fully-developed claim online, or by mail/fax, you are telling VA that you have no further evidence or information to submit. Submitting un-requested evidence or information after it has been submitted will cause a delay in processing.

Did you know? By providing a more complete picture of your situation to the rating team when you file your VA compensation claim application, you not only make it easier for the raters to find your information and process your claim, but you also increase your chances of having your claim granted. Although it will take a little more effort on your part, it can pay off with faster VA processing, and will increase your chances of a successful claim the first time. Remember, the rating team—most of whom are Veterans just like you—is on your side, but you can help them by including everything they need to approve your claim.

Editor's note: I found that two (2) of the four (4) links in the above were either temporarily off-line or was not working so you may have to do a little research should you desire to file a claim. However, you may want to consult with and have the Service Officer at the VA assist you in filing your claim.

Lt. Gen. Frank Petersen remembered, honored
By Sgt. Terry Brady, Defense Media Activity

Lt. Gen. Frank E. Petersen, Jr. (ret.) was honored at a memorial service at the U.S. Naval Academy Chapel in Annapolis, Sept. 3, 2015.

Lt. Gen. Petersen died at his home in Maryland Aug. 25, 2015, after succumbing to lung cancer. Petersen was the first African-American Marine Corps aviator and the first African-American Marine Corps general officer.

"We celebrate his decades of courageous service to our country," said Lt. Gen. Ronald L. Bailey, Deputy Commandant, Plans, Policies and Operations. "Since his humble beginnings in Topeka, Kansas, he endured the humiliation of segregation. He gained strength and resolute character along the way, which led to him becoming the Marine Corps first African-American aviator in 1952, and ultimately the first African-American Marine Corps general in 1979.

"The country is forever indebted to [him] for his service and protection of our great nation," said Bailey. Among the audience stood the family of Lt. Gen. Petersen, service members and honored guests, including Charles F. Bolden, the administrator of NASA, Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., the 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Green, the 18th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, and members of the Montford Point Marine Association, who came to pay respects to the late general.

"I think I speak for many of us here that [he] is a part of who we are," said Bolden. "To have known him is to have known a legend, and we have been made a part of his legacy."

In addition to his most notable accomplishments during his Marine Corps career, Petersen had flown more than 350 combat missions and more than 4,000 hours in various military aircraft. Petersen commanding officer for Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 212, deactivated March 11, 2008, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314, and served as the commanding general, Marine Corps Combat Development Command. "He didn't ask you to do anything he wouldn't do. That was a leadership trait he had," said Frank E. Petersen III, son of Lt. Gen. Petersen. "He taught us many things as a family. Key principles [such as] honor, dignity, family. That's what [he] instilled in us and that's what's going to carry us through this tough time." Petersen's accomplishments were documented in the Congressional Records as part of the archives of the House of Representatives on July 28, 2014.

General Mattis

When asked what he thinks about General Mattis being considered for Secretary of Defense, Rob O'Neill (the man who killed Bin Laden) said "General Mattis has a bear rug in his home but it is not dead....it is just afraid to move".

RAO Bulletins

Each month your editor attempted to review all RAO Bulletins and put articles deemed important to veterans into our newsletters.

However, what may be important to me may not be important to you and I may very possibly overlook something you as a veteran might like to know about, so I am providing a link below that will take you to the current bulletin so that you might look it over. The below bulletin is dated February 1st, 2017 and must be viewed before February 15th, 2017 when it will go off-line.

[http://www.nhc-ul.org/Bulletin%20170201%20\(PDF%20Edition\).pdf](http://www.nhc-ul.org/Bulletin%20170201%20(PDF%20Edition).pdf)

EVERY DAY PRAYER REQUEST

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. Amen."

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE
Support Our Troops



I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands,
One Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

From your editor

If you are receiving this newsletter via "Snail Mail" and have email capability, please email me at 53usmc73@byunet.net so that I can add you to my address book and cut down on the postage.

Any comments or suggestion on what should be in our newsletter! Articles/information you need! Let me know! The newsletter will go to press on or about the weekend following each meeting.

Don Elseroad, Editor

LINKS TO CHECK

Many of you if not all skip over these links. If you do you are missing out on some good stuff.

<https://biggeekdad.com/2009/11/usmc-answering-machine/#.WFelNfv0eMs.email>

-- *Once a Marine, Always a Marine* –
OOORAH!!

GOD BLESS AMERICA