

Leatherneck News

Southern Indiana Leatherneck Detachment #931

Upcoming Events

- 14 February— 7 PM Marine Family Support Group Meets, Jasper American Legion
- 21 February—Regular Meeting, Jasper American Legion, 7 PM
- 8-9 March—Spring Conference, Marion
- 24-27 April—Central Division Conference, Louisville, KY
- 17 May—4th Annual 5K Run/Walk
- 14 June—1st Annual Fallen Soldiers Bass Tournament, Newton-Stewart Ramp, Patoka Lake

Volunteer Opportunities Abound!

Looking for something to do? Do you like working with others? Indoor... outdoor activities?

“There’s plenty of opportunities for those who would like to step forward” according to Commandant Englert. Looking at the upcoming events, most will notice the spring conferences, the 5K Run, and the 1st Annual Fallen Soldiers Bass Tournament, but these are only the tip of the iceberg. In addition to volunteering to help with these events, serve on the committees or help find sponsors, Commandant Englert suggests potential volunteers consider some of the following options:

- Volunteer to serve on the 2008 Birthday Ball Committee. This

committee will begin meeting on a monthly basis and will make the key decisions regarding this year’s ball.

- Help establish the house committee. As the Detachment gets closer to the day where it might possibly have a place to call home, organization and planning are required.
- Volunteer to make a trip to the VA Hospitals that service this area. The Detachment occasional has items gathered to deliver to the VA Hospitals.
- Volunteer to set up a Detachment event, such as a group trip/outing, a service, or other special event. How about a group trip to the Division Conference?

Inside this issue:

Volunteer Opportunities	1
Division Conference	1-2
Commandant's Corner	2
Legislative News	3-4

2008 Central Division Conference

The location of this year’s event will be at the Executive West Hotel (1-800-633-8723) which is extremely accessible to both land and air transportation. It is situated a few hundred yards from the Louisville International Airport terminal and free transportation is available upon arrival by the host hotel. Handicap rooms will be available upon request. The Executive West Hotel is a very comfortable facility located directly across the street from the Kentucky State Fair and

Exposition Center and the Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom Amusement Park. It is minutes away from downtown Louisville, Churchill Downs, and the Kentucky Derby Museum, Louisville Slugger Bat Factory, Fraizer Historical Arms Museum and major shopping malls. The dates of the conference has been set for 25 – 26 April 2008 (Friday – Saturday) with optional events scheduled for early arrivals on Thursday, 24 April 2008 and

(Continued on page 2)

Commandant's Corner

In this issue I've included a press release from Congressman Hill's Office regarding the VA budget. While the increase in the budget is indeed quite substantial, what really caught my eye was the addition of 1,800 claims processors to reduce the mountain of claims awaiting disposition. The VA's latest numbers indicate that claims are being processed in a little over six months, average. The word "average" also catches my attention. Many claims should be cut and dried, able to be adjudicated within one month. Unfortunately the VA claims system does not support rapid operations because it is reliant upon the physical transfer of records from records centers to the individual claims processor. Some progress has been made with the electronic health record and improved data sharing between DOD and VA. Much work remains, however.

Within the next few weeks, the 9th Congressional District Veterans Advisory Group will meet again. Our philosophy during these meetings has been to provide advice and information focused on what we see as the highest prior-

ity issue to address. I invite your input by email or "snail-mail" to provide what you see as to what the highest priority should be.

The 2008 Central Division Conference is as close as it will probably ever get. I encourage all to look over the information in this newsletter and take advantage of its proximity. As stated on page one, maybe someone would like to coordinate a group outing to the conference.

It's time once again to renew our focus on membership. I ask that each member do their best to find a potential new member and talk to them about the benefits of membership. As our numbers grow, so does our the strength of our voice in the world.

Finally, take the time to check out our website. Our Web Sergeant has been hard at work to make additions and improvements. Click on the "How Can I help" link. Semper Fi

2008 Central Division Conference

(Continued from page 1)

late departures on Sunday 27 April 2008. The price of rooms is a very economical \$ 75.00 (plus tax) per night and that rate will be available to travelers arriving as early as Wednesday, 23 April through Sunday 27 April 2008.

The exciting news is that the conference will occur one week prior to the famous Kentucky Derby and there will be many festival events during the week of the conference for our attendees to enjoy. The Spring Meet at Churchill Downs will begin on Saturday and the committee is organizing a "Day at the Downs" on the back end of the conference. The cost will be \$ 25.00 per person with lunch, admission, and a program in the luxury of "Millionaires Row" where the guests will have a bird's eye view of the days races from the famous home of the Kentucky Derby, Churchill Downs.

On the front end of the conference, for those opting to participate will be a tour of the Marine

Corps Detachment at the Armor School at Fort Knox where guests will tour the Tank School, participate in a Lunch of MRE's at the Marine Corps Reserve Center aboard the base followed by a tour of the Patton Museum on the base.

Also, because the conference will occur one week prior to the famous Kentucky Derby and there will be a couple of festival events for the group to enjoy. Included in those will be the "Great Balloon Race" on Saturday and Friday night the Balloon Glow both events across the street from the hotel and well within walking distance.

2. The timing of the Conference is a "Double Edged Sword". Because it is occurring we will be able to have an opportunity to see some of the delights of the Kentucky Derby Festival. The other side of the sword is that the Balloonist and their crews – hundreds of them

(Continued on page 3)

2008 Central Division Conference

(Continued from page 2)

will be competing for rooms at the hotel because of its close proximity to the Fairground. That said we have blocked 80 rooms which the Hotel will hold open for us until 1 March 2008. After that the unused rooms less than 80 will be released and undoubtedly go fast! IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT YOU MAKE RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE – AND BEFORE 1 MARCH 2008. However, we can exceed 80 rooms prior to that date based on availability. We hope we will have to!!

3. To have received these room rates is unheard of at this time of year. It triples one day after we leave! Even if you have not registered for the conference, be sure to call the hotel

and make your reservations now! They will not be available after the 1 March 2008 date. Make it a point to decide on the duration of your trip – All hotel prices will be valid from 23 April thru 27 April 2008. Information is provided below to make reservations:

By Phone: (800) 626 - 2708 (Identify our Group Block: Marine Corps League Central Division Conference)

Online: (www.executivewest.com) (Go to this website and click on “Reservations” and indicate Group Rate Code: 826346 - Marine Corps League Central Division Conference.)

Legislative News—Letter From Congressman Baron Hill 22 January 2008

Editor Note: The following is a press release from Congressman Hill’s Office.

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Baron Hill hailed the President’s release late last week of the \$3.7 billion in additional veterans funding provided by Congress – to provide the largest single funding increase in the 77-year history of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“With this historic veterans funding, this new Congress has begun to fulfill our promises to honor American veterans with both our words and our actions,” Hill said. “After years of neglect during a time of war, the 110th Congress will ensure that our veterans have the resources and benefits they have earned and improve our local veterans’ facilities.”

“Americans were shocked to learn one year ago of a crisis in care for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan,” Hill added. “America can do better, and this historic funding increase, paired with our Wounded Warriors Act reforms, puts us on the right track for America’s veterans.”

With the release of these funds, the 110th Congress has provided an extra \$6.7 billion over last year for the largest single funding increase in the 77-year history of the Department of Veterans Affairs. This funding is primarily aimed at:

- Strengthening quality health care for 5.8 million patients, including about 263,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, in the 5th year of the war in Iraq;
 - Investing in much-needed maintenance for VA health care facilities and treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury for returning veterans;
 - Reducing the backlog of veterans (400,000 claims) waiting for their earned benefits by adding 1,800 claims processors.
-

Apply
Postage
Here

*Southern Indiana Leatherneck
Detachment #931*

Southern Indiana Leathernecks
Marine Corps League
P.O. Box 184
Jasper, Indiana 47547-0184
Phone: 812-357-2792
Email: marines@psci.net

Once a Marine, Always a Marine

Please deliver to:

**WWW.FULLNET.COM/
U/JARHEAD**

Legislative News—Letter From Congressman Baron Hill 22 January 2008 (Contd)

(Continued from page 3)

- Building on the first steps by this Congress at the beginning of 2007 -- increasing veterans' health care and benefits by \$5.2 billion for improved care and shorter waiting lines for veterans waiting 177 days to receive their earned benefits.

This increase won widespread support and praise from America's leading veterans' organizations including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Military Officers Association of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, AmVets, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, National Association for Uniformed Services and Disabled American Veterans.

“Providing quality care and services to our veterans is one of my top priorities,” Hill said. “I am very proud of the work done thus far by this Congress, and look forward to making significantly more progress on veterans' issues during the second session of Congress.”

Detachment Officers:

Commandant:
Dave Englert 812-357-2792

Senior Vice Commandant:
Patrick Moriarty 812-695-5061

Chaplain
John Wagner 812-683-4997

Jr. Vice Commandant
Chad Mehringer
Paymaster
Tina Moriarty 812-695-5061

Adjutant
Dennis Englert 812-482-2987

Judge Advocate
Jeramey Osborne 812-295-6005

Public Affairs Officer
Steve Lindauer 812-634-9685

Sgt. at Arms
Allen Fritz 812-683-2192

Historian
Pat O'Keefe 812 630-2567

Quartermaster
Tim Rue 757-880-3138