



Mestengo

Volume 16 Issue 4

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Fall 2016

NEW ORLEANS MUSTER: SUCCESS ON MANY LEVELS

by Tony Cerrillo

2016 Muster Chairman

Greetings fellow Mustangs! This past Reunion was a success on so many levels. There are key people I'd like to thank for making this such a memorable event. **Eddie Ray**, for his critical advice and counsel which kept us on a strategic course. **Col. Wenrich**, Chief of Staff for MARFORRES whom, without hesitation, committed a Marine Force Commander to our event. Once MARFORRES committed, we had the unflinching and proactive support of the Command Group, Public Affairs, Combat Camera, Band, and their Centennial group. **Alex Hernandez** of Hernandez Consulting who signed up to be a strategic partner for our event and gave a very sizeable donation. **Billy Gavigan** of the Gavigan Group, our second strategic partner, offered up a private plane to bring former Commandant **General Al Gray** to our event, and also dedicated the full resources of his organization to set up and live stream our event worldwide. I don't have the final numbers from our Strategic Partners' contribution, but it would be fair to say it was in the neighborhood of \$16,000. I can only muster up one word to sum up my thoughts on this...wow!

For those who attended the event, I'm sure you would all agree this was a first class event. New Orleans and the French Quarter were a real treat.

One would have to have go out of their way not to find something exciting to do in that town! There were all types of activities, attractions, and restaurants featuring diverse menus. I discovered two dishes I will definitely return to enjoy--Charbroiled oysters in the half shell, and Louisiana Cracklins...good chow!!!

You heard me say earlier that the organization and execution of this Muster was based on our Association's strategic objectives from the vision laid out by our President. At the risk of not being repetitive, you can access the past year's *MESTENGO* newsletters and scan my past articles on the subject.

The take away is that we have taken the first step in making these high profile events, which are relevant not only to our current membership, but

the newer and younger generation of Mustangs. Our ranks are dwindling and we have done little to attract new members. These events are critical to showcasing a relevancy key to recruiting that new generation.

Billy Gavigan brought us up to another level in which to appeal to and attract new members to the Association...a well thought out and coordinated Social Media campaign. Billy also introduced me to an associate of his who is an expert at fundraising, finding potential donors and organizing high speed events. We are at the most advantageous level this Association has ever been in. We can either take advantage of this unique opportunity to continue this meteoric climb and be peers with the other Marine Corps association

See **MUSTER**, Page 6

Dues Renewal Change Approved

A major change in dues renewals was approved by the Board of Directors during the New Orleans Mustang Muster.

Dues for all members will now be payable on Jan. 1 annually.

Members whose dues expiration dates are January through June will receive dues renewal notices in early December. Those members with dues expiration dates of July through December will not receive dues renewal notices until next year.

The change simplifies the dues re-

newal process and eliminates multiple dues renewal reminder mailings saving the MCMA money.

Dues payments will remain unchanged. Cost for a one-year renewal will still be \$35 and the three-year cost will remain at \$90.

Permanent membership cards will also begin being issued to those members renewing their membership in January. The embossed cards, made of plastic, will be similar to the current paper cards but will only be issued once.

From: THE PRESIDENT

Greetings Mustangs:

The 31st Muster held in New Orleans, LA, was enjoyable by all in attendance. The attendance at the 2016 and the past three Musters cause some concern to me and the Board of Directors. I will have to re-evaluate having an annual Muster. The Bylaws, Article V, Section 5-02: "The members shall meet annually for the election of Officers and/or Directors and for the transaction of such business as may properly come before the meeting".

A substantial amount of business was addressed and accomplished by those members present and voting.

The FY2016-2017 annual budget was accepted and approved.

Membership dues will be paid at one time by all members instead of a "spread out" payment system.

The Board of Directors will develop a three-five-year Strategic Plan designed to focus on the MCMA future.

Joseph Mouton was presented the "Outstanding Mustang Award" at the Banquet. The award write up appears in this *MESTENGO*.

At the Muster, the MCMA gained three Strategic Partners. These partners contributed significant monetary and expertise toward enhancing the 2016 Muster and the MCMA. The banner of these companies was displayed during the Muster. A corporate table was provided and recognition of their donation was acknowledged at the banquet.

A special thanks to **Timothy Cook** for providing photographs of the activities at the Muster. Thanks!

VISION STATEMENT

The Marine Corps Mustang Asso-



ERNEST E. JOHNSON

ciation serves as the primary advocate promoting the initiatives and values inherent within Marine Officers, possessing prior Marine Corps enlisted experience.

MISSION STATEMENT

The MCMA vision will be achieved through Mustang outreach, social and professional networking, professional mentoring and transitional social interaction. The principle purpose of the Marine Corps Mustang Association is to advocate and provide career enhancement support for Marine officers, and associate members from other military services who have enlisted Marine Corps experience. We are an organization made up primarily of Mustang officers with a broad spectrum of successful military and civilian experience. We pursue this mission through mentoring, networking, and facilitating relations that assist Mustang officers in their careers and civilian transitions. we provide a venue of sharing lessons learned in occupational fields and industry initiatives that support the mission of the United States Marine Corps.

Semper Fidelis!



ernestjohnson219@verizon.net

MARINE CORPS MUSTANG ASSOCIATION, Inc.

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Chalfont, PA 18914-0012

Phone: 1-844-330-5922

Email: MarineMustangs@aol.com

Web Site:

www.MarineCorpsMustang.org

OFFICERS

President: 1stLt. Ernest E. Johnson, USMC (Ret)

Vice President: Maj. Joe Featherston, USMCR (Ret)

Secretary: CWO4 Tim Cook, USMC (Ret)

Treasurer: Maj. John Darracott, USMC (Ret)

DIRECTORS

LtCol. Mark C. Blaydes, USMC (Ret)

CWO-5 Ronald K. Cookson, USMC (Ret)

LtCol. Daniel J. McGee, USMC (Ret)

Col. Eddie S. Ray, USMC (Ret)

Capt. Herbert S. Smith, USMC (Ret)

Maj. Paul A. Sotomayer, USMC (Ret)

LtCol. Richard J. Sullivan, USMC (Ret)

BOARD MEMBER EMERITUS

Capt. Robert E. Richter, USMC (Ret)

PAST PRESIDENTS

Capt. Herman H. Walbert, USMC (Ret)
(1985-1989)

LtCol. Paul L. Hirt, USMC (Ret)
(1989-1992)

LtCol. Thomas E. Graney, USMC (Ret)
(1992-1994)

Maj. G. Radford, USMC (Ret)
(1994-1998)

Capt. Robert E. Richter, USMC (Ret)
(1996-1999)

Maj. Jerry V. Lasher, USMC (Ret)
(1999-2002)

Maj. Peter E. Bocker, USMC (Ret)
(2002-2005)

LtCol. Phillip Ray, USMC (Ret)
(2005-2007)

Capt. Sidney L. Spurgeon, USMC (Ret)
(2007-2010)

Maj. George W. Fritchi, USMC (Ret)
(2010-2014)

1stLt. Ernest E. Johnson, USMC (Ret)
(2014-Present)

HONORARY MEMBERS

Gen. Alfred M. Gray, USMC (Ret)
29th Commandant of the Marine Corps

Gen. James J. Mattis, USMC (Ret)

Capt. Herman H. Walbert, USMC (Ret)

ASSOCIATION INCORPORATORS

Capt. Herman H. Walbert, USMC (Ret)

Maj. Joseph Castro, USMC (Ret)

1stLt. Al Tidwell, USMC (Ret)

BUSINESS MANAGER

Don H. Gee, USMC (Ret)

1-844-330-5922

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Annual Membership Meeting

17 August 2016

New Orleans, LA

CALL TO ORDER: National President Ernest E. Johnson.

INVOCATION: National Chaplain Luther A. Bolenbarker.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS: National Secretary Timothy A. Cook.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Secretary Cook. The Minutes of the September 16, 2015, Annual Membership Meeting as published in the Fall 2015 MESTENGO were unanimously approved.

OPENING STATEMENT AND COMMENTS: President Johnson addressed the assembled members and welcomed them to the Muster.

OFFICER REPORTS

President Johnson reported on his activities on behalf of the MCMA

during the past year.

Vice President Joseph F. Featherston was unable to attend and no report was given.

Secretary Cook reported last year's on a variety of items and activities he had undertaken in the past year.

Treasurer John F. Darracott reported on the financial status of the Association. The MCMA is financially solid.

2016 Muster Chairman Tony Cerrillo gave a report on the reunion attendance and activities. He thanked all those who assisted in putting the reunion together. He also gave special thanks to those who contributed materially and financially to making this reunion a success.

OLD BUSINESS

*It was determined the Association would continue to investigate poten-

tial investment sources for MCMA funds but retain those funds in the General Fund.

NEW BUSINESS

*The election of MCMA Officers was conducted. **Ronald K. Cookson** was elected to the Board of Directors and **Joseph F. Featherston** was returned as Association Vice President.

***The 2016-2017 Budget** was unanimously approved.

***A motion** was made and unanimously to donate \$1,000 annually to the "**Semper Fi Fund.**"

***A motion** was made and unanimously approved to donate \$1,000 annually to the **Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation.**

ADJOURNMENT: President Johnson.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Board of Directors Meeting

17 August 2016

New Orleans, LA

CALL TO ORDER: National President Ernest E. Johnson.

INVOCATION: President Johnson.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS: National Secretary Timothy A. Cook.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA OR ADDITIONAL ITEMS: President Johnson.

OPENING REMARKS: President Johnson.

NEW BUSINESS

***Executive Committee**--A motion was made and unanimously accepted to establish an Executive Committee in accordance with ByLaws Sections 6-05, 6-12, 6-13, and 6-14. The Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

and a Director and is responsible for the conduct of day-to-day business of the organization. The Business Manager serves as an advisor.

***Strategic Plan**--The Board of Directors is tasked with developing and instituting a three-five-year plan focusing on six core areas. Areas include Financial, Board of Directors, Business Manager, Annual Musters, Communications, Succession Planning. The plan must not only address concerns but also make recommendations for implementation.

***Articles of Incorporation and ByLaws**--President Johnson stated these documents need review for correctness and simplicity. No action was taken by the Board but the President will make recommendations for changes and/or revisions.

***Life Membership**--Board dis-

cussed possibility of creating this membership category and the best age to implement and the pricing. The Board determined more research needed to be conducted before any further action could be taken.

***Membership Dues**--The Board approved converting from the current staggered system of dues renewal to having all members pay dues at the beginning of the calendar year. This will become effective January 1, 2017.

***Box.com**--Secretary Cook provided an overview of "Box" and the benefits of implementing and using "Box.com" by the MCMA. He invited the Board members to call him for instruction on the use of this tool.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 2016-2017 schedule for the Board of Directors Business Meet-

ings Conference Calls are:
*Saturday, November 12, 2016
*Saturday, February 11, 2017

*Saturday, May 13, 2017
*Saturday, August 12, 2017
Call Times are 1200 EST, 1100 CST,

1000 PST.
ADJOURNMENT: President
Johnson.



10 November 2016

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Each year on or around 10 November, Marines gather in groups large and small to celebrate our history, honor the memory of those who have gone before us, and rekindle the bond that unites all generations of Marines. This year, we mark the 241st anniversary of our Corps--241 years of uncommon valor, innovation, and combat excellence.

Marines, we are part of something bigger than any of us could imagine. Whether you fought in the battles of World War I, in the Pacific during World War II, in Korea or Vietnam, in *Desert Shield* or *Desert Storm*, or in the streets of Iraq and Afghanistan--or you are just starting out on your Marine Corps journey--we are all part of an elite family of warriors. For the rest of your life, the first term people use to describe you will be "Marine."

When the Continental Congress stood up two battalions of Marines in 1775, a culture of discipline, vigilance, professionalism, and military excellence was born that has characterized our Corps for nearly two and a half centuries. As Marines, we have a profound respect for our traditions and heritage, and for taking care of each other. We know we're strongest when we're together as a team. Wherever you are celebrating our Corps' birthday this year, look around at the Marines beside you and remember the bonds forged in training, in garrison, and in combat. Take this time to reconnect.

We are Marines for life. It's our responsibility, our duty, to maintain and build upon the legacy of those who have gone before us. What we do today, guided by what we've learned from past generations, will determine the future of our Corps. So, as we celebrate this 241st anniversary of our Corps, we also look ahead and prepare for our next success. Take pride in carrying our legacy forward.

Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,



Robert B. Neller
General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps

VA Announces Community Care Call Center

WASHINGTON --Veterans can now work directly with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to resolve debt collection issues resulting from inappropriate or delayed Choice Program billing. In step with MyVA's efforts to modernize VA's customer-focused, Veteran-centered services capabilities, a Community Care Call Center has been set up for Veterans experiencing adverse credit reporting or debt collection resulting from inappropriately billed Choice Program claims. Veterans experiencing these problems can call 1-877-881-7618 for assistance.

"As a result of the Veterans Choice Program, community providers have seen thousands of Veterans. We continue to work to make the program more Veteran-friendly," said **Dr. David Shulkin**, Under Secretary for Health. "There should be no bureaucratic burden that stands in the way of Veterans getting

care."

The new call center will work to resolve instances of improper Veteran billing and assist community care medical providers with delayed payments. VA staff are also trained and ready to work with the medical providers to expunge adverse credit reporting on Veterans resulting from delayed payments to providers. VA is urging Veterans to continue working with their VA primary care team to obtain necessary health care services regardless of adverse credit reporting or debt collection activity.

VA acknowledges that delayed payments and inappropriately billed claims

are unacceptable and have caused stress for Veterans and providers alike. The new call center is the first step in addressing these issues. VA presented The Plan to Consolidate Community Care in October of 2015 that outlines additional solutions to streamline processes and improve timely provider payment.

For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA's progress, visit: www.va.gov/opa/choiceact. Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program can call 1-866-606-8198 to find out more about the program, confirm their eligibility and schedule an appointment.

Outstanding Mustang Award

This award is a program instituted by the Marine Corps Mustang Association, Inc., to recognize a Marine Mustang and acknowledge exemplary performances in the community, outstanding contribu-

tions toward the accomplishment of the Marine Corps' objectives and the dedication of personal service to the MCMA.

The award shall be presented annually to the deserving Marine Mustang.



THIRD MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION JOIN THE BEST! The Third was, is and ALWAYS will be ready!

Dedicated to keeping the fighting spirit and traditions of the Marine Corps and the Division burning brightly.
World War II - Korea - Vietnam - Peacetime - Cold War
Southwest Asia - Afghanistan - Iraq - War on Terrorism



Membership is open to anyone who, at any time, honorably served in, was attached to, or was in support of the 3rd Marine Division. Annual dues are \$35; \$7.50 for active duty Marines and Navy personnel, and includes the CALTRAP newsletter; Life Membership plans are available, and scholarship assistance for qualified dependent children is available.

Web Site: www.caltrap.com

Clip and mail your check or money order to:
Third Marine Division Association * P. O. Box 254 * Chalfont, PA 18914-0254

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City & State _____ NINE-DIGIT Zip _____

Date of Birth _____ E-mail _____

Home Telephone AREA CODE (_____) _____ Spouse's Name _____

I served in _____ Company/Battery; _____ Battalion; _____ Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, from _____ to _____

Active Duty Rank _____ Occupation _____

Signature (Required) _____

ENLIST IN THE CHOSIN FEW

If you served in any X Corps allied service in, above, or around the Chosin Reservoir in **November - 1950 - December** you belong in a very exclusive fraternity of honor. We invite your company in **The Chosin Few** which is dedicated to reuniting the survivors of that epic campaign.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip+Four: _____

FAX: _____ E-mail: _____

Branch of Service at Time of Campaign: _____

Unit During Campaign (Co/Bn/Regt): _____

Note: Complete unit must be shown

Sponsored by: _____

The annual membership fee is \$35 for all Chosin Few veterans. Make check payable to: **The Chosin Few, Inc.** and mail to: **Chosin Few Headquarters, 238 Cornwall Circle, Chalfont, PA 18914-2318.**

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday-Friday

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

(East Coast Time)

Ph: 1-844-330-5922

FAX: 215-822-6723

Email:

MarineMustangs@aol.com

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT

Please share this with anyone who's had active duty service prior to January 2002.

In a nutshell it boils down to this: You qualify for a higher social security payment because of your active duty military service anytime between 1940 and 2001 (the program was discontinued in January 2002).

Up to \$1,200 per year of earnings

credit can be credited at the time of application--which can make a substantial difference in social security monthly payments upon your retirement.

You must bring your DD-214 to the Social Security Office--and ask for this benefit to receive it!

Social Security website: **http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm**

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President **1stLt. Ernest E. Johnson**, USMC (Ret), 8808 Providence Ridge Ct., North Chesterfield, VA 23236-2172 Ph: (804) 241-4939 Email: **ernestjohnson219@verizon.net**

Vice President **Maj. Joseph F. Featherston**, USMCR (Ret), 223 Hamstead Place, Aiken, SC 29803-8052 Ph: (803) 644-5995 Email: **jrhd@aol.com**

Secretary **CWO-4 Timothy A. Cook**, USMC (Ret), 209 Evergreen Trail, Weatherford, TX 76087-2218 Ph: (817) 800-3575 Email: **MarineMustangSecretary@gmail.com**

Treasurer **Maj. John F. Darracott**, USMC (Ret), P. O. Box 827, Bothell, WA 98041-0827 Ph: (425) 481-4729 Email: **jdarra9912@aol.com**

Chaplain **CWO-3 Robert E. Timmons**, USMC (Ret), 11804 Fort Loudon Rd., Mercersburg, PA 17236-9788 Ph: (301) 964-2383

APPOINTED POSITIONS

MCMA Liaison Officer **CWO-4 James R. Casey**, USMC (Ret), 3825 Blowing Leaf Place, Dumfries, VA 22025-3608 Ph: (571) 285-2574 Email: **jc Casey04@comcast.net**

Business Manager **Don H. Gee**, USMC (Ret), Po. O. Box 12, Chalfont, PA 18914-0012 Ph: (844) 330-5922 Email: **MarineMustangs@aol.com**

MUSTER from Page 1

giants, or we can go back to business as usual, and go gently into the good night. Me? I choose to not go gently into that goodnight, but to rage against it!

I would offer a parting thought. If you attended the muster, please take some time to write a short article on your experience and send it to the Business Manager to post on the *MESTENGO*. Our members' thoughts and feedback is a good way to solicit change and attract future participation.

BUSINESS MANAGER

1. Mustang Muster

With the advice and consent of **President Ernest Johnson**, a Mustang Muster for 2017 has been canceled. The next Muster is scheduled for 2018 in San Antonio, TX, and is in the very early planning stage. We will be exploring potential hotels in the Alamo city to find the site which best meets the needs of and requirements for the MCMA. More information on this will be provided as we begin to solidify things.

2. Administrative Progress

*Beginning in January, we will be providing permanent plastic membership cards to both new members and Mustangs renewing their memberships. Also, as was noted in the last **MESTENGO**, the dues year for all members will be from January through December. Dues reminders will be sent in mid-

November annually to members whose dues will be due for renewal in January annually. The current plan is to notify members with renewal dates in January through June. Those with expiration dates from June through December will not be due until January 2018.

*Our membership applications have started appearing in other military fraternal organization publications on an exchange basis. Applications from the Third Marine Division Association and The Chosin Few are in this **MESTENGO** issue and Marine Corps Mustang Association applications are either already in those organizations' newsletters or will be in their next issues. We have also contracted with both **LEATHERNECK Magazine** and the **MARINE CORPS GAZETTE** to have our applications printed in the December issues of those publications. These are the

first attempts in many years to market the MCMA and will hopefully result in many new members joining the association.

*As those of you without internet access have found with this issue, the Mustang Association is mailing the **MESTENGO** to you. Since about 40 per cent of MCMA members do not use the internet, approval was gained to resume mailing the newsletter to them. This should result in more members maintaining their membership in the association.

3. Holidays

The Officers, Directors and staff of the Marine Corps Mustang Association wish you and yours' a Happy Thanksgiving and the very best of the holiday season.



DON GEE

DONATIONS

John E. Aliyetti
 Capt. John B. Bowe, USMC
 Evelyn B. Burgess
 CWO-4 Glen A. Campbell,
 USMCR (Ret)
 Capt. Harold K. Cleveland,
 USMC (Ret)
 Capt. Jimmy A. Corbet, USMC (Ret)
 1stLt. L. Corpus, USMC (Ret)
 Capt. James T. Daley, USMC (Ret)
 CWO-4 Thomas A. Devine,
 USMCR (Ret)
 Capt. Calvin D. Emanus, USMC (Ret)
 Capt. Daniel C. Gilmour, USMC (Ret)
 Maj. James H. Guelich Jr.,
 USMC (Ret)
 Maj. John L. Jenkins, USMC (Ret)
 Maj. Paul F. King, USMC (Ret)
 CWO-4 Paul S. King, USMCR (Ret)
 Capt. John R. Lindsay, USMC (Ret)
 Maj. David E. Marvin, USMC (Ret)
 Maj. Don Mathis, USMC (Ret)
 J. D. Olexa

Maj. Eugene A. Osborne,
 USMCR (Ret)
 Maj. John D. Perry, USMC (Ret)
 Capt. Lloyd G. Phillips, USMC (Ret)
 Maj. John T. Schwent Jr., USMC
 Maj. W. E. Southerland, USMC (Ret)
 CWO-5 T. M. Sturtevant, USMC (Ret)
 LtCol. Jake Walker Jr., USMC (Ret)
 Capt. Williard Walker, USMC (Ret)
 Capt. Richard E. Warne, USMC (Ret)
 LtCol. Louis M. Withiam,
 USMCR (Ret)
 Col. Larry R. Zinser, USMC (Ret)

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS as of 30 September 2016

Income:	\$ 11,762.10
Regions Bank Transfer:	\$ 152,251.07
Expenses:	\$ 3,101.35
General Fund	
Checking Balance:	\$ 101,873.35
Savings Account:	\$ 18,287.47
Certificate of Deposit:	\$ 75,040.78

Mustang Honor Roll

Maj. William C. Barnsley, USMC (Ret)

March 2015

Capt. Sterling Peters, USMC (Ret)
 Date Unknown

Capt. Otto R. Stites, USMC (Ret)
 7 April 2013

Mestengo

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Your date of Retirement! Any required corrections!
And, don't forget to let us know your new phone
number and email address. Please include all nine
digits of your zip code!

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