

National Montford Point Marine Association Inc. National Newsletter

November/December 2015

“Preserving the Legacy”



*“Preserving the Legacy By:
Educating, Commemorating, and Rededicating our Efforts to Preserve the Legacy”*

Members, Friends, and Supporters:

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to assume the responsibilities as the 18th National President of the National Montford Point Marine Association, Inc.

Allow me first to pay tribute to our **Past National President, Dr. James T. Averhart, Jr.**, whose leadership over the past six years has contributed to promoting and preserving the legacy of the Montford Point Marines. His efforts, along with those who served within his administration, will continue to be the foundation for which my term in office will stand.

We serve a country that continues its efforts to fulfil the promise of hope, prosperity and equality for its citizens, regardless of race, color, creed or national origin. The Montford Point Marine Association’s mission to **“Preserve the Legacy”** of the Montford Point Marines is rooted in the basic tenant that the most fundamental rights of any democracy is equality. Yet for too long, too many of our fellow citizens were denied that right, simply because of the color of their skin.

Seventy four years ago, President Roosevelt took a firm stand against employment discrimination when he decreed a presidential order banning discriminatory practices in defense industries. During this time, as our nation was preparing for war against our enemies, African-Americans still faced discrimination and violence from the country they took an oath to protect and serve. Yet through it all, the Montford Point Marines fought for the right to fight. Those Montford Point Marines took it upon themselves to achieve one of the greatest victories in our country, CIVIL RIGHTS.

During the next two years of my administration, I call on the Association to renew their focus on three major areas of concern. My #1 priority is the completion of **THE MONTFORD POINT MARINE MEMORIAL**. The memorial will serve as a symbol of the transformation of the African-American role within the United States Marine Corps. The iconic image of a Montford Pointer laying down an ammunition pack and taking up a rifle reminds us that every Marine, regardless of race, will serve side by side as a basic rifleman.

Secondly, National Officers will actively participate in the next phase of **ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**. It is my intent to leverage my corporate expertise by presenting a path to establish a foundation by expanding the use of our 501 (c) 3 status. For this to occur, standard business practices will be applied in the areas of finance, governing documentation, and internal procedures to ensure the “business” of the Association is stronger for the future.

Lastly, Regional Vice Presidents and Chapter Presidents will collaborate in the “**GROWTH THROUGH COOPERATION**” initiative. Every Chapter within the Association has been a laboratory for innovation. My intention is to gather lessons learned by those Chapters and share them among the Association for the purpose of continuity, membership growth and long term sustainability. This initiative will enhance our ability to share new ideas, enhance relationships, and provide visibility and confidence within an evolving Association. Our Association will be a better place because of modern day heroes like yourselves. Whatever burdens stood in your way of actively participating and supporting the Association, I ask that you lay them down like the ammunition pack depicted in the memorial and pick up the rifle of engagement. I call on all members to re-engage your Chapters and National Officers, and embrace the path that lay before us.



Together, we will define the future of our Association - because we have already proven that “*Working Together Works.*”

Semper Fidelis! Forest E. Spencer, Jr. National President National Montford Point Marine Association, Inc.

**From: National Public Relations Officer
Joseph H. Geeter III (Past National President)**

National Convention: Besides being our historical 50th Annual Convention, this was a milestone in the form of Leadership changes. **Forest Spencer**, Quantico-32 (Q-32) was elected as our 18th National President and **Eric Nelson**, also of Q-32 was election National Vice President. As we welcome our new leadership, let's give a big thank you to the outgoing President, **Dr. James T. Averhart** and the National Vice, **James "Hammer" Carr**, for their outstanding leadership over the past 6 years. This incredible duel has taken us to new levels in every major initiative they have been involved in, to include: the Congressional Gold Medal , the naming of the USNS Montford Point, the progress of our Monument and the beginning of the Movie Project "*Black Boots*". Well done gentlemen!

We also have a new National Financial Secretary in **Kelvin GB Collins** , Grandville-Alexander #7 We would like to thank our very own **David Fortune** for 15 years of incredible service as our National Financial Secretary. Our new National Treasurer is **Alfreda Carmichael** from Camp Lejeune Chapter #10. Outgoing Treasurer, **Charles Stallard** is commended for his outstanding job of keeping our books for nearly a dozen years. The members also elected Q-32 member **Carmen Cole** as our National Recording Secretary. Many thanks to outgoing National Recording Secretary, **Tashall Williams**, for redeveloping this position in becoming an integral portion of the Leadership Team. Finally, the Southern Region elected a new Vice President in Atlanta, Chapter #5 member **Fred Codes**. Outgoing Southern Region and Senior Vice President **Erica James** retired from the Marines on September 4th and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors. As you can see, we have a completely new top leadership team in our Association and they will need our assistance as they find their sea legs to take us to even higher plateaus. Congratulations to all of our new elected officers! Additionally, the Ladies elected **Dr. JoAnn Ginyard-Hayward** as their National President. Dr. Hayward is the Daughter of **Pastor Joseph Ginyard**, an original Montford Pointer from the Philly Chapter that recently passed. This is another Daughter of an Original carrying on the legacy. Congratulations Dr. Ginyard-Hayward!

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL: We still are receiving many requests from families and Montford Point-Marines requesting recognition for their loved ones. Please assist in these requests by ensuring the family's forward proper documentation of their service at Montford Point Camp and next of kin information to the National President. Upon verification of their service, Certificate of Status will be issued by the National President. The Congressional Gold Medals that we had in our inventory have been exhausted. Therefore, The National President is asking the local chapters to purchase these Medals from the US Mint at www.usmint.gov to be presented to the Montford Point Marine and/or their family member. These Medals are currently available and we suggest you do place your order on line so that the medal will ship to you just as soon as the backorders arrive. As a reminder, the National President should be informed **PRIOR TO** the ceremony being scheduled. This way, coordination can be done with the National Public Relations Officer and the Webmaster to produce a professional Press Release to support this event. Special thank you to all the Chapter Presidents and members that have organized and helped execute the many Congressional Gold Medal ceremonies to date. If you are currently waiting on a Certificate of Status, please coordinate with your Chapter President or Region VP to get an update from the National President. This is an ongoing commitment by the Association to ensure that every Montford Pointer gets their just recognition.

Chapter Presidents, please compile all information pertaining to the respective Montford Point Marine and forward to our National President, Forest Spencer via email at: president@montfordpointmarines.com or mail to: National Montford Point Marine Association, Inc. (NMPMA, Inc.) P.O. Box 711 Quantico, VA 22134

National News:

Monument Update: Our scheduled ribbon cutting ceremony for the Montford Point Monument unfortunately had to be postponed because of the severe weather caused by hurricane Joaquin in the North Carolina area. This even is now scheduled to occur during our 51st National Convention in Jacksonville, tentatively July 29th. This way many more members and Montford Pointers will be able to witness this historic accomplishment. National Monument Director *Houston Shinal* will keep us abreast to these dates. Please continue to check their website for the latest news; <http://www.mpmamemorial.org/>

Movie update: Now that filmmaker Amit Kumar has finished his movie project “Unfreedom”, Amit and his special projects officer and former Marine, Damon Taylor, are now refocused on his “Black Boots” movie project about the Montford Pointers. Amit and Damon spent two days at PNP Joe Geeter’s home in late June 2015 to go over archival items and gather information on which direction this project will go. Both Joe and Amit were pleased with the information provided and are moving forward on this project. No definitive timeline yet on the Movie, but rest assured that the story of our heroes will be told on the big screen.

50th Anniversary Commemorative Coins; These very impressive 50th Anniversary Coins have arrived! Coins feature on the “head” side, our Founding Father and 1st National President, *MGySgt Brooks E. Gray*. The “Tail” side features the American Flag, The Marine Corps Flag and the Montford Point Logo. Coin also features 25 raised stars on both sides signifying our 50 years in existence. There were only 500 coins minted so this is truly a limited collector’s item. Coins sale for only \$15.00 each (processing and handling charges may apply) and be purchased only via our website and through the National Public Relations Officer, PNP Joe Geeter. Chapters are highly encouraged to purchase these in bulk for their members before they run out!

Membership: Our membership and Association year began on 1 September 2015. Annual National Dues were increase for the first time in over 20 years to \$35.00 annually. Life dues remain the same price. Please look for the latest addition of our membership Application on the National Website

2014 Convention Photos: The Official 2014 Convention Photo, taken in New Orleans, is available for purchase. The Convention Photo is a panoramic 8x10 shot and the cost is \$12.00 per picture. This includes shipping and handling. Please make checks payable to “Montford Point Marines” and write “**Convention Photo**” in the Memo Section for accounting. Please mail checks to the National Public Relations Officer, Joseph H. Geeter III, 27 Red Tail Court, Limerick, PA 19468. *Convention 2015 photos will soon be available through the National Quartermaster. Elijah Abram.*

Chapter Rosters: There are still a few chapters that have not submitted an updated roster to the National Recording Secretary. It is imperative we have a current roster for each chapter on file. Please contact the National Recording Secretary, Carmen Cole at 706-840-1789. If you have any questions and provide your updated rosters via email to: nationalsecretary@montfordpointmarines.org.

Spring Council 2016: Spring Council and Convention 2016 will be held April 21st -24th with the 21st and 24th as travel days, in Jacksonville North Carolina. The main hotel is Home 2 Suites (Hilton) located at 138 Circuit Lane, Jacksonville, NC 28546. Phone number; 910-355-3500

National Convention 2016: The dates of our 51st National Convention are; July 27-31 with the 27th and 31st being the travel days. More information will be published and posted on our National Website once confirmed. The hotel will be the same as the Spring Council above.

Chapter Happenings

Philadelphia Chapter #1: The Philadelphia Chapter members will participant in many Marine Corps Birthday and Veterans events this November highlighted by the Marine Corps League, Valley Forge Detachment where 6 Original Montford Pointers will be honored and a Congressional Gold Medal will be presented to the widow of Donald Black.

Chicago Chapter #2: The Veterans and Ladies Auxiliary will hold their *President Luncheon* on Saturday, November 14th from 12:00noon till 4:00 PM at Niko's Banquet Hall, 7600 South Harlem Avenue, Chicago IL. Tickets are \$65.00. For more info call 773-973-6600

New York Chapter #3: On Sunday, November 8, 2015, the New York Metro Chapter will give their Annual Dinner Dance to celebrate its 48th Anniversary and the 50th Anniversary of the NMPMA. In concert with this, we will celebrate the 240th Birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps. The celebration will be held at Antun's, 96-43 Springfield Blvd, Queens Village, NY 11429. From 4PM to 9PM, donation is \$85.

The New York Police Department Marine Corps Association has invited the NY Metro Chapter to attend its 22nd Anniversary (1993 - 2015) at the NYPD Headquarters located at 1 Police Plaza, New York City, NY on Friday November 13th 2015, at 1100 hrs. NYC Police Commissioner William Bratton, & Dais will welcome Military guest of honor - Lt. General Mark A. Brilakis, USMC - Deputy Commandant, Manpower & Reserve Affairs. The Montford Point Marine Association will also be honored at this event.

Atlanta Chapter #5: Held their Annual Awards Banquet honoring their 5 Original Montford Point Marines on October 10 at the Weston, Atlanta Airport Hotel. The Guest Speaker was **Major General Craig C. Crenshaw**, CG MCLB Albany, GA. Among the many dignitaries at this event was Major general J. Gary Cooper and Original Montford Point Marine **Ambassador Ted Britton**, who received his Montford Point Marine Association Hall of Fame Award. Additional, Civil Rights Legend C.T. Vivian attended this well planned and executed event. **Atlanta Ladies Auxiliary:** The Atlanta Chapter Ladies Auxiliary volunteered and participated in the Veteran Administration Stand Down for Homeless Veteran's at Fort McPherson on Saturday October 17th. There were 350 veterans who were in attendance. The Veterans received showers, sleeping bags, food and clothing. The Atlanta Chapter Ladies Auxiliary donated approx. \$300.00 in toiletries to homeless veteran stand down.

District of Columbia-6; We were informed just prior to print that DC-6 lost one of its stalwarts. Original Montford Pointer **Reuben McNair** passed on November 5th. Reuben held many post throughout his long tenure with the Association to include DC-6 Chapter President and Senior Regional Vice President. Reuben was known to be "**The Chairman of the Board**" because of his dress and leadership. Funeral arrangements are currently being made and will be passed to Chapter Presidents once final.

Beaufort Chapter #9; under the new leadership of retired *Master Gunnery Sergeant Tyrone Jackson*, Beaufort held their first Chapter event in recent years on Saturday, November 7th. This event was billed as the *Montford Point Marines Gospel Showcase* and had many local and nationally recognized singers. Congrats to the Beaufort Chapter for coming back into the fold!

Quantico Chapter #32 and Ladies Auxiliary: held our Annual Gala on Saturday, 12 September 2015 at The Clubs of Quantico, Marine Corps Base, Quantico, VA, with newly elected President **Carmen E. Cole** as Mistress of Ceremony to a sold out Gala. The theme “A Commitment to Make a Difference” was evident with four of our Chapter Montford Point Marines in attendance; Mr. Johnny Cody, Mr. Carroll Braxton, Mr. Stanley Tapscott, and Mr. Richard H. Walker, who were each presented a token of appreciation from Past President, Eric Nelson. Past President Nelson presented Chapter awards for Superior Support to The Clubs at Quantico and 1st Mount Zion Baptist Church; Volunteer Award to Mr. John W. Jones; and, the Membership Award to Damien Chestnut and the Ladies Auxiliary President Catrina Upshaw presented their first Service Award to Danielle Dillard.

Chapter #38 Triad Chapter: Crystal Brown's (Daughter of Chapter President Tammy Williamson) 3rd Annual Black History Month Gospel Festival honoring the Montford Point Marines by raising money for scholarships and for the Montford Point Marine Monument located at Jacksonville, NC. The Gospel Festival will be **February 6, 2016 at the Mebane Arts Center in Mebane**, NC 27302 at 3pm \$10 in advance/ \$15 at the door, children 13 and under free. Gospel groups are John Thorpe & Truth, New Creation, Burton Chapel Male Chorus, The Cates Family, Mark Webb & Family, NC 2015 Mr. Black, Courtney Turner & other special guests. Donations can be made at <http://www.gofundme.com/pr34jrd8> or mailed to NC Triad/Triangle Chapter 38, PO Box 893, Haw River, NC 27258. Please specify on the money order or check (Gospel Festival donation). For more information please call (336) 684-5524 or (336) 512-3606.

TAPS/Final Formation: We continue to lose our Original Montford Pointers at a saddening pace. The Association also lost a giant supporter in **Lieutenant General Frank E. Petersen**. General Petersen passed on August 25th, 2015 and was memorialize at the Naval Academy on September 3rd with Senior Leaders of the Association led by National President *Forest Spencer* as pall bears. General Petersen was a staunch supporter of the Association since its inception was part of the inaugural call of Hall of Fame inductees. General Petersen was interned at Arlington National Cemetery on October 30, 2015 in an incredible moving ceremony led by our National President Forest Spencer and a host of family, association members, General Officers, and friends.

National Chaplain: Chapter Presidents and members are reminded to encourage our elder members to prepare a bio for the press and the funeral home. We often get last minute requests from the family asking about their loved one's service dates, rank, etc... Please make sure that biographic information is ready at the Chapter level. Members are reminded to report the loss of members and supporters immediately to our National Chaplain, *Reverend James Moore*. Reverend Moore may be reached at (843) 846-0881.

Chapter Presidents are also reminded to send a funeral program to Public Relations Officer Joe Geeter for scanning and submission for our Obit section of the National Website.

As always, please visit the NMPMA, Inc. National Website for information pertaining to your Association at www.montfordpointmarines.org Please donate to the Montford Point Marine Memorial:<http://mpmamemorial.org> Please continue press forward and to do all that you do to **Preserve the Legacy** of our heroes, The Montford Point Marines!

