VFW Chief Visits Camp Lejeune

By Jennifer Hlad, jdnews.com

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CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — The commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States visited Camp Lejeune this week, as part of an effort to visit more military bases inside the country.

"We think it's important to let the troops know we're here for them and we support them," said Glen Gardner Jr., commander of the national VFW organization.

Gardner also wanted to find out how the VFW can support and assist active-duty service members.

"There are a lot of active-duty and families that need help," he said.

Tuesday, the VFW presented a check for $7,000 to Hope for the Warriors, said Brian Jackson, VFW pre-discharge claims representative at Camp Lejeune.

The VFW also has a program called "Unmet Needs" to help service members and their families, Gardner said.

In the past, the VFW leadership has mainly visited overseas installations, and focused in issues related to finding and bringing home the nearly 90,000 American service members still listed as missing in action, Gardner said.

But the leadership visited Ft. Bragg and Camp Lejeune this week, and will visit Camp Pendleton and other military bases later this year, he said.

Gardner said he wants service members to know the importance of joining veterans organization, especially as the number of older living veterans dwindles. Veterans organizations can help keep veterans informed of their rights and how to get the services they need, as well as advocate for all veterans, he said.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE
200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719
info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

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The VFW and its auxiliaries includes 2.2 million members in about 8,100 posts around the world, according to the organization's Web site, visit www.vfw.org.

Contact interactive content editor and military reporter Jennifer Hlad at jhlad@freedomenc.com Visit www.jdnews.com to comment on this report.