OPENING CEREMONY:

The meeting was opened per ritual by Commandant Randy Barnes at 0901. The Mission Statement of the Marine Corps League was read.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS AND DETACHMENTS:

Department officers in attendance included:
- Commandant Randy Barnes
- Sr. Vice Commandant Al Yates
- Jr. Vice Commandant Larry Heard
- Judge Advocate Silas Brown
- Adjutant/Paymaster LuAnn Miller
- Chaplain David Epps
- Sergeant-at-Arms Ed Barbee
- Sergeant-at-Arms Richard Jones
- Sergeant-at-Arms Tim McClelland

District Vice Commandants in attendance included:
- District 2 – Frank Corrick
- District 4 – Craig “Doc” McNabb
- District 6 – Harry McCann
- District 7 – Levi McKenna
- District 8 – Tim McClelland
- District 9 – Tim McClelland
- District 10 – Barbara Brammer

Appointed Positions:
- Historian – Bernard Bledsoe

Detachments in attendance included:
- Detachment 647 - L/Cpl Squire “Skip” Wells
- Detachment 970 - Middle Georgia
- Detachment 1020 - “Jake” Puryear
- Detachment 1040 - PFC George Eiland
- Detachment 1083 - Joseph Schmittou
- Detachment 1196 - Maj. Stephen W. Pless
- Detachment 1260 - Maj. Lawrence Des Jardines
- Detachment 1325 - Sgt. Clyde Thomason MOH
- Detachment 1333 - Waycross
- Detachment 1339 - Henry County Leathernecks
- Detachment 1373 - Central Georgia
- Detachment 1402 - Columbus
- Detachment 1424 - Byron
- Detachment 1438 - Lake Blue Ridge
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Commandant Barnes noted that the minutes from the April 29, 2017, business meeting are available and have been posted on the website. Michael Clark moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve them as published. Bernard Bledsoe seconded the motion, and it was approved. The minutes were accepted as published.

CORRESPONDENCE:

A letter was received from the Shepherds Center Foundation thanking the membership for the donation of $1,500. Commandant Barnes reported that an airplane crashed in Mississippi killing 14 Marines and 1 Sailor. One of the Marines was from Georgia, and the family is having trouble getting money together to attend the funeral. Commandant Barnes will contact the Coordinating Council of Georgia to check into financial assistance. Bill Miller noted that the Marine Corps League Foundation has already paid funeral travel expenses for the mother of one of the Marines killed in the crash.

REPORT OF PAYMASTER:

The Paymaster’s report was read. A discussion was held regarding the efforts to form a Detachment in the Thomaston area and the status of Detachment 1421 (PFC Jason Hill Estopinal). The Jr. Vice Commandant is working on these areas. Bernard Bledsoe moved to approve the Paymaster’s Report as submitted pending financial review. Michael Clark seconded the motion, and it was approved.

There was a discussion regarding the Commandants’ email distribution list, which has a maximum capacity of 100 email addresses. The Web Sergeant is cleaning up the list based on Detachment Reports of Officer Installation forms submitted to Department.

REPORT OF MEMBERS SICKNESS OR IN DISTRESS:

The following deaths were reported by the membership: Edward L. Richards, Jim Dunn’s uncle, Sgt. Fritz, Robert Kitchen, LuAnn Miller’s father, and Stuart Swan’s son. Members with health issues include Jesse Pruitt and several members of Detachment 1333 (Waycross).

Chaplain Epps reported the following deceased members since the last meeting: Charles F. Waller, Thomas W. Clavin, William S. Newman, Sadie Simpson (associate), Jack Runninger (associate), Lance Wheeler, and Michael A. Pressley. He noted that cards were sent to the survivors listed on the Notices of Death, and National Headquarters was notified.

REPORT OF OFFICERS:

Judge Advocate: Judge Advocate Silas Brown noted that his telephone number on the Department website is incorrect; his contact number is 404-801-5043. Judge Advocate Brown reported that National will be proposing a massive Bylaws/Administrative Procedures revision at the National Convention. He recommended that Detachments be prepared to revise their own Bylaws based on the amendments approved at the Convention and submit them to Department as soon as possible. A Bylaws Committee is being created to work on the Department Bylaws, and the proposed members are Bernard Bledsoe, Roscoe Foster, Silas Brown, Bonita Johnson, and Barbara Brammer. Michael Clark recommended that Department and Detachments wait until after the Convention to see what National Bylaws amendments are approved by the membership. Bernard Bledsoe suggested that Detachments review the proposed National Bylaws amendments and instruct their delegates for voting at the Convention. Michael Clark
summarized the proposed National Bylaws amendments and noted that, if approved, the amendments will allow the National Board of Trustees to proactively attend to the business of the League.

**Jr. Vice Commandant:** Jr. Vice Commandant Larry Heard noted that Detachment 1188 (General Ray Davis) will be moving from Covington to Decatur. Commandant Barnes advised that Bonita Johnson has been appointed as Acting Commandant for the reconstitution of Detachment 1188. Efforts are being made to reestablish Detachment 1421 (PFC Jason Hill Estopinal), and the possible Detachment in Thomaston is being investigated. Anyone with information regarding the Tifton or Forsyth County efforts should contact Jr. Vice Commandant Heard. Bill Miller noted that a file for the Forsyth County Marines was given to Guy Mitchell when he was elected Jr. Vice Commandant.

**Sr. Vice Commandant:** Sr. Vice Commandant Al Yates reported that Detachment quarterly reports are due at least two weeks prior to the end of each quarter or at least two weeks prior to the quarterly staff meetings.

Michael Clark asked about the status of the Department Newsletter. Commandant Barnes said he has been unsuccessful in his attempts to reach Bob Force, the Newsletter Editor, and noted that he is looking for volunteers.

**Commandant:** Commandant Randy Barnes noted that too many members are in arrears. The Detachment Jr. Vice Commandants need to contact their members to resolve these delinquencies. He reported that there are 218 unpaid regular members, 55 unpaid associate members, and 3 unpaid multiple members for a total of 276. Commandant Barnes announced that Jr. Vice Commandant training will be held following the staff meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

The 2017 National Convention will be held August 13-18, 2017, in Overland Park, Kansas.

The 2018 Department Convention will be held April 27-29, 2018, in Warner Robins, and will be hosted by Detachment 1373 (Central Georgia). Marty Habecker is the Convention Committee Chairman. The convention will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott (478-602-6200) with the Fairfield Inns and Suites by Marriott (478-953-4200) being the overflow hotel. Rooms are $119 per night, and the cost does not include breakfast. Program ads should be sent to Marty Habecker at usmc_ret@cox.net. Convention information will be posted on the Department website. Barbara Brammer suggested that Detachments consider donating raffle items of interested to women, as well as men, along with Marine gear.

There was a brief discussion concerning hosting of the 2019 Department Convention. After discussion, Ed Barbee moved to table the matter until the next staff meeting. The motion was seconded by Levi McKenna and was approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:**

The next staff meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2017. A host Detachment is needed.

Commandant Barnes introduced Lt. Dan Kirk, who will be running in the Marine Corps Marathon. He has been running the marathon since he was 29 years old, and he is now 67. He and his buddy raise money for the Semper Fi Fund, and they have generated over $50,000 in the last three years. Lt. Kirk
distributed a five-paragraph request to the membership outlining their mission. Michael Clark moved to
donate $1,000 to the Semper Fi Fund. The motion was seconded by Roscoe Foster and was approved.
Barbara Brammer suggested that the membership donate something to the parents and families of the
Marines that recently died. Commandant Barnes will see what the needs are and will review the
information he receives with Department officers for possible action. Bill Miller explained that the
Marine Corps Foundation’s Corrigan Fund is used solely for helping mothers of Marines.

Commandant Barnes introduced Michael J. Hiers, who is joining Detachment 1402 (Columbus). He was
sworn in by his brother, Duane Hiers, who is the Commandant of Detachment 1339 (Henry County
Leathernecks). Detachment Commandant Hiers declared a 5-minute recess to welcome Marine Michael
Hiers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Levi McKenna reported that he was contacted by Jim “Mo” Moyer who is with The Ride Home. The
Ride Home supports POW and MIA families, and they are coming to the Central Georgia Technical
College in Warner Robins from September 14-16, 2017. They are bringing the Vietnam Traveling Wall
A, the Brothers Memorial, the Nurses Memorial, and possibly one other. There will be a procession to
Andersonville with a state escort. They are looking for volunteers to help set up, assist during the event,
and break down the Wall. Financial support is also needed. It costs about $400 per family, and families
across the country are invited. The families pay their own transportation costs, but all other expenses are
paid for them.

Bill Miller reported that a Department of Louisiana 2017 Convention streamer was presented to the
Department of Georgia. He will see that the Sergeant-at-Arms receives it. Life Member audits must be
completed annually and submitted to the Department Paymaster. If a Detachment does not submit an
audit, that Detachment will not receive a PLM distribution. As of July 1, 2017, the new Chief Operating
Officer for the Marine Corps League is Bob Borka. He had previously been on the paid staff of the
Young Marines, and his biographical information is posted on the National website.

Southeast Division Conference streamers for 2016 and 2017 were received, and Commandant Barnes
presented them to the Department Sergeant-at-Arms.

Detachment 1333 (Waycross) received land from the Waycross City Council. They are joining with the
Vietnam Veterans to erect a Vietnam Memorial on the property. It should be completed by Memorial
Day 2018, and all are invited to the unveiling.

David Epps reported that he has two grandsons who graduated from Parris Island since the last staff
meeting. One was the company Honor Graduate for 2nd Platoon, and both fired expert.

There will be a Veterans Day parade at Dublin Community College. Volunteers are needed. More
information will be provided.

Tony Gasper reported that the America the Beautiful and National Parks passes are currently $10. They
will go up to $80 on August 28, 2017. Also, there is an expanded discount policy at Lowe’s for all
veterans. You must sign up for a My Lowe’s account to be eligible.

Frank Goalen invited the membership to the Detachment 1196 (Maj. Stephen W. Pless) Marine Corps
Birthday Ball on November 18, 2017. Tickets are $45 each, and the ball will be held at Barnstormers
Grill.
Bernard Bledsoe noted that all the veterans’ organizations in Troup County work together whenever there is a veterans’ event in LaGrange. They joined together to install a veterans’ memorial in downtown LaGrange, and he provided directions for those who wanted to view it.

Duane Hiers reported that Detachment 1339 (Henry County Leathernecks) will be sponsoring its annual 5K run on November 4, 2017. All are invited to participate.

Russ Vermillion announced that a Growl of the Pack will be held at 1300.

**CLOSING CEREMONY:**

There being no further business, the Staff Meeting was closed by ritual at 1057.

Submitted by:
LuAnn K. Miller
Adjutant/Paymaster
Department of Georgia
Marine Corps League