OPENING CEREMONY:

The meeting was opened per ritual by Commandant Randy Barnes at 0900. The Mission Statement of the Marine Corps League was read.

RECOGNITION OF DISTINGUISHED GUESTS:

Commandant Barnes recognized Southeast Division Vice Commandant Archie Sweet, Southeast Division Assistant Vice Commandant Michael Clark, and National Comptroller and Marine Corps League Foundation Treasurer Bill Miller.

TRAINING:

Department Commandant Barnes presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Commandants. Department Sr. Vice Commandant Yates presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Sr. Vice Commandants. Department Jr. Vice Commandant Heard presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Jr. Vice Commandants. Department Judge Advocate Brown presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Judge Advocates. Department Jr. Past Commandant Kirstatter presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Jr. Past Commandants. Department Adjutant/Paymaster Miller presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Adjutants and Detachment Paymasters. Department Sergeant-at-Arms Barbee presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Sergeants-at-Arms. Department Chaplain Epps presented a brief training session on the duties and responsibilities of Detachment Chaplains.

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
  Jr. Past Commandant Ron Kirstatter
  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 1 – Don Alexander
  District 5 – Bill Stevens
  District 6 – Harry McCann
  District 7 – Levi McKenna
  District 8 – Tim McClelland
District 9 – Tim McClelland

Appointed Positions:
Fallen Marines – Charles Polk
Web Sergeant – Bill Stevens
Historian – Bernard Bledsoe

Detachments in attendance included:
- Detachment 647 - L/Cpl Squire “Skip” Wells
- Detachment 783 - Unicoi
- Detachment 970 - Middle Georgia
- Detachment 1040 - 1st Sgt Charles F. Waller
- Detachment 1188 - Gen Ray Davis - MOH
- Detachment 1196 - Maj Stephen W. Pless
- Detachment 1260 - Maj Lawrence Des Jardines
- Detachment 1303 - Currahee Mountain
- Detachment 1311 - MajGen Warren R. Johnson
- Detachment 1312 - Aubrey Gilbert
- Detachment 1325 - Sgt Clyde Thomason MOH
- Detachment 1333 - Waycross
- Detachment 1339 - Henry County Leathernecks
- Detachment 1373 - Central Georgia
- Detachment 1402 - Columbus
- Detachment 1424 - Byron

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Commandant Barnes noted that the minutes from the October 28, 2017, business meeting are available and have been posted on the website. Marty Habecker moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes as they have been posted on the website. Levi McKenna seconded the motion, and it was approved. The minutes were accepted as posted.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

A Meritorious Unit Commendation-Department Level was received from the Department of Florida in recognition and appreciation of the Department of Georgia’s donation to the Florida Relief Fund for Hurricane Irma.

**REPORT OF PAYMASTER:**

The Paymaster’s report was read and accepted pending financial review. Commandant Barnes requested that all Detachments provide their current Employer Identification Numbers (EINs) to the Department Paymaster for submission to National. He also noted that the Commandants’ email distribution list is based on Reports of Officer Installation (ROIs) received from Detachments. Bill Stevens reported that the list and spreadsheet on the website were recently updated. Timely and complete ROIs are critical. Randy indicated that officers’ email and residence addresses should be provided so that Department can contact the Detachment officers directly, when necessary.
REPORT OF MEMBERS SICKNESS OR IN DISTRESS:

Chaplain Epps reported the following members as having been deceased since the last staff meeting:

Jurian (Jerry) van Riper
Donald Guy Trammell
John Wayne Delion
Donald R. Roberts
George V. Gerbert
George R. Abrams
John W. Alford
David Conkle
Frank Scott

Members and friends with health problems include Marty McNulty and Libby Stadler, wife of Ken Stadler. Members and friends who have passed away include the son-in-law and four-year-old granddaughter of Larry Heard’s friend from Mobile, Alabama; Ernie Elmore; Gene Whitten; Bobbie Armstrong; Vivian Wall, wife of Bubba Wall; and Camp Gilley. Donna Tindall reported that she is now cancer free.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Judge Advocate: Judge Advocate Brown reported that Convention Delegate Registration forms will be mailed out in the next 7-10 days. They are due back to the Department Paymaster and must be postmarked by April 12, 2018. Delegate forms will come with instructions and will be posted on the Department website. Proposed amendments to the Department Bylaws must be submitted to the Department Judge Advocate no later than February 15, 2018, and can be submitted by email or by first class mail. Judge Advocate Brown recommended that members read the National and Department Bylaws noting that, every time you read them, you find something you hadn’t seen before.

Jr. Vice Commandant: Jr. Vice Commandant Heard reported that, for third quarter 2017, Department had 630 delinquents. The delinquent total is now down to 373. Levi McKenna was on television twice and represented the League well. Jr. Vice Commandant Heard noted participation in the parade in the Dublin area where participants handed out about 30 membership applications. He also reported that GySgt Boone is interested in forming a new Detachment in Dublin.

Sr. Vice Commandant: Sr. Vice Commandant Yates reported that Detachment quarterly reports are instrumental in gathering information about what each Detachment is doing so the information can be passed along to other Detachments to promote growth in all Detachments. Quarterly reports are due two weeks prior to the Department staff meetings. There was a discussion about roster distribution, and Bernard Bledsoe said you do not need a roster to do your quarterly report. Membership changes start at the Detachment level, and the Detachment should have that information available. Russ Vermillion recommended reading reports from other Detachments to get ideas for your Detachment. Michael Clark asked about a Department Newsletter, and Sr. Vice Commandant Yates noted that he is trying to get one started.

Commandant: Commandant Barnes reported that Detachments are doing a good job working down their delinquents, but we need to keep up our efforts. Annual membership as of December 31, 2017, was 842 and we have 674 life members. Total membership in the Department of Georgia is 1,516. Commandant Barnes noted that some Detachments have not been sending in Reports of Officer Installation, and there are plans for Department officers to visit those Detachments. He also noted that the meeting room for this business meeting is costing the Department $180 because we didn’t have enough rooms booked, and he suggested that perhaps Detachments should be required to contribute to the cost of meeting facilities.
REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

Bylaws Committee: No report

2018 Department Convention Committee: Detachment 1373 (Central Georgia) will host the 2018 Department of Georgia Convention. It will be held April 27-29, 2018, in Warner Robins, Georgia. Detachment 1373 Commandant Marty Habecker is the contact for convention information. The convention hotel is the Courtyard by Marriott, and hotel information is posted on the Department website. Also posted are the registration and ad forms. Please consider placing an ad to assist the Host Detachment in recovering its costs. Additionally, each Detachment should provide three raffle items and is required to contribute $20 for convention support. A Grand Growl will follow the business meeting. There will be a rifle raffle (AR made by Troy with two magazines and optics, a $1,000 value) and a pistol raffle (9mm hand gun). Tickets are available now, and the drawings will be held at the Convention.

Commandant Barnes noted that we still need bids for the 2019 Department Convention. Detachment 1325 indicated they may be willing to host the 2019 Convention.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commandant Barnes reported the following upcoming events:

NEW BUSINESS:

None

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:

Commandant Barnes noted that Detachment 783 is presenting a program to honor veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima. The program is scheduled for February 19, 2018, at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park in Young Harris, Georgia.

Division Vice Commandant Sweet noted that in South Carolina, by vote of the Department Board of Trustees, the Detachment hosting the Department Convention receives $100 from each Detachment. He also noted that the deadline to register for the Southeast Division Conference is February 1, 2018.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Paymaster Miller reminded Detachments that the deadline to file annual registrations with the Georgia Secretary of State’s Office is April 1, 2018. Copies of Detachment registration filings must be forwarded to the Department Paymaster. National has not yet released instructions for correcting deductibility codes with the IRS. Information relating to this issue will be presented at the Mid-Winter Conference. The pro-rated dues period for new members is March 1 through August 30. During the pro-rate period, National dues is $15; Department dues remains $4.
Sr. Vice Commandant Yates announced that he plans to run for Department Commandant at this year’s Convention. Rich Sabo suggested that proposed candidates send out their biographies in advance of the Convention, and Bernard Bledsoe noted that biographies will not be available for candidates nominated from the floor. If more people attended staff meetings, they could get to know prospective candidates prior to the Convention.

Bill Miller reported that the Department of Georgia is above the national average for dealing with delinquencies and thanked the membership for their efforts. The Marine Corps League Foundation approved the next challenge coin, which will debut at the National Convention in Buffalo, New York. The coin is a tribute to the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Belleau Wood and was designed by Vic Beverson (Department of Louisiana) who recently passed away.

Frank Goalen was contacted by a gentleman from California regarding the Warrior Reunion Foundation. They are looking for volunteers (rifle detail and color guard) for a reunion in Hampton, Georgia. This would be a good recruiting opportunity.

Larry Heard announced that Detachment 1188 moved to their new location and had their first meeting there. They are well on their way to getting that Detachment back up and running.

Merrill Tindall requested clarification about prorated new member rates, and a discussion followed.

**CLOSING CEREMONY:**

There being no further business, the Staff Meeting was closed by ritual at 1049.

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