OPENING CEREMONY:

The meeting was opened per ritual by Commandant Al Yates at 0900. The Mission Statement of the Marine Corps League was read by Levi McKenna.

RECOGNITION OF DIGNITARIES:

Commandant Al Yates introduced National Jr. Vice Commandant Johnny Baker and Assistant Southeast Division Vice Commandant Michael Clark.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS AND DETACHMENTS:

Department officers in attendance included:
- Commandant Al Yates
- Acting Sr. Vice Commandant Levi McKenna
- Acting Jr. Vice Commandant Rex Delk
- Judge Advocate Bill Miller
- Jr. Past Commandant Randy Barnes
- Adjutant/Paymaster LuAnn Miller
- Chaplain David Epps
- Sergeant-at-Arms AJ Polk
- Sergeant-at-Arms Jim Martin
- Sergeant-at-Arms Richard Jones

District Vice Commandants in attendance included:
- District 6 – Harry McCann
- District 10 – Barbara Brammer

Appointed Positions:
- V.S.O. – Mickey Edwards
- Boy Scout Coordinator – Mickey Edwards
- Newsletter – Al Yates
- Historian – Bernard Bledsoe

Detachments in attendance included:
- Detachment 647 - L/Cpl Squire “Skip” Wells
- Detachment 783 - Unicoi
- Detachment 970 - Middle Georgia
- Detachment 1020 - “Jake” Puryear
- 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 1280 - North Georgia Mountain
- Detachment 1311 - MajGen Warren R. Johnson
- Detachment 1325 - Sgt Clyde Thomas MOH
- Detachment 1326 - West Chatham
INTRODUCTION OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS:

The following Department Officers introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of the responsibilities associated with their positions:
- Commandant Al Yates
- Acting Sr. Vice Commandant Levi McKenna
- Acting Jr. Vice Commandant Rex Delk
- Judge Advocate Bill Miller
- Chaplain David Epps
- Sergeant-at-Arms AJ Polk

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Commandant Yates noted that the minutes from the April 28, 2018, business meeting are available and have been posted on the website. Bernard Bledsoe moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Randy Barnes seconded the motion, and it was approved. The minutes were accepted as published.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Commandant Yates reported that he sent emails to the Commandants’ distribution list regarding address changes of members and a questionnaire received from National Headquarters. He noted that both need to be completed prior to the National Convention for reporting at the Convention.

Barbara Brammer thanked the membership for the lovely cards she received.

REPORT OF PAYMASTER:

The Paymaster’s report was read. Bernard Bledsoe moved to approve the Paymaster’s Report as submitted pending financial review. Roscoe Foster seconded the motion, and it was approved.

REPORT OF MEMBERS SICKNESS OR IN DISTRESS:

Chaplain David Epps reported seven members deceased since the Department Convention including Arthur John Miller (#1312), Gene W. Whitten (#647), Martin T. McNulty (#1325), Zell Brian Miller (#783), Jesse Kenney (#1373), Maxine M. Belk (#1260), and Robert A. Kotz (#1325). Cards were sent to the survivors from the Department, and Notices of Death were forwarded to National Headquarters. Additional members who have passed away include Jerry Brammer (#1402) and Howard Gould (#1402). Members with health issues include Vera Newsome (#1373), Larry Heard (#1196), Roy Johnson (#783), Bud Johnson (#783), and Shirley Redd (#783). Members Jim and Sheba Valentine (#1260) were involved in an automobile accident.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Judge Advocate: Bill Miller reported that it has been an interesting three months with two disciplinary charges filed and a joint hearing conducted. He will be looking into Detachment compliance including
990 filings, Georgia corporation filings, submission of Convention support, and other requirements. Judge Advocate Miller reported that 990s can now be filed with the IRS. He also noted that Detachments must be incorporated in the State of Georgia as non-profit entities. Detachments that are using National’s Bylaws may need to create their own Bylaws in accordance with Georgia law. If the National Bylaw amendments are approved at the National Convention, National Headquarters intends to create a Detachment Bylaws template.

Jr. Vice Commandant: No report

Sr. Vice Commandant: No report

Commandant: Al Yates thanked the members in attendance. He noted that he has been visiting Detachments to see what’s happening across the state and to determine where we can make improvements. The Department webpage is being maintained by Ron Kirstatter, and he is doing a great job. Ron is working on redesigning the website. Commandant Yates requested that each Detachment submit something for the Department Newsletter, noting that the next edition will publish July 22, 2018. Articles are due two weeks before each staff meeting. Commandant Yates noted that we have a lot of vacant positions. District 1, 3, and 4 need District Vice Commandants. Michael Hiers volunteered to take District 3, but it was noted that he needs to become a dual member in one of the Detachments before he is eligible. Ruben Scott volunteered to take District 4. Bill Miller reviewed the requirements to be a District Vice Commandant. A brief District Vice Commandant meeting will follow the staff meeting.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

2019 Department Convention Committee: Joe Najjar, Host Detachment #1260, reported that their committee met with two venues, Merry Acres Inn ($91/night) and Hilton Garden Inn ($119/night). The preferred location is Merry Acres, and the rate includes breakfast and free WiFi. The room rate is subject to a 30-day hold period. The hotel is pet friendly, and conference space includes a large room and two other rooms located in two buildings. The committee is looking into a possible wine and beer tasting and is working with the base to see if they can schedule any activities. Area attractions include a botanical garden, shopping, an aquarium, and a zoo; and camping and RV sites are located nearby. The possible dates include April 5-7 or May 17-19. Bernard Bledsoe made a motion to accept Albany’s convention offer for May 17-19 at the hotel of their choosing. David Epps seconded the motion. Following discussion concerning the acceptability of the venue based on previous convention experiences, Bernard Bledsoe withdrew his motion. David Epps moved that Albany, Georgia, be approved as the site for the 2019 Department Convention to be scheduled the weekend of May 17-19, 2019. Bernard Bledsoe second the motion and it was approved. A Convention Committee comprising Bonita Johnson, Joe Najjar, Barbara Brammer, Al Yates, and Bernard Bledsoe will conduct a site visit to determine suitability of the venue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commandant Yates noted that volunteers are needed to host the 2020 Department Convention. Bernard Bledsoe noted that, when negotiating for a convention site, room reservations will assist in getting a lower rate on the meeting rooms.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

The meeting was recessed at 1034 and was called back into session at 1047.
GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:

Michael Clark, Assistant Southeast Division Vice Commandant, reported that National Commandant Wendell Webb directed the Assistant Division Vice Commandants to attend Department conventions and meetings to talk about what we should be doing as Marine Corps League members and to get the message out that officers and members have taken an oath to do their jobs. Commandants need to disseminate information to their Detachments. Communication is failing on the Detachment level. He stressed the importance of supporting programs like Toys for Tots, JROTC, Young Marines, Boy Scouts, Youth Physical Fitness, promoting Flag Etiquette, Flag Replacement, and the Hot Trike Program, to name a few. He urged members to get their pictures in local newspapers and magazines to increase recognition of the Marine Corps League. He noted that we are a Veteran Service Organization. The Commandant of the Marine Corps has asked the Marine Corps League to assist Reserve personnel with funeral honors and to implement and support the Marine for Life Program. Assistant Division Vice Commandant Clark urged Detachments to do their annual PLM audits, to push renewals now, and to keep attitude problems and anger issues out of their meetings. Enjoy the camaraderie within your Detachments and Department and take care of Fallen Marines. He counseled Detachments to turn in Boy Scout reports. Clark noted that Louisiana created a patch for Eagle Scouts. Barbara Brammer moved that the Department of Georgia purchase 500 modified patches for Georgia Eagle Scouts modeled after Louisiana’s patch. The motion was seconded by David Epps and was approved.

Johnny Baker, National Jr. Vice Commandant, reported on activities at the National level. The next Mid-Winter Conference will be the last one held in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Beginning in 2020, Mid-Winter Conferences will be hosted in Norfolk, Virginia, for the next two or three years. National is creating a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for funeral honors; look for it on the National website in the near future. National Jr. Vice Commandant Baker noted that the Marine Corps is only required to send two people for funeral honors, and the Marine Corps League should supply a third person, at a minimum. Uniforms should be standard. He reported that there is a Memorandum of Understanding that brings the Marine Corps League, the Marine Corps Association and Foundation, and the Marine Corps on equal footing. National Jr. Vice Commandant Baker reported on the new membership database. National plans to have the new database online by the National Convention or September 1, 2018, at the latest. Membership staff are no longer updating the old database, which confirms that the project is progressing. A recent budget meeting has the Marine Corps League operating in the black. The budget system has been revamped. Johnny noted that Bob Borka, our Chief Operating Officer, has an incredible work ethic. Bob is going after contracts that have not been paid for the last three years and has recouped funds for the League. National Jr. Vice Commandant Baker noted that communication is key to our success, and we need to do a better job. He noted that the Marine for Life Program will be up and running by the National Convention and requested that Detachments assign a Marine for Life Coordinator to liaise with Department and National. Johnny noted that, if the Bylaws amendments are adopted, the National Board of Trustees will be able to update the Administrative Procedures to support the operational needs of running the Marine Corps League.

Dan Kirk, Sons of Pacific Heroes, reported that his team runs the 10K Marine Corps Marathon each year. The money they collect is donated to the Semper Fi Fund. This year their goal is $50,000. In the last three years, the Sons of Pacific Heroes raised and donated $93,000.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commandant Yates noted that the next quarterly meeting will be October 6, 2018, at the Courtyard by Marriott in McDonough. The meeting will be at 0900.
Tom Coursey reported that The Varsity and the Shepherds Men have teamed up to celebrate The Varsity’s 90th anniversary. Items are available for purchase at The Varsity’s website. Barbara Brammer said that, when her husband passed away, her Detachment sent a contribution to the Shepherds Men in Jerry’s name. This is great way to leave something behind in remembrance of a loved one.

Roscoe Foster advised that he has a Toys 4 Tots train that will be available.

Marty Habecker thanked everyone for their support of the 2018 Department Convention hosted by Detachment 1373. He noted that the Detachment did well financially.

Commandant Al Yates presented a Marine of the Year Certificate to Levi McKenna.

**CLOSING CEREMONY:**

There being no further business, the meeting was closed by ritual at 1207.

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