OPENING CEREMONY:

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

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS AND DETACHMENTS:

Department officers in attendance included:
- Commandant Al Yates
- Sr. Vice Commandant Larry Heard
- Jr. Vice Commandant Silas Brown
- Judge Advocate Bill Miller
- Adjutant/Paymaster LuAnn Miller
- Chaplain Mickey Edwards
- Sergeant-at-Arms AJ Polk
- Sergeant-at-Arms Jim Martin

District Vice Commandants in attendance included:
- District 6 – Bonita Johnson
- District 7 – Marty Habecker
- District 8 – Tim McClelland
- District 9 – Tim McClelland
- District 10 – Barbara Brammer

Appointed Positions in attendance included:
- V.S.O. – Mickey Edwards
- Boy Scout Coordinator – Mickey Edwards
- Newsletter – Al Yates
- Web Sergeant – Ron Kirstatter
- Historian – Bernard Bledsoe

Detachments in attendance included:
- Detachment 647 - L/Cpl Squire “Skip” Wells
- Detachment 921 - Lt.Col Jimmie Dyess
- Detachment 1020 - “Jake” Puryear
- Detachment 1040 - 1st Sgt Charles F. Waller
- Detachment 1083 - Joseph Schmittou
- Detachment 1188 - Gen Ray Davis - MOH
- Detachment 1196 - Maj Stephen W. Pless
- Detachment 1260 - Maj Lawrence Des Jardines
- Detachment 1311 - MajGen Warren R. Johnson
- Detachment 1333 - Waycross
- Detachment 1373 - Central Georgia
- Detachment 1402 - Columbus
- Detachment 1424 - Byron
- Detachment 1438 - Lake Blue Ridge
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Commandant Yates noted that the minutes from the May 18, 2019, annual meeting are available and have been posted on the website. Bonita Johnson moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept the minutes as posted on the website. Hal Gosnell seconded the motion, and it was approved. The minutes were accepted as published.

CORRESPONDENCE:

National Jr. Vice Commandant Warren Griffin sent out a survey with a request that all Departments and Detachments complete the survey indicating the activities they are currently employing in their recruiting and retention efforts.

The Department of Alabama extended congratulations to Georgia on winning the Grits Bowl and thanked Georgia’s membership for a great convention.

Bernard Bledsoe spoke about a message received from Bob Borka, Marine Corps League Chief Operating Officer, reporting that the National website library system is a members-only site and is password protected.

REPORT OF PAYMASTER:

The Paymaster’s report was read. Harry McCann moved to approve the Paymaster’s Report as submitted pending financial review. Rex Delk seconded the motion, and it was approved.

REPORT OF MEMBERS SICKNESS OR IN DISTRESS:

Commandant Yates introduced Mickey Edwards as the new Chaplain for the Department of Georgia. Bonita Johnson provided the Chaplain’s report for the last quarter advising that ten deaths were reported since the last Department meeting. She will provide a report to the new Department Chaplain. Members with health problems include Tom Beavers (#1020), Randy Barnes (#1196), Karen Lawrence (#1311), Jim Lamb (#1438), and two members of Detachment #1333.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Judge Advocate: Bill Miller reported that the Department’s amended Bylaws have been sent to National for review and approval. Since the last meeting, Judge Advocate Miller reviewed Bylaws for one Detachment. He suggested that Detachments wait for approval of the Department’s amended Bylaws before working on amendments to their own Detachment’s Bylaws. Judge Advocate Miller noted that National Bylaws amendments were made at the National Convention and Bylaws amendments and decisions have been posted. The National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures are two separate documents. In response to member inquiries, Bill Miller reported that Detachment #1339, Henry County Leathernecks, surrendered their charter almost a year ago. He will take care of wrapping up the process. A list of assets will be sent out via the email distribution list with a date/time specified for disposition. Unreasonable bids will not be accepted. He noted that the Detachment colors and charter are not available. Judge Advocate Miller reminded members that passwords for the MCL website should never be posted on social media. He also noted that, from the last two Conventions, inappropriate photos were published on social media. Although the League does not have a social media policy, he will work with the National Judge Advocate to develop a policy.

Jr. Vice Commandant: Silas Brown discussed the survey received from the National Jr. Vice Commandant relating to recruiting, retention and recovery. The Marine Corps League currently has 63,250 members. As of Aug 2016, we had 69,054 members; 66,510 members as of August 2017; and 64,032 members as of August 2018. It is everyone’s responsibility to recruit. The Department of Georgia grew by 28 members since April 1, 2019. That increase came from 14 Detachments. When Detachment #1339 is dissolved, we will lose 9 members; and Kings Bay will result in the loss of 4 members when they are dissolved. The Department of
Georgia has 30 Detachments on the rolls, 11 of which had negative growth and 4 of which showed growth. The Department currently has 1,348 paid and 125 unpaid members. Jr. Vice Commandant Brown noted that flyers from National (carry on and come join), MCL interest cards, and tri-fold pamphlets are available.

The meeting recessed at 1000 and reconvened at 1007.

Sr. Vice Commandant: Larry Heard reported that he is assisting Commandant Yates with whatever needs to be done. If the Department Commandant is not available, please call Sr. Vice Commandant Heard. The Department is here to help, just let us know how we can assist.

Commandant: Al Yates thanked everyone for their attendance. He noted that Reports of Officer Installation are looking better, but he still needs personal contact information for at least the officers of each Detachment. He received a call from the VA about an Iraqi vet on the streets. Rex Delk reported on the incident. The VA couldn’t react quickly, but the Detachment went online and found a local Bed and Breakfast and negotiated a good rate for several nights. The VA will be taking over, but the Detachment was essential in bridging the gap. Commandant Yates reported on the change in command at National. Dennis Tobin is National Commandant, Johnny Baker is National Sr. Vice Commandant, Warren Griffin is National Jr. Vice Commandant, and T. J. Morgan is National Judge Advocate. Archie Sweet is Southeast Division Vice Commandant and Butch Raynes is Southeast Assistant Division Vice Commandant.

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

2020 Department Convention Committee: Ron Welborn representing Detachment #1311 reported on the 2020 Department Convention. Lodging is $116/night including breakfast for two. A guest speaker has been retained; and the cut-off date for reservations is April 1, 2020. The Convention will be held May 1-3, 2020, in Marietta, Georgia. The Host Detachment is working on a ladies program, optional golf activities, and a Braves or Atlanta United game if they are in town. The Convention will be held at the Hilton Atlanta Conference Center, and a flyer will be published by end of September 2019. The telephone number for reservations is 888-685-2500, use code 2020 for the Marine Corps League State of Georgia Convention rates.

2020 Southeast Division Conference – The Southeast Division conference is being hosted by Detachment #1373 at the Courtyard Marriott in Warner Robins, Georgia, from March 26-29, 2020. The rate is $119/night. An $8 breakfast buffet is available, and the banquet tickets are $50. Information has been posted on the Southeast Division website. The guest speaker will be 1st Lt. McClary.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commandant Yates noted that 4 Detachment still need to provide information about their Marine 4 Life Coordinators.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:

The 2020 National Midwinter Conference is February 27-29, 2020, in Roanoke, Virginia. Reservations may be made by calling 800-325-3535; rate is $129/night plus tax

The 97th National Convention will be held at the Hilton Daytona Beach Ocean Front Resort. Rate is $145/night and includes Wi-Fi, parking, and breakfast. Call 866-536-4877 for reservations; use code MCL20.

Tony Gasper reported that the Department of Georgia and various Detachments have supported the Sons of Pacific Heroes in the past and he is asking for support for this year’s Marine Corps Marathon and 10k. Funds
raised go to the Semper Fi Fund, and the Founder of GoDaddy will match the first $500,000 raised. This year’s goal for the running team is $50,000.

Bill Miller noted that the Marine Corps League Foundation consented to National Headquarters’ request to retain proceeds from the card and label program for the next 3 years resulting in reduced revenue of $10,000 per year for the Foundation. He challenged each Detachment and Department to donate $100 to the Marine Corps League Foundation to offset the shortfall. So far, the Foundation received 6% of this goal. Bill Miller also noted that he is able to have tri-fold brochures printed. They can be made available to Detachments at a cost of $12 per 100. Bernard Bledsoe made a motion to donate $100 to the Marine Corps League Foundation. The motion was seconded by Ron Kirstatter and was approved. Silas Brown reported that their pound also donated $100 to the Foundation.

AWARDS

The 2019 National Convention Streamer was presented to the Department Sergeant-at-Arms.

Sr Vice Commandant Larry Heard presented National Certificates of Appreciation for the Marine South Expo at Camp Lejeune to Russ Vermillion, Harry McCann, Barbara McCann, Lamar Scott, Michael Vernon, and Randy Cooper.

Jr. Vice Commandant Silas Brown presented National Jr. Vice Commandant Citations for growth exceeding the previous year’s membership to Savannah Detachment #564, North Georgia Mountain Marine Detachment #1280, Central Georgia Detachment #1373, Glynco Detachment #716, Joseph Schmittou Detachment #1083, Unicoi Detachment #783, 1st Sgt Charles Waller Detachment #1040, Lt.Col Jimmie Dyess Detachment #921, LCpl. Skip Wells Detachment #647, Lake Blue Ridge Detachment #1438, Glen Pair Detachment #1309, and Waycross Detachment #1333. National Jr. Vice Commandant Citations were also presented to Detachment #1020 and Detachment #1229 for the previous year.

Department Sergeant-at-Arms A.J. Polk presented 2019 Department Convention streamers to Detachments that attended the Convention.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

CLOSING CEREMONY:

There being no further business, the Quarterly Business Meeting was closed by ritual at 1050.

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