A WORD FROM OUR COMMANDANT

During the 2018 Marine Corp National Convention in Buffalo, NY, I listened to our guest speakers, our Nationals, Senior and Junior Vice, Commandants and I came away with this message. This is a new and better-structured Marine Corps League. At every level, all members of management primary concern are to make the Marine Corps League a well-run organization. Our jobs as Department and Detachment Commandants, as well as Senior and Junior Commandants in the league, and the relationships of these jobs with responsibilities from the top down, all perform separate yet critical functions that enable the league to function and meet its obligations to bring in and retain new members.

We as leaders must be able to set priorities and motivate our members. This involves self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management; in addition to being a source of energy, empathy, and
trust. Effective leaders work daily to develop team members through positive feedback, constructive feedback, and coaching. It is important that we become students of effective communication in all its applications: including one-on-one, small group, large group, email and social media. Young Marines leaving active duty use social media as a means of communication; we need young members. Realize that the most important aspect of communicating is listening.

Continue to serve as role models for working together. Support cross-functional efforts and model collaborative behaviors to set the example for your Detachment members; as the detachment is the backbone of the League. Effective management and effective leadership start at the top.

Commandant

Al Yates
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

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 Marine Corps 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.
Lake Blue Ridge Detachment 1438

The Marines, Sailors and associate members continue to stay engaged in the local community. Since the last newsletter, detachment members have assisted in construction of a wheelchair ramp for a 93 year old WW II veteran; began selection of a detachment pistol team and raffled off three weapons to raise funds for restoration of a 6X6 truck.

Answering the call for support from American Legion Post # 45 In Murphy,

North Carolina, members of Detachment # 1438 traveled to North Carolina to assist legionnaires and employees of Home Depot in the construction of a wheelchair ramp meeting all requirements of the Americans With a Disability Act. In addition to the ramp, detachment members also installed a wider entrance door to the residence to allow for easier ingress/egress.

Detachment members raised over $6,200 to help fund the restoration of a 6X6 truck donated by a detachment member. The truck will be used for detachment activities such as Toys for Tots as well as parades and ceremonies in the local community.

Weapons raffled off included a brand new lever action Henry 45-70 rifle; a Weather by 308 with scope and an Savage over under .223/12 gauge. The Weather by and the Remington were slightly used and donated by a detachment member.

Finally, the detachment is in the formative stages of developing a
detachment pistol and rifle shooting team and conducted its first familiarization shoot at a local gun range. Although there may have been

a little tarnish on the BRASS, muscle memory quickly kicked in and detachment members demonstrated that marksmanship skills can quickly be reacquired.

Finally, the Detachment "Kicks Off" it's 2018 Toys for Tots Drive at a Fannin County High School football game on September 28th. Thanks to the involvement of local high school administrators and coaching staffs, not only will there be spirited competition on the field but competition between the two student bodies and their supporters for who can fill the most collection boxes. We look forward to a busy and productive campaign.
HORNING A HERO

Representing the Sgt. Clyde Thomason Medal of Honor Detachment of the Marine Corps League, Jim Renfro, John Sones, Commandant David Epps, Kenn Young, and Mike Foran presented an Honorary Membership Certificate to retired Master Sergeant Willie Miller, USMC, on his 94th Birthday. MSgt. Miller was a veteran of World War II and Vietnam. He is believed to be the last surviving black Marine. From WWII.

He was also presented a detachment cover and shirt. In addition, MSgt. Miller was recognized by the VFW, American Legion, City of Fayetteville, and Fayette County. Miller was a member or the historic Montford Point Marines, each of which received the Congressional Gold Medal signifying their accomplishment as the first African Americans to serve in the United States Marine Corps. Mr. Miller was presented an American flag. Gazing upon the flag in his hands, he said, “There’s nothing like this anywhere you go in the world.”

The recognition was coordinated by Southern Grace Hospice where MSgt Miller resides.

Jake Puryear Det 1020 participated in the Cave Spring Motorcycle Rally and sold almost $300.00 in raffle tickets for the rocker donated by a long time Det 1020 member. In addition, over $3,200 was raised during the Belk’s Back to School sale. All proceeds will be donated to Toys for Tots and other charities.
DETACHMENT 1260

Detachment 1260 is an active partner with Albany’s American Legion Post 30. Carrying on with a long standing tradition, MCL members recently marked the lawn in front of the Albany Mall so that Legion members could place flags as part of an annual remembrance day for the victims of the 9/11/2001 attacks. The Field of Flags is erected several times a year for such occasions as 9/11, Veterans Day, and Memorial Day. League members mark and Legion members place the flags. Interestingly, for the 2018 911 ceremony, there was a double rainbow facing the speakers’ stage and an imminent storm held off until the speeches and ceremonies ended. Perhaps a bit of Divine intervention at the request of the remembered souls who wanted to express their appreciation for the participants and spectators? Semper Fi and God bless America. (Top photo: Field of Flags; bottom: stage & speakers)
Detachment 647 Events:

Marietta 4th of July Parade:
Detachment 647 (accompanied by members of the General Raymond Davis Metro Atlanta Young Marines) participated in Marietta’s 4th of July parade.

On August 15th Detachment 647 hosted a birthday party for Life Member Harry Kone’s 98th birthday. Harry is a WWII Marine who participated in the Guadalcanal and Bougainville Campaigns.
The Veterans Festival at Pemberton Place proudly presents -

THE 116TH ARMY BAND

Mission Statement:
"Provide music throughout the spectrum of military operations to instill in our forces the will to fight and win, foster the support of our citizens, and promote our national interests at home and abroad."

The 116th Army Band was founded 28 March 1859 in Atlanta’s “Gate City Guard” Georgia Volunteers, Company F. It is the oldest Military National Guard or Reserve Band with service in the War Between the States, Confederate Service 1861-1862, as-

sisted with border service during the Mexican Campaign or the Mexican Expedition, WWI with the 121st Infantry Division Band, WWII with the 170th Field Artillery Band and the 48th Armor Division. On 1 January 1968, the band became an independent organization, known as the 116th Army Band.

THIS EVENT IS FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Come enjoy the music of the 116th Army Band, and learn about veterans benefits and military initiatives from AARP, T-Mobile, Georgia Department of Veteran Service, Atlanta Medical Center, USO, American Red Cross, Wreaths Across America, Georgia Aquarium, Armed Forces recruiters, and more!

Please check updates at our website and Facebook page:
www.GeorgiaVeteransDay.org
Greetings to all! If you were at the Convention in Buffalo you probably heard there are some changes coming regarding the Notice of Death for fallen MCL members. Because of the way we do reports in the Department of Georgia, I would like to request that you continue to send me the Notice of Death, either by mail or email, for the time being. I have about eight or nine months left on my appointment as the Department Chaplain and I would like to see the new reporting system go into effect with the new chaplain. I will assure you that if you send the notifications to me I will make sure they get to the proper person at National HQ.

If I get by-passed I’m afraid the quarterly reports given at the Department staff meetings will be inaccurate and I don’t want any MCL member who has passed to not be properly recognized. So, what I am requesting is that either you send the notifications by email to ctkcec@aol.com or mail them to:

Chaplain David Epps  
4881 Highway 34 East  
Sharpsburg, GA 30277