

**2010 Southeast Division Conference**  
AM Business Session – Saturday, 6 March 2010  
Mobile, Alabama

National Vice Commandant Dave Gardner called the Business Session of the 64<sup>th</sup> Southeast Division Conference to order at 0830. The proper procedures to reopen the session were conducted.

Division Sergeant-at-Arms requested that all cell phones be turned off or put on vibrate. Also announced that the streamers for the Detachment and Department Colors for this Conference are located on the right of dais.

Sergeant-at-Arms called the membership to attention to salute the National Colors.

Division Chaplain announced that the Bible was opened

NVC Gardner asked the assemblage to take their seats.

NVC Gardner made the following announcement:

The Devil Dog Growl will commence at 1400 this afternoon.

NVC Gardner proceeded to introduce our National Executive Secretary of the Marine Corps League, Michael Blum, and asked him to give his report:

- (1) Surprised so many members in attendance this morning.
- (2) Thanked NVC Gardner for inviting him to this Conference and thanked Cal Walters for taking care of him and him and his staff for the great job his Detachment has done.
- (3) Expressed his thanks for the way he is treated at all Southeast Division Conferences and is the one Conference he never misses.
- (4) Thanked all members for the hospitality that he receives at our Conference.
- (5) Commented on the weather and the fact that the streets do not have snow on them. Referring to the Mid-Winter Conference held this past February in the DC Area.
- (6) Commented that this is his sixth year in the position of National Executive Secretary and how much he enjoys working with the National Staff and the Executive Board.
- (7) Commented on the dedication and professionalism of the National Staff.
- (8) Commented on how the applications for membership and dues transmittals are handled at National Headquarters.
- (9) Commented on the Grand Opening of the new Ship's Store at Headquarters, which occurred during the Mid-Winter Conference.
- (10) Commented on how much the stock at the Ship's Store has been increased due to the larger amount of space. The store now carries the red blazers, which it was not able to do with the old store. Also, the store can undersell the other suppliers of the red blazers by \$10.00, because the store does not have to make as much profit.

- (11) The Marine Corps League currently has a membership of just under 76,000 members with 66,000 paid, leaving 10,000 members unpaid. Commented on how Detachments can bring unpaid members back into the fold.
- (12) Commented on the new Marine Corps League database at National Headquarters. This database has been not implemented, although it is ready except for further testing.
- (13) There are currently 2500 to 3000 members on the Members-at-Large list. The majority of these members come into National Headquarters by e-mails or phone calls.
- (14) National Headquarters does not have any records of how many members have received military awards, which campaigns they have participated in as Marines or any other information of this nature. This may change in the future.
- (15) Mike commented on how member-at-large applications are handled. He personally reviews all MAL applications along with the applicant's DD-214. If he suspects anything not to his liking, he has contacts in the "right places" to verify the information.
- (16) Commented on how he has contacts in the other veterans organizations, such as the American Legion, VFW, Marine Corps Association and others to assist him with weeding out undesirables.
- (17) Brought up the new database at National Headquarters again, explaining that it will take a period of four to six months for training purposes by the National Staff. Also described the need of developing a training program on CDs to be utilized by the Detachments, Departments and Divisions of the Marine Corps League.
- (18) Commented on the cost of publishing By-Law changes, approximately \$9000 for the cost of the printing and \$2000 for the cost of postage. The current By-Law changes are available on the National website.
- (19) Stressed the importance of the Detachments, Departments and Divisions keeping their websites current. Complimented the Southeast Division on the job they have been doing in the past on keeping their website current. Today, the Marine Corps League Detachments, Departments and Divisions are 75% in compliance with their websites.
- (20) Commented on how well received the SEMPER FI magazine is on Capitol Hill, as well as some of our competitors in other veterans organizations. The magazine has taken away a lot of advertising from our competitors. Also, commented that extra copies of the magazine are available for use in exhibits, fairs, etc., at a cost of \$1 per magazine. These magazines can be used as a recruiting tool.
- (21) Commented on some of the past interviews, Generals Conway and Zinni, as well as the current Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, and how well they were received.
- (22) Commented on the recent e-mail he had received from a Marine in regard to how much it will cost the taxpayers to change the name from the "Department of the Navy" to the "Department of the Navy and Marine Corps."

- (23) Commented on the on-going talk in Washington as to why we need two land forces in the current US military. Of course, the Marine Corps, being the smaller of the two, should be dissolved. Currently, a heated discussion between the Commandant of the Marine Corps and the Navy about the need for more amphibious ships, which the Navy does not support.
- (24) Last week, the National Staff together with Congressman Jones from North Carolina met in regard to changing the name from the "Department of the Navy" to the "Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps." Marine Corps League has hired a public relations firm, at a cost of \$35,000, to take this crusade nation-wide.
- (25) Spoke about the website [www.marinecause.com](http://www.marinecause.com), which is being utilized to bring the Marine Corps' battle for our much needed recognition by the citizens of this country.
- (26) Spoke on his other duties besides his position as National Executive Secretary of the Marine Corps League. Also mentioned that Lieutenant General Olmstead is onboard to assist Mike Blum in the areas of representing the Marine Corps League at receptions and other functions. General Coleman is replacing General Olmstead as the head of the Marine Expos.
- (27) Question was asked by a member of a South Carolina Detachment about how donations may be made to "Marine Cause."
- (28) Glen Barry Evans, from Tennessee, brought up the question about what is being done to repair the Iwo Jima Memorial. Also brought up the question about the model of the Iwo Jima Memorial at Quantico being moved for a traffic circle. This will not happen.
- (29) Jim Cairn from the Memphis Detachment questioned Mike about how to send funds to support the repairs of the Iwo Jima Memorial.
- (30) National Commandant telephoned Mike from Denver giving his regrets about not being able to attend the Conference. Also told Mike that the Japanese government is in the process of shutting down visits to the island of Iwo Jima. They have already sealed all the tunnels and the only areas open are the beaches and the top of Mount Surabachi.

NVC Gardner announced that the assemblage would be taking a break, but first, he had a couple of announcements:

- (1) The Southeast Division will probably not be able to support the effort of changing the name from "Department of the Navy" to the "Department of the Navy and Marine Corps." NVC Gardner asked for contributions from the members present. A bucket will be passed after the break and asked each member to donate whatever amount he/she could afford.

ANVC Walters made the following announcements:

- (1) Asked if everyone is having a good time and if you have any complaints tell the NVC.
- (2) There will be a Devil Dog Growl this afternoon at 1400. Registration for the Growl will take place next to the area where the Growl will be held. Passport may be stamped at that time.
- (3) Announced that name badges do not need to be worn for the Banquet, but please bring the card inside that indicates you paid for the dinner.

- (3) Please leave the name and address of your Detachment so that streamers for your Colors may be mailed at a future date.
- (4) Any questions on the Conference so far? A member of the P. L. Wilson Detachment brought up the fact that the Kennel Ship's Store had not done very much business so far and the fact that the Mid-Winter Conference was practically snowed out, asked the assemblage to please drop the Ship's Store, located in Parlor 102.
- (5) Devil Dog Ship Store will close at 1200.

NVC Gardner announced that the Business Session will stand in recess for ten minutes at 0950.

Division Chaplain closed the Bible and the Division Sergeant-at-Arms called the assemblage to attention and rendered a hand salute to the National Colors.

ANVC Walters called the AM Business Session back into session at 1003. The bucket was being passed around at this time for contributions by the membership for "Marine Cause."

ANVC Walters asked R. C. Smith, Pack Leader for the Pack of Alabama to come forward.

Pack Leader Smith welcomed everyone and was looking forward to a great Growl commencing at 1400. Announced that the Pack Dog Robber, Johnny Baker, was at this moment stamping passports and that he had raffle tickets on sale for a .45 caliber pistol.

NVC Gardner announced that he wanted all Department Commandants to remain immediately after this session.

Division Sergeant-at-Arms called the membership to attention and hand salute was rendered to the National Colors.

Division Chaplain announced that the Bible is now open.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

NVC Gardner called on the Division Paymaster Glen Barry Evans to give his financial report at this time. Announced that the Audit Committee approved the Division books. Reported that Division now has \$2580 in its coffer. Also announced that the Division was in the process of ordering more Southeast Division Challenge Coins.

NVC Gardner called on Past NVC Southeast Division Commandant John Hicks to give his report at this time.

PNVC Hicks reported on proposed changes to the Southeast Division Standard Operating Procedures. In the past, the recipient of the Carter Award was given a clock, which costs \$150.00. The Division could not afford the cost of the clocks, so at the Southeast Division Conference in Gatlinburg, TN last year, it was decided to go back to giving a

clock to each recipient since 2006. The cost of the clocks will be borne by the Carter Award Committee at no cost to the Division. The Carter Award Committee will sponsor funds raisers each year to pay for the clocks and the monies collected will be placed in the Division's bank account marked for the Carter Award Committee. These funds will only be used for the Carter Award expense. Further change to the SOP to read as follows:

The Carter Award Committee is authorized to raise the necessary funds for the purchase of the clock that the recipient is to be presented.

The clocks will be presented to the recipients of 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 awards and will be presented their clocks at tonight's banquet.

PNVC Hicks gave a description of the clock that will be presented to each recipient.

PNVC Hicks announced that he would pick up the prize to be raffled each year on his trip to Marine Expo at Quantico, VA. The prize will not be sleazy.

NVC Gardner reiterated what PNVC Hicks had stated about raising funds for the Carter Award. Also stated that the Division will not bear the expense for purchasing the clocks.

NVC Gardner entertained a motion to accept the proposed amendment to the SOP. The motion was made by Bernard Bledsoe, Department of Florida and seconded by Lane Parker, Department of South Carolina to accept the amendment. NVC Gardner called for a vote on the motion and the motion passed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

NVC Gardner announced that there are two bids for the 2011 Southeast Division Conference:

Department of Florida, represented by Andrew Smith, Convention Chairman of the Department of Florida presented the proposal for 2011 Conference to be held in the Lake Buena Vista area of Orlando from 3-5 March 2011. The Conference will be held at Hilton Garden Inn and Homewood Suites, which are located very close to all the tourist attractions, such as Disney World, Sea World, etc. The hotels opened in May 2009 and have all the modern conveniences. The rates will be \$99.00 plus tax per night for a regular room and \$109.00 plus tax per night for the suites. These rates include a welcome reception on Thursday night and a hot, cooked-to-order breakfast each morning and complimentary deli luncheon on Saturday. There will also be 15% off on all room service. Wednesday before the start of the Conference and Saturday after the Conference will be computed based on availability. The management of the hotels is totally committed to the Armed Forces and the Marine Corps League.

Question by James Smith of Hutchings Caldwell Detachment #1134, Department of South Carolina. Asked if the hotels are handicapped accessible. The answer was yes and all rooms are handicapped accessible also.

Question by Vince Johnson, Low Country Detachment #803, Department of South Carolina. Asked if the hotel is accessible for RVs. The answer was yes. Plenty of parking is available. No charge for parking.

Question by Carl Ekstrom, Nashville, TN Detachment. Asked about how many handicapped rooms are available at each hotel. Andrew Smith did not have a definite answer.

National Senior Vice Commandant Vic Voltaggio asked if they had prices on the cost of the banquet. The answer was “no not yet.” The Committee will be working with banquet staff on making up the menu, which will determine the cost.

Division Sergeant-at-Arms asked the membership to please keep their private conversations to a minimum and give the speaker his/her full-time and attention.

NVC Gardner announced that the next presentation would be the Department of South Carolina represented by Butch Raynes, Commandant of the Grand Strand Detachment #873 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Asked for a quick show of hands of members who have attended previous Conferences in Myrtle Beach. Most present have been there. The Conference will be held again at the Holiday Inn on the Waterway, the same place where all the previous Conferences hosted by the Grand Strand Detachment were held. The hotel will set aside the whole hotel for the Conference. Commandant Raynes proceeded to talk about the different entertainment venues, shopping malls and amusements available to the attendees. Also mentioned the many golf courses that are available for those who wish to play. The hospitality room on Thursday night will feature a carving station with Virginia baked ham and a steamship round of beef with all the trimmings along with an open bar. On Friday night, there will a pig roast with all the trimmings also with an open bar. The banquet will be buffet-style featuring baked herb chicken, top round of beef and a fish dish featuring tilapia with lemon and butter sauce, assorted vegetables, salads and desserts. The banquet will cost \$50 per person and the cost of a hotel room will be \$70.00 all-inclusive. Suites and handicap rooms are available. There is a dining room and bar in the hotel. There are swimming pools, both indoor and outdoor, plus an exercise room available. The hotel is in the process of totally redoing each room with new beds, new flat screen TVs and all rooms will be redecorated prior to the Conference. Transportation will be available for the ladies attending to go to the shopping malls, etc. and to take attendees wishing to go to the evening shows. Tours are available to Brookgreen Gardens, located south of Myrtle Beach, which features many varieties of statuary, flowers, shrubs, wildlife and boat rides on the waters of the old rice plantations plus some of the old buildings that still stand today from the plantation days. Complimentary breakfasts will consist of coffee, tea, assorted juices, bagels, rolls and assorted pastries. Sit-down breakfasts are available in the hotel restaurant, which are at the expenses of the diners. The dates of the Conference will be 3-6 March 2011.

NVC Gardner asked the Sergeant-at-Arms to pick two people, not from the States of Florida or South Carolina, to help with the counting of the votes. Sergeant-at-Arms asked for a volunteer from the great State of Tennessee and the State of Georgia.

NVC Gardner announced that someone asked for a caucus. He announced that a caucus was not necessary, as the vote was one man, one vote. Announced that the Department of South Carolina needs to caucus. National Senior Vice Commandant Vic Voltaggio announced that the Departments of Florida and South Carolina should not be allowed to vote. NVC Gardner stated that there was a question in the back of the room and requested that person who wished to speak go to the microphone. Hal Gosnell, Department of Georgia, stated that the Division SOP states that any vote is one-man, one-vote.

National Judge Advocate John Kovalcik made a motion to suspend the one-man, one-vote for this vote. The motion was seconded by Johnny Horton, Department of South Carolina. A discussion followed with Bernard Bledsoe, Department of Florida, who suggested that everyone vote “no” to the motion on the floor. Glen Barry Evans, Music City Detachment, Department of Tennessee, declared that if the rules of the SOP are suspended for this vote, it will require a two-thirds majority.

NVC Gardner called for a vote of suspending the rules for this vote and asked for all members in favor please stand up. The vote was almost unanimous to over rule the motion. The one-man, one-vote rule stands.

The voting went as follows:

63 votes for Florida

35 votes for South Carolina

NVC Gardner asked if the Department of South Carolina would entertain to host the 2012 Southeast Division Conference and the Department agreed. The Memphis, TN was going to put in a bid for the 2012 Conference, but had to drop out. NVC Gardner asked for a vote to have the 2012 Conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The vote was unanimous.

NVC Gardner announced that the 2011 Southeast Division Conference will be held in Orlando, Florida. The 2012 Southeast Division Conference will be held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

NVC Gardner announced that if any Detachment or Department wishes to put in a bid for 2013 should do it at next year’s Division Conference.

NVC Gardner announced that there is a hot lunch being served at the moment in the hospitality room. Barbeque is being served.

ANVC Walters announced that there is no reserved seating at the banquet this evening.

NVC Gardner asked the Sergeant-at-Arms to put the Business Meeting in recess until 1200.

Sergeant-at-Arms asked all members to stand and render a hand salute to our National Colors.

**2010 Southeast Division Conference**  
PM Business Session – 6 March 2010  
Mobile, Alabama

Business Session reconvened at 1202.

NVC Gardner announced that Sergeant-at-Arms has checked all Colors in the room and those Detachments and Departments will have streamers mailed to them.

NVC Gardner announced that \$718.00 had been collected while the bucket was passed around. This money will go to support "Marine Cause."

NVC Gardner announced that his next order of business is one of his favorites. He has some things to present to folks and all he has to do is locate them. We have some very special Marines here and I have some certificates to present:

National Judge Advocate John Kovalcik  
James Smith, Jr., Department of South Carolina – Meritorious Commendation Medal  
David Cates, Department of Tennessee – Individual Commendation Medal  
David Hatfield, Department of Tennessee – Individual Commendation Medal  
P. L. Wilson Detachment – the host Detachment received by Jerry Steele –  
National Unit Meritorious Medal

NVC Gardner recognized the Officers of the Southeast Division.

NVC Gardner recognized the National Senior Vice Commandant Vic Voltaggio and asked for support for being elected National Commandant at Greensboro, NC.

NVC Gardner recognized the National Junior Vice Commandant Jim Tuohy and asked for support for being elected National Senior Vice Commandant at Greensboro, NC.

NVC Gardner recognized the National Judge Advocate John Kovalcik and asked for support for being elected Junior Vice Commandant at Greensboro, NC.

NVC Gardner recognized Jimmy "the squid" Hackbart, the Central Division National Commandant, who is running for the office of National Judge Advocate.

NVC Gardner recognized Dick Gore, National Vice Commandant, New England Division and National Chief of Staff. Asked for support for being elected National Judge Advocate.

NVC Gardner commented that these Marines came here because they know where the action is. Commented on the Semper Fi magazine and what a phenomenal magazine it is and commented on all the articles written by the National Officers.

NVC Gardner recognized British Royal Marine Jimmy Eanon, a WWII veteran, who met a Marine, Vince Johnson, who is a members of the Low Country Detachment #803.

Jimmy asked everyone to stand, if you can, to offer the following prayer:

The Korean Epitaph

When you go home tell them of the (undecipherable) for your tomorrow will give our today. (Sorry, but was unable to decipher his English accent.)

ANVC Walters announced that the Grownl would be in the room that we are currently meeting in at 1400.

The cocktail hour will be in the hospitality room from 1730 until 1830. Please do not try to gain access to the banquet hall until they are ready for us. Access to the banquet hall is through Entrance "A." Dinner will served buffet style and the head table will go first.

ANVC Walters thanked everyone for being here and was very happy to see the room so

full. Thanked everyone for coming to Mobile. Also announced that no covers will be worn tonight. No reserved seating for the banquet.

Chris Roberts, from the Atlanta Detachment, announced that they had hosted a premier of the HBO mini-series "The Pacific." The series evolves around three Marines during WWII, one from the Mobile area E. B. Sledge, whose son was present in the hospitality room on Thursday night. The Mobile Detachment will be hosting the premier of "The Pacific" next Saturday night, the 13<sup>th</sup> of March at the Center Theater in Mobile. One of the P. L. Wilson Detachment members, Sid Phillips, a great friend of E. B. Sledge, is also highlighted in the series.

The Junior Vice Commandant for the State of Georgia stated that the dvd for "The Pacific" will coming out on Father's Day.

ANVC Walters made a statement that many attendees had asked how they were able to pay for all the food that has served at the Conference in the hospitality room. The raffles and the sale of the polo shirts is how they were able to offset the cost of running the hospitality room.

Charles Norman, Past Commandant of the Department of Louisiana, announced that there 2600 troops airborne as we speak on their way to Afghanistan from the State of Louisiana. Asked for prayers from everyone for their safe return.

NVC Gardner asked that all Department Commandants remain after the Business Session.

Norman Bundy, Riverfront Detachment, Department of South Carolina played the Marine's Hymn on his harmonica with everyone standing. Everyone joined in singing our Hymn. Norm Bundy announced that he is playing at the graduation of the Young Marines in Anderson, South Carolina.

NVC Gardner asked the Division Sergeant-at-Arms to recess this meeting. The membership rendered the hand salute to our National Colors.

NVC Gardner announced that the meeting was in recess at 1235 until the banquet this evening.