



# Southeast Division Marine Corps League

- Chartered by Congress – 7 August 1937 –



## MINUTES 2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Augusta, Georgia

24 to 26 MARCH 2016

Conference host: Lt. Col Jimmie Dyess Detachment 921

### DEPARTMENT COMMANDANT'S COUNCIL

The meeting was called to order on Thursday, 24 March 2016 by NDVC Jim Hackbarth.

Present at the meeting were officers and staff of the Southeast Division, Commandants from each of the Departments, and many other members of the Marine Corps League to include National Commandant, National JVC & National JA.

NDVC Hackbarth welcomed everyone to the conference and introduced Bill Ragan, Commandant Detachment 921 and conference chairman. Commandant Ragan welcomed all and provided a brief overview of activities during the conference.

NDVC Hackbarth acknowledged National officers present at the meeting:

- National Commandant Richard Gore;
- National Junior Vice-Commandant Dennis Tobin;
- National Judge Advocate Johnny Baker

NDVC Hackbarth called for reports from the Department Commandants.

- Department of Alabama Commandant Jerry Cherne reported on membership and Detachments. The Department Convention will be in June. There are not any pending Chapter 9 issues.
- Department of Florida Commandant William Cona reported on membership and delinquency. The rate of delinquency has improved during the last quarter with further improvement expected in the current quarter. The Department is on track with an aggressive program for recruitment and retention. He also spoke of the Professional Development Program and its availability on the Department web site [www.mclfl.org](http://www.mclfl.org). The Detachment locator is linked through the Department web site from the National web site. There have been 2 Chapter 9 hearings. The Marine For Life program has proven useful within the Department in helping one

of their own in time of need. The Florida Injured Warrior Fund, Inc. program has been successful in helping veterans of all services in filling the donut hole they experience from other aid programs.

NDVC Hackbarth noted the importance of having a Marine For Life Coordinator appointed in each Department.

- Department of Georgia Commandant Ron Kirstatter reported on membership. There were not any Chapter 9 hearings. A couple of the Georgia Detachments have been renamed and a new Detachment was formed. There are a couple of Detachments that are having difficulty with the Department doing all that they can to help but if they do not meet standards their charters may be pulled. This year is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Department and all are invited to their convention in June.
- Department of Mississippi Commandant Billy Henderson reported on membership.
- Department of South Carolina Commandant John Tharp reported on membership and delinquency. He is looking forward to the membership database in order to have a more accurate roster than is currently available. A new Detachment was recently chartered and is moving ahead full speed. Training is important to the Department with innovative approaches being tried to provide PDP training at the Detachment level. Some of the Detachments have initiated creative fund raising programs. The Department is considering the adoption of competitions and awards such as an outstanding Detachment newsletter.
- Department of Tennessee Commandant Laimon Godel is excused absent and represented by Senior Vice Commandant Kenneth Kotchevar reported on detachments, membership, and delinquency. The annual convention is coming soon. There was a special ceremony in September for the reinternment of Lt. Bonnyman

A question from the audience concerning the "Fire Team" concept was posed and answered.

- Department of Louisiana Commandant David Martin reported on membership and activities such as marksmanship. Annual convention will be in June. The Detachments have turned around and improving with focus on Marine Corps League programs.

National JA Baker addressed the meeting. Many of the Chapter 9 hearings could be avoided if the parties would simply address their concerns as they did while serving as active duty Marines. Members need to speak to one another and work out their differences between themselves.

National Junior Vice Commandant addressed the meeting. Forms are on the web site for transmittals, ROI, and etc. Be careful in completing all forms correctly and legibly. If members on the inactive list are not found, are deceased, or are no longer interested please submit the information to NJVC Tobin who will present to membership section at

HQ for removal from the list. The MCL is aging; there is a need for younger members to carry the torch. Many active duty Marines do not know what the MCL is. The Marine Corps has approached the MCL to provide assistance during transition from active duty. Too many Marines (and other veterans) are becoming statistics to suicide. Associating the Marines with the MCL may help reduce the rate. A new membership sub-classification under the Honorary Membership classification of Honorary Active Duty (H/AD) will be implemented to allow active duty Marines to become associated with the MCL. NJVC Tobin provided a handout with detailed information on the H/AD program.

NJVC also spoke on providing classes or presentation during transition week for active duty Marines preparing for discharge. MCL members can assist with suicide prevention, homelessness, housing and relocation, employment, and education. Currently there is a program at Camp Lejeune. It will be evaluated and based on the outcome of the evaluation may be expanded to other bases nationwide.

National Commandant Gore greeted the meeting encouraging all to enjoy and learn.

Florida Commandant Cona spoke concerning providing assistance at VA centers and crisis centers. All too often material is not being distributed to the veterans. MCL members can volunteer to see that the material is distributed. He also spoke on visiting USMC Reserve Units and speaking with the reserve Marines, an opportunity to provide awareness on the MCL and maybe recruit members.

A member spoke on the Wounded Warrior Project and the high rate of overhead. There are other programs that provided more service to the individual veteran with a significantly lower rate or overhead.

NDVC presented a replacement charter for Det. 066 to Florida Commandant Bill Cona.

Commandant's meeting adjourned by NDVC Jim Hackbarth.

Respectfully submitted,

George LaMont. Adjutant

## **JOINT MCL/MCLA OPENING CEREMONY AND MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**Friday 25 March 2016**

The meeting was called to order by NDVC Jim Hackbarth.

Following the opening ceremony, the following dignitaries were recognized:

- National Commandant Richard Gore;
- National Junior Vice Commandant Dennis Tobin;
- National Judge Advocate Johnny Baker;
- MCLA National President Deborah Evans;
- MCLA Division Vice President SED Joyce Brickett who then addressed the meeting with comments and welcome. She introduced the MCLA officers present at the meeting.
  - MCLA National Senior Vice President Karen Aune
  - MCLA National Judge Advocate Evelyn Joppa
  - MCLA Past National President Alice black
  - MCLA Assistant Division Vice President Nancy Calleja
  - MCLA PNVP SED Linda Adams
  - MCLA National Guard Rogene Hackbarth
  - Unit officers and fleas
- NADVC Archie Sweet
- SED Adjutant George LaMont
- SED Sgt. At Arms Butch Raynes
- SED Paymaster Glen Barry Evans
- SED Vice Chief Devil Dog David Sargent

Announcements included the elimination of a head table for the banquet due to the large number of VIP present.

Lt. Col Jimmie Dyess Detachment Commandant Bill Ragan was introduced. He welcomed all to the 2016 SED Conference. He provided an overview of activities during the conference.

National Commandant Richard Gore welcomed all to the conference. He explained that he could not discuss details of the ongoing litigation with the previous MCL Executive Director due to constraints imposed by legal counsel.

MCLA National President Deborah Evans welcomed all to the conference.

Chaplain Terry Witt dedicated the conference to those fallen members of the past year. He then led a Memorial Service in honor of all departed MCL and MCLA members since the last conference.

The Joint Meeting/Memorial Service was adjourned with MCL business meeting to convene following a brief break.

## **SOUTHEAST DIVISION MCL BUSINESS MEETING**

**Friday 25 March 2016**

The meeting was called to order and opened in accordance with MCL Ritual by NDVC Jim Hackbarth.

Roll call of officers and staff indicated all present or represented by approved alternate.

Motion made and seconded to accept the minutes of the 2015 conference with corrections as posted on the website. Correction was noted for Page 3 to correct the spelling of Charles Harding to Charles Hardy. The correction was made. Motion passed unanimously.

The Paymaster report will be presented during the Saturday session following a review by the financial oversight committee.

Members sick or in distress: Tennessee Commandant Laimon Godel is recovering following chemotherapy. The wife of John Hicks has suffered a third broken hip.

NDVC Hackbarth called for the report of officers:

- NDVC Jim Hackbarth reported the Division is doing well. The Departments and Detachments have attacked the delinquency issue with positive results. Department of Louisiana Commandant David Martin was recognized for his efforts and success within the Department. There has been a positive change within the Department of Louisiana.
- ADVC Archie Sweet reported that he has not been tasked with much and therefore no report of activity.
- Adjutant George LaMont reported that the ROI form is not being sent to the Division except for Georgia & Florida. Kudos to LuAnne Miller Department of Georgia for her consistent effort in sending the ROI. Request for ROI to be submitted to Adjutant LaMont electronically as the yellow copy (Division copy) does not scan well enough to read.
- Sgt. At Arms Butch Raynes no report.
- Department of Alabama reported on membership and detachments. The Department will implement training this year.
- Department of Georgia reported on membership and detachments.
- Department of Florida reported on their web site and invited all to use as may be desired. Membership delinquency rate is down and expected to continue to be reduced. The website has linked the National detachment locator. The PDP is available in full from the website. 163 Good Citizen awards have been presented to Eagle Scouts throughout the State.
- Department of Mississippi
- Department of Louisiana reported on overcoming recent problems. The Department is seeing younger members and making every effort to not only keep them but also find more. Commandant Martin is making visits to each of the detachments to build better relations with the Department.

- Department of South Carolina reported on membership and visiting as many detachments as possible to encourage the detachments and improve relations.
- Department of Tennessee reported on membership.

National Commandant Gore addressed the meeting. He thanked everyone for electing him as National Commandant. He is at National HQ frequently and for a couple of weeks at a time each month. The focus is on getting the MCL back on track at all levels. The web site is up, improvements are needed and are forthcoming. He complimented NJVC Tobin on his efforts with the Marine Corps. MCL General Counsel is on board and in constant communications with the National Board. National convention and mid-winter meetings will focus on training for the membership. Members need to know how to perform the duties of their MCL jobs if the MCL is going to prosper. He complimented the current Executive Director for the work he is doing. Concerning the current litigation very little can be said because the litigation is under way. The Blum's filed for unemployment benefits which were denied. The MCL has filed a countersuit to the suit filed by the Blum family. More information will be shared as it can be.

National Junior Vice Commandant Dennis Tobin addressed the meeting. The Mid-Winter conference was well attended right up to the last minutes of the last day. He shared the report from the Commandant's meeting with the membership in attendance. Written copies of the reports were available. The program essentially brings active duty Marines, Corpsmen and Chaplains into the MCL and follow them through transition to civilian life after discharge from active duty. The Honorary/Active Duty classification was explained with the hope that many will convert to regular membership upon return to civilian life if not sooner. MCL members can support the Marine Corps with suicide prevention, homelessness, education, employment, and housing for Marines no longer on active duty. These programs are in direct response to the Marine Corps and has been approved by the Marine Corps. A question was posed concerning liability to the MCL especially concerning suicide prevention. The Marine Corps has approved but NJVC Tobin will check further. *NOTE: later in the conference NJVC Tobin reported that he had consulted with the Marine Corps and the opinion is that helping as volunteers will not incur a liability.* Delinquency is too high; it is incumbent on the JVC at each level to work on the problem. More details on the programs will be forthcoming. Copies of the handouts provided by the NJVC are attached to the hard copy of these minutes for reference as may be needed.

NDVC declared a 10-minute break.

Cmdt. Bill Regan spoke about the evening trip for a performance by the Parris Island Marine Corps Band.

National Judge Advocate Johnny Baker thanked all for electing him as National Judge Advocate. He acknowledged the efforts of National SVC Wendell Webb. There have been 11 Chapter 9 hearings since August. The majority result because of 2 people not being able to get along with each other. If these problems can be resolved at the detachment level the outcome will be much better for all concerned. He explained the new ceremonial ribbon effective August 2015. Service for the award began August 2015 not before that and the award may only be presented by a Commandant. An individual member may not decide that it is earned and therefore begin wearing without presentation by a Commandant. Bylaw changes must be submitted all inclusive. If a change is approved, it will be based on the wording of the bylaw not by an abstract interpretation. A question was asked concerning the Ceremonial ribbon and what is meant by ceremonial. *NJA Baker later read the wording of the criteria for the award.* The PDP is needed at each Detachment for every member. The bylaws of each level are very important for understanding by the membership. Take the time to learn your detachment bylaws and then

the Department and National. He closed by asking all to keep those with cancer and especially prostate cancer in their thoughts and prayers.

SED Boy Scout Coordinator Mike Foran spoke on the program. National is not receiving reports from the Departments. National will be seeking that reports from the Departments be submitted to the Division for combined reporting to National. Department of Georgia has a challenge coin for presentation to the Eagle Scout. The Commandant of the Marine Corps will present a certificate to the Eagle Scout which may be requested via your local recruiter.

VAVS report by Cary Haerlin. Without reporting from the Departments an accurate report cannot be presented from the Division. Reporting has not been all inclusive of what can be reported.

NDVC Hackbarth read the report from the Young Marines Coordinator listing the various activities and events supported by the Young Marines. Many detachments sponsor Young Marine units, more would be helpful.

The meeting recessed for lunch to resume at 1330.

The meeting was called to order in accordance with MCL ritual by NDVC Hackbarth

NDVC Hackbarth reported on his activities since installation in August 2015. He has visited Department and Detachments in the Division. Recruitment and retention has and is being positively addressed throughout the MCL. He reminded everyone that a position in the MCL is to serve the membership not for ego. The 2017 conference will be in Mobile, AL. 2018 bids will be discussed later in the conference.

PRO Robin Barker reported. He echoed NDVC Hackbarth on the importance of publicizing what the MCL accomplishes so that the "best known secret" becomes better known to all Marines. The Florida website has many resources and tools for everyone that will help with public relations and publicizing activities. Additionally, PRO Barker is available to all for any questions or assistance. Newsletters are one of the best sources for Detachments to communicate with their membership.

NDVC called on Sgt. At Arms Butch Raynes who is also the Chair of the National Uniform Committee. He briefed on the availability of resources on the proper wear of the MCL uniforms. The National Committee is in the process of publishing a booklet, with accompanying visual aids, for the various uniforms of the MCL. He frequently sees photos of members wearing uniforms outside the requirements of the bylaws.

Carter Award Chairman Karl Ekstrom reported that 10 nominations were received. The committee will meet to select the recipient for presentation during the banquet. It is imperative that future nominations strictly follow submission guidelines.

PDP National Chairman Bill Cona reported. The Leadership Program is continually evaluated and revised as needed. The Department of Florida presents classes twice annually on the whole of the PDP during a full day session at the Spring and Fall Conferences. The entire program is available on the Department of Florida website and is the same as the National PDP.

PRO Robin Barker was again recognized and reminded everyone that we are members together of the Southeast Division of the Marine Corps League.

Georgia Pack Leader Joe Barbee addressed the meeting on behalf of the MODD. The growl will conclude in time for the trip to hear the Marine Corps Band. The FLEAS have agreed to begin early in order to dust and scratch the DOGS in time for the Growl to begin early.

NDVC Hackbarth placed the meeting in recess in accordance with ritual until 0900 the next day.

NDVC Hackbarth opened the Saturday session in accordance with MCL ritual.

Roll call of officers indicated all present or accounted for.

NDVC Hackbarth introduced the National Commandant Richard Gore; National Junior Vice-commandant Dennis Tobin; and National Judge Advocate Johnny Baker.

National JVC Dennis Tobin addressed the admission of Honorary Active Duty Marines in that as Honorary members a vote to approve membership is not required until such time the Marine decides to join as an active member then all current requirements for active membership must be followed. Question by member Bledsoe concerning how long Honorary membership for active duty Marines lasts. Response is that it terminates with discharge from active duty.

NDVC Hackbarth reported that there was a failure to obtain Division streamers for those that brought their flags. Streamers will be ordered and mailed out to recipients ASAP.

Bill Miller, Treasurer for the Marine Corps Foundation addressed the meeting. The Foundation funds the MCL scholarship. Last year there were 197 scholarships awarded. The Foundation must operate with less than 25% operating and management expenses. Last year the Foundation operated at about 17.2%. The Foundation must be audited annually by an outside firm which cost about \$11,000 last year. So far this year the Foundation is operating in the black. There were some sizeable donations to the Foundation during the last year which have been invested with the investment income being used for Foundation operations. The hat was passed for donations to the Scholarship Fund.

NDVC recognized each of the Department Commandants.

Department of Florida Commandant William Cona spoke to clarify the difference between the Wounded Warrior Project (based out of Jacksonville, FL) and the Florida Injured Warrior Fund, Inc. operated under the umbrella of the Department of Florida MCL

The Department of Tennessee Smoky Mountain Detachment 1206 submitted a bid for the SED 2018 Conference in Pidgeon Forge, Tennessee. The hotels rooms are all suites and about 2 blocks off the parkway. Tourist traffic should be minimal as the conference will be just before the beginning of tourist season. The hotel owns an RV park next door. The tentative dates are March 22 – 25, 2018. Motion to accept the bid with a second passed unanimously.

Department of Mississippi invited all to attend their upcoming 2016 convention.

Department of Alabama spoke briefly on the 2017 SED conference in Mobile, AL at the Mobile Marriott. The rate is \$99 per night including breakfast. March 30 through April 1, 2017 are the conference dates.

The Department of Alabama 2016 Convention in Mobile is upcoming with all invited to attend.

Department of Mississippi Commandant Billy Henderson addressed the meeting concerning a Gold Star Families event in Mississippi. There have been a few significant donations to establish a memorial to the Gold Star Families. In May there will be an event to raise additional funds. Visit the Gold Star Families web site for more information or to make a donation.

SED ADC Lou Calleja reported that there are guides to assist in planning a conference available on the SED web site.

National Scholarship Committee Chair David Hatfield introduced George LaMont as a member of the committee. Roger Gardner of Texas and Teena Engel representing the MCLA were not present. Chair Hatfield spoke briefly on the submission requirement and the need to follow such requirements as failure to do so will result in the application being denied. The committee will

review each application and vote on approval or denial. An official transcript must be submitted at time of application. It may be sent separately due to many schools sending the transcript directly. Be sure to note the correct address for submission; it is not the National HQ. If the application is approved, the student is required to submit proof of admission before an award is made. Applications are available on the National website under "programs" and then "programs" again from the drop down. Instructions for completion are part of the application. Only paid members (no delinquent or honorary members) of the MCL may sponsor an applicant for the scholarship.

The session recessed for 15 minutes.

NDVC Hackbarth turned the chair over to ANVC Sweet while NDVC attended the MCLA meeting.

Paymaster report presented by Glen Barry Evans. (copy attached to minutes). Presented information concerning relation of social security number and primary signatory on MCL accounts. If the SSN cannot be validated the account must be closed under requirements of the Patriot Act. The term "audit" is being restricted across the country and replaced with the term "financial review". Archie Sweet, Lou Calleja, and David Hatfield served as the 2016 oversight review committee for review of the SED financial records. Their finding is that all is in order. A report was presented concerning EIN status for Detachments in each Department obtained from the IRS on-line data base. When filing 990N it is imperative that each detachment first identify as "Marine Corps League" then use the detachment name as "dba" name of detachment ###. NJVC Dennis Tobin reported that if there is any problem or question with IRS filing to contact NSVC Wendell Webb.

NDVC Hackbarth returned during the Paymaster report and resumed his position as chair.

Motion to accept and second to accept the report of the Financial Oversight Committee. Motion passed.

Carter Award 50/50 winner was announced as Nancy Calleja for \$108.00.

Motion and second to accept all staff and committee reports. Motion carried.

Session recessed for lunch to resume at 1300

Guest speakers Col. Carl Elle US Army and his wife Col. Kimberly Elle, USAF spoke on the Ft. Gordon cyber center of excellence and the Augusta Warrior Project.

Session recessed for 10 minutes.

Department of Mississippi invited all to attend their annual convention.

Department of Louisiana announced their annual convention.

An announcement was made on a fund raiser by Share Initiative on a run from Boston to New York this weekend then to Atlanta. On May 5<sup>th</sup> there will be a special award ceremony that all are invited to attend.

PRO Robin Baker addressed the membership on the Injured Warrior Fund of Florida, Inc. under the MCL Department of Florida.

John Jones Department of South Carolina spoke on #22killed.

An announcement was made that a presentation has been prepared on how to conduct an internal audit (financial oversight review) which is currently under review by National and should soon be available to all MCL members.

Bill Miller spoke on the series of challenge coins for the MCL Foundation. There were several suggestions for the next coin in the series. Motion and second for the SED to sponsor the 4<sup>th</sup> coin for the Foundation. Under discussion: the cost of production and the history of funding prior coins was discussed. SED has funded the coin for 3 years. Lou Calleja suggested that other Divisions help with the funding of the coin. The cost for SED to sponsor the coin is more than half of the current balance. The motion failed unanimously. National Commandant Gore said it will be taken to National for other Divisions to sponsor the coin.

NDVC called for all Department Commandants to briefly meet following this meeting.

Announcement made on a 1-hour delay for the beginning of the banquet.

The meeting recessed until the banquet.

*Technical difficulties with the recording and audience noise prevented recording of the beginning portion of banquet ceremonies.*

The SED MCLA announced the recipient of the Watt/Liner award as \_\_\_\_\_.

Department of Georgia Commandant Ron Kirstatter welcomed all and thanked Lt. Col. Jimmie Dyess Detachment for their efforts in hosting the conference.

Detachment Commandant Bill Ragan thanked the members of the Lt. Col. Jimmie Dyess Detachment for all their work in all they do for the MCL and their community.

Guest of Honor and evening speaker Major General Perry M. Smith USAF (ret) was introduced followed by his presentation to the audience. He also introduced his wife Conner who is also a daughter of Lt. Col. Jimmie Dyess.

The winner of the 50/50 drawing is Fran Cona for \$240.

A remembrance and memorial ceremony was conducted for KIA, POW/MIA, and fallen members of the SED MCL and MCLA.

SED NDVC Jim Hackbarth introduced National Commandant Richard Gore who presented a Distinguished Citizen Gold award to Ray Schneider (sp?).

SED NDVC Hackbarth recognized the Department officers present and SED staff. Department of Georgia Commandant Ron Kirstatter was presented the Distinguished Silver award. A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the Lt. Col. Jimmie Dyess Detachment for their effort in hosting the conference. Proclamations from the US House of Representatives were presented to the Department of Georgia and the Lt. Col. Jimmie Dyess Detachment. A proclamation from Columbia County, Georgia was read announcing Marine Corps League Day on 25 March

The Ochman award was presented to Department Georgia

The Perrone award was presented to Department of Florida

Karl Ekstrom announced the recipient of the Carter Award (Division Marine of the Year) as Laimon Godel of the Department of Tennessee. There were 10 nominations for the award.

The 2016 SED Conference was adjourned until 2017 in Mobile, Alabama.

Respectfully submitted,

George LaMont SED Adjutant