

Marine Corps League

Chartered by Congress – 7 August 1937

Minutes 79th Annual SOUTHEAST DIVISION CONFERENCE 2026

Savannah, Georgia 5 – 8 March 2026

Conference Host:

Department of Georgia, Department Commandant Rex Delk

SEDIV DEPARTMENT COMMANDANT'S COUNCIL

The meeting was called to order at 1600 by SEDIV ADVC Jim Stone on Thursday 5, March 2026.

Present at the meeting were officers and staff of the SEDIV, Commandants from each of the Departments and many other members of the Marine Corps League.

ADVC Jim Stone introduced special guest National Jr. Vice Commandant David Porter, Past National Commandant Johnny Baker, Bob Borka COO, Past NVC Jerry Holt who is now the President of the MCL Foundation and welcomed all.

Adjutant Donald Beck conducted a roll call of Department Commandants. All Commandants were Present (Alabama Sr. Vice Nancy Burtron will fill in as the Commandant for this weekend) with a total of 51 guests also present.

ADVC Jim Stone called for reports from each of the Department Commandants. Focus on Recruiting and Retention.

COO Bob Borka (just Bob) is available all weekend for your help with pay rosters, PLM rosters, and anything you need from him, so don't be bashful. BOB has a lot of knowledge and is willing to share it with you.

Marine of the Year and Associate Member of the Year

The new program is set up for three years looking back at what the individual has done for the Detachment / Department / Division outside adventures (volunteering at the VA Hospital and number of hours the person has put in / Toys for Tots / The Church he/she goes to / Volunteering for youth programs (basketball, football, baseball coaching) / Scouting programs). The possibilities are endless.

We are looking for consistency.

Last year we had 13 nominations for MOY and this year we have 18 nominations.

This is the most prestigious award we can give.

The new forms are on the web site. Past National Commandant Johnny Baker stated these forms and writeup's are some of the best he has seen.

Find someone who knows how to write in your Detachment or Department to do the write-up. The forms are a lot easier. You no longer are writing 4, 6, 10 pages of the individual. Write bullet points when you are doing these. It goes a long way.

All Nominations had to be turned in by the 19th of February. There were 2 MCL and 1 Associate Member turned in last week, and we had to turn them away. Please read the Bylaws. We must have all nominations at least 14 days in advance.

Marine Corps League Auxiliary

MCLA last year we had 7 nominations and this year we have 9 nominations.

Membership:

How are you recruiting and retaining your members?

Are you as Department Commandants going out and visiting your Detachments?

- Department of Alabama Sr. Vice Commandant Nancy Burtron reported: Department has 16 Detachments and 1 Auxiliary unit.
- Department of Florida Commandant John Gionet reported: Department has 45 Detachments and 5 Auxiliary units.

- Department of Georgia Commandant Rex Delk reported: Department has 23 Detachments and 0 Auxiliary units. Everything is done by electronic communications as you did this weekend to sign up and book your reservations.
- Department of Louisiana Commandant Timothy Neal reported: Department has 12 Detachments and 3 Auxiliary units.
- Department of Mississippi Commandant Harry Sharpe reported: Department has 10 Detachments and 0 Auxiliary units.
- Department of South Carolina Commandant Jim Breen reported: Department has 23 Detachments and 1 Auxiliary unit.
- Department of Tennessee Commandant James Delaney Reported: Department has 17 Detachments and 2 Auxiliary units.
- For the SEDIV we have 146 Detachments and 12 Auxiliary Units. Great job everyone.

David Porter – National Jr. Vice Commandant – gave us a brief on the National Numbers and SEDIV Numbers:

Paid Members	National	SEDIV Numbers
	46398	8477
Not Paid	4741	918

Once you get new members signed up for the first year, you need to keep them involved or they walk out the door, as the numbers show above.

Jim Stone ADVC:

Went around the room and had all the Commandants state where their state convention is. This is also on the SEDIV.org web site.

1 – Respond in a timely manner and be proactive to the emails Ronnie Broussard and I are sending.

2 - Please have your Detachments send \$100.00 each to the general fund and earmark it for Scholarship.

3 – Disaster Relief is big in the SEDIV, and all Detachments and Departments should contribute to this. Please send a contribution to the SEDIV paymaster and mark it for Disaster Relief. This helps all of our States out.

We have talked a lot about recruiting aspect element and retention aspects of it and learning about those individuals.

It is important that you use the Chain of Command at all levels.

Bob Borka COO – talked about VSOs. A year in a half ago we had 4 accredited VSOs. Right now, we have 38 accredited VSOs, and we are in 20 States. Our goal is to get a VSO in every State.

JOINT OPENING CEREMONY AND MEMORIAL SERVICE SEDIV MCL AND MCLA

National Vice Commandant Ronnie Broussard called the meeting to order at 0900 on 6 March 2026. We have a Guest count of 103 people, and we have 153 registered for this conference.

NVC Ronnie Broussard recognized the following VIP and Guest:

David Porter – National Jr. Vice Commandant

Johnny Baker - Past National Marine Corps League Commandant

Bob Borka – COO

Joe DeAngelo – Chief Devil Dog MODD #62

Jerry Holt – Past NVC and MCL Foundation President

Becky Marcel – SEDIV Auxiliary

SEDIV MCLA VP Becky Marcel introduced the following Marine Corps League Auxiliary members:

Dignitaries:

Lynn Cortright – MCLA Past National Judge Advocate

Deborah Evans – MCLA PNP (Past National President), PMBF (Past National Madam Big Flea), Past Regent, Past Flea of the Year

Angie Pitts – National MCLA Assistant Chaplin / National Girl Scout Chair

Angie Neal – MCLA Department of Louisiana President

Staff of SEDIV

Rebecca “Becky” Marcel – SEDIV Vice President

Christy Ellis – Assistant SEDIV Vice President / Operation Angel – Shelter for Domestic Abuse

Rex Delk Commandant from Georgia: Welcomed everyone for attending the SEDIV Conference. The Staff is working very hard, so if you need something or have a question, please ask one of the Department staff, and we will take care of it. We ask that you help us this weekend, by picking up behind yourself. Let’s show the Hotel staff we care.

Jason Smith – Talked about Suicide prevention, safe guns and how to store them with the new partners we have. He also had a slide presentation.

Ronnie Broussard NVC – Jason Smith has a table set up in the hallway, and please stop by and talk to him. He will be here all weekend.

David Porter National Jr. Vice Commandant – David went over the numbers again that he gave on Thursday night. There is a Guide on the web site in the MCL Membership folder, for recruiting and retention. Work with your Recruiters in your area. I ran the MC Marathon this year with a friend. Next year we are going to run it again and we are having tee shirts made up with a QR code on them to direct people to the MC League. The MC Marathon draws 40,000 people every year, this will be a great recruiting tool.

Joe De DeAngelo Chief Devil Dog #62 – Woof Woof – We have raised over 50,000 big bones for the Children’s Hospital so far this year. We have over 47 hundred members in the MODD. I will talk more tonight at the Growl.

Becky Marcel SEDIV Auxiliary Vice President – Talked about the Auxiliary and they were chartered in 1937. She talked about what they do and their role within the Marine Corps League. As the Auxiliary, we are proud to stand aside the MCL in its missions.

Christy Ellis Assistant SEDIV Auxiliary VP – Operation little angel project this year is called Safe Shelter. It is a domestic shelter here in the Savannah area. They are open 24 hours, 7 days a week. They provide safe, confidential service to all victims of domestic violence. They are the second largest domestic violence emergency shelter in the state and the largest in the county. At the flea scratch tonight, we will be raising money to help the shelter.

Jim Stone ADVC – Last night we had our Commandants Council meeting with 51 people in attendance. It was a great time, and everyone learned a lot. We talked about membership and retention. Remember every one of us is a salesperson for the MCL.

Color Guard presented by the Young Marines.

John Burks SEDIV Chaplin and Angie Pitts National MCLA Assistant Chaplain conducted the memorial service for all members:

	Members	Auxiliary
Alabama -	12	0
Florida -	31	2
Georgia -	20	0
Louisiana -	18	1
Mississippi -	11	0
South Carolina -	25	0
Tennessee -	2	1

Johnny Baker – Past National Commandant: Thanked everyone for coming.

Fiscal Year is from July 1 to June 30; all ROIs are done on the fiscal year.

SEDIV MCL BUSINESS MEETING

Ronnie Broussard NVC – Introduced Arron Henry who is the Mayor of Rotem, part of Savannah, Georgia

Ronnie Broussard NVC - called for a roll call of officers.

Adjutant Donald Beck did the Roll Call, all Department Commandants present. We do have a Quorum.

Adjutant Donald Beck stood up to read the minutes from the last meeting. A motion was made to accept the minutes as posted on the web site and 2nd to accept the minutes as posted on the web site. Motion carried.

Ronnie Broussard NVC – Talked about the ship store and visit it because he does this on his own time.

Jim Stone ADVC - talked about the Commandants' Council meeting last night. Everyone is welcome to attend this meeting. We had 51 people attend.

Billy Lamar Compliance Officer - Has been in the Job for over a year now. There are 4 areas of compliance: ROI / PLM / 990 / Secretary of State, He has made a spread sheet for all states to use and see where they are. He has listed all Detachments in each state. Each state has access to it and can see where each Detachment stands. If you are having problems please get ahold of your Department Compliance Officer and if questions still arise, please get ahold of me.

The PLM audits were down: Submitting this audit back to National gives them an update on individuals and National sends a check (via: Direct Deposit) to each detachment that returns this audit. PLM audit must go to your Department Paymaster who will submit it to SEDIV Compliance for review.

The Division did quite well, we were above 90% compliance across the board this year. Compared to the low 80% when I took it over.

Joe DeAngelo – Chief Devil Dog #62 – A lot of revamping of the system and working on the Kennel web site, we have come a long way in the last 2 years. Everything is now electronic, including all payments to the Dog Robber. So, when I ask the Dog Robber what our numbers are she can tell me, which we are at 4772 dogs today. We have 198 pounds as of today. We are also working with all packs and pounds to keep everyone compliant.

Bryce West - the SEDIV Paymaster - gave his report on all the finances. If you need to know the finances, please contact the SEDIV Paymaster. Bryce stated to check all your Departments and Detachments paymasters and make sure you are checking the Bank Statement. Don't rely on a word document. A motion was made to accept the financial report with an audit. A 2nd was made. Discussion on the floor, None. All in Favor of the Motion say I, oppose None. The motion is carried.

Ronnie Broussard NVC – Asked about a Division Newsletter. We are going to try and put this together. There is only 1 other Division that has a newsletter and they always

get first place. Each Department needs to write an article and submit pictures about what you are doing.

Clifton Addison Disaster Relief - talked about the program and how it works.

David Porter - National Jr Vice Commandant - Please update all individuals with their email address. This will help us at National. Working with all Jr Vice Commandants in all Departments on Recruiting and taking care of our Marines.

Bob Borka COO – So we have about 51,000 members in the MCL. We only have about 2,000 users of the mobile app. It is very easy to sign on. I can help you with that this weekend. Pretty soon we are going to have a new building and address. The SEDIV is squared away. This division has set the bar. There are a couple of other divisions getting close. When I go to other divisions, you all are the ones I talk about.

Let's talk about the difference between VAVS and VSO. VAVS is Veterans Affairs Volunteer Service, founded in 1946. They assist in the Hospitals; you might push wheelchairs around. So, it's working as a volunteer in a VA Medical Center Hospital. VSO is Veterans Service Officers, who are trained, accredited professionals who assist Veterans and their Dependents and survivors in navigating and assessing VA benefits, including disability compensation, pension, education, and variable benefits. I am an accredited VSO. Today we have 38 Accredited VSOs in the Marine Corps League. Our job is to help all Veterans not just Marine Corps veterans. Nine divisions now have an accredited service officer. In FY 25, we helped veterans get \$150 million in benefits by our VSOs.

Membership – Tax Exempt Status – The Hill for Legislative Affairs – we have talked a lot about what is going on in the Marine Corps League.

This is the end of the Business Meeting on Friday.

Put in Recess

The Growl for the Devil Dogs was held.

SEDIV MCL BUSINESS MEETING

Saturday 7 March 2026

Ronnie Broussard NVC opened the Business session at 0900. With 95 people present.

Chapel of The Four Chaplains ceremony was held: Kathleen Potthoff and Kathy Sheppard did a great job. If you are interested in learning more about this or would like them to come to your Department, please talk to them.

John Gionet – Young Marines – The SEDIV is doing extremely well.

	Units	Waiting in Que
Alabama	3	1
Florida	17	4
Georgia	5	1
Louisiana	6	2
Mississippi	0	1
South Carolina	3	2
Tennessee	5	1
North Carolina	7	3

With us today is a young marine, let's bring him up. Good morning, everyone I am Young Marine Sergeant Major for the law. I am the Division II Government of the year, and I service the southeast part of the Nation. My unit is sponsored by the Department of South Carolina Corps. So, I am proud to stand here before you today, not only to represent myself and my division, but, you know, every Young Marine across this Nation. We often say that the Young Marines is about strengthening the lives of America's youth, but to me it means something even more. It means preparing young people to serve - for their nation through character, commitment, and leadership.

Johnny Baker – Past National Commandant – Advisory Council of the Youth Physical Fitness Foundation

Jerry Holt, President of the MC League Foundation – The Foundation was established in 1989. We fund the MC League Scholarship programs. Last year we received 157 scholarship applications. They received \$600.00 each, for a total of \$94,200.00. So, we do a lot in helping our young people. 71% of the applications were from Marine Corps families: (children, grandchildren, spouses etc.). We are also helping on the humanitarian side with aid for Marines. Our fiscal year goes from 1 May to 30 April. The foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, and we will send you a letter for your taxes.

Jim Breen – Department Commandant for South Carolina – We are discussing KMA training, and electronic transmission.

Bob Borka COO – Talked about the Marine Corps Library.org / MC Families.org / MBR Library and password to get into the Library / MBR profile ID # and Last Name (you

will need the profile ID # to register for all events) / 26 USC 170 c6 congressionally approved (PL) Public Law 118-146

The Marine Corps League is a 501 c 4. To be tax exempt the MCL must comply with 501 c 19 regulations IRS PUB 3386. This pertains to Tax deductibility. The requirements are:

75% of members must be past or present members of the US Armed Forces

97.5% must be present or former members US Armed Forces, Cadets, University ROTC programs, Naval Academy, Spouses, Widows

Only 2.5% of members can be Associate Members without being a Veteran or direct lineage to a Marine.

We must follow these rules now. This is why National is now putting a V by the member's number. Associate members will have a VX in front of the member number unless they were a veteran also then they will have a V beside their name. We are only concerned about the actual member right now and getting that V put in front of the member's number.

Commandant and Paymaster are the only 2 people in each detachment who have authority for this program. You can View member profiles / update members address / update members phone number /101 video for paymasters (same password as the MC library)

Semper Fi store:

Red Satin Jackets – we have a new vendor now and we ordered 600 jackets

White Uniform Shirt aviator – we have a new vendor now.

Death notice – Please send a Notice of Death. Make sure you are emailing it to the National Chaplain and JD Foster at National Headquarters. Make sure you are sending it to the Department and Division Chaplain and Paymaster.

We talked about Alabama, holding the next SEDIV conference, they will have to get back to us. A suggestion was made to do the SEDIV in Alphabetical order so each state will know when their turn is.

Put In Recess until the Banquet

Ronnie Broussard – NVC welcomed everyone to the 2026 Conference Banquet

Chaplain Burks led us in prayer and blessing of the meal.

Major General James E Livingston was the Guest of Honor – He talked about his time in the service.

SEDIV MCLA VP Becky Marcel:

Awards presented:

MCLA Distinguished Service Award to Elizabeth Anderson

Frances R. Watt, PNP / Norma A. Liner, PNP Memorial Award for the SEDIV

Auxiliary Member of the Year:

Becky Marcel



Awards Presented by NVC Ronnie Broussard SEDIV 2025

SEDIV Marine of the Year

Jerry Holt SC Lancaster County Leathernecks 1169

SEDIV MARINE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Eric Allison TN SgtMaj Ernest F Seagle 518

Jarrold Beachum TN Capt Jack Holland 735

Jerry Blaylock MS Andrew F Lawhon 1220

Tim Callahon SC Harold E Wilson 1141

Luis Cambal FL Cpl. Larry E Smedley 064

Alton Coleman GA Unicoi 783

Michael Cortright SC Low Country 803
Rex Delk GA Maj Stephen W. Pless 1196
Edward Gizara GA Savannah Dog Company 564
Kenneth Hawkins FL Everett P Pope 1017
Getzie Lamar GA LCpl Squire Wells 647
Sammy Marcel LA Houma Terrebonne 475
Todd Messina LA Choctaw 778
William Nantz FL Oldest City 383
Linda Roach SC Riverfront Marines 1132
Larry Sullivan MS L P McElveen Jr. 1454
Robert Willis TN Lt. Alexander Bonnyman 924

SEDIV Associate Member of the Year

Jerry Vaughn FL Cpl. Larry E Smedley 064

SEDIV ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES

Brandy Creel GA Unicoi 783
Tyler Hale MS L P McElveen Jr. 1454
Shelley Jimmerson SC Riverfront Marines 1132
Barbara McCann GA Maj Stephen W Pless 1196
Kelly Mitchell TN Capt. Jack Holland 735
Angie Neal LA Houma Terrebonne 475
Lydia Szur LA Choctaw 778
Donna Tindall GA Waycross 1333

The Milton Ockman Award

The Department with the greatest number of new detachments:
Department of Georgia with 1 new Detachment

The Tom Perrone Award

Department with the greatest increase in membership:

Department of Louisiana with 18.88% increase

The Conference was concluded in accordance with the MCL ritual and adjourned until the 2027 Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Beck, SEDIV Adjutant