



**MARINE CORPS LEAGUE  
DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA**



**MINUTES - QUARTERLY STAFF MEETING – AUGUST 27, 2016**

**OPENING CEREMONY:**

The meeting was opened per ritual by Commandant Randy Barnes at 0915. The Mission Statement of the Marine Corps League was read.

**ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS AND DETACHMENTS:**

Department officers in attendance included:

Commandant Randy Barnes  
Sr. Vice Commandant Al Yates  
Jr. Vice Commandant Guy Mitchell  
Judge Advocate Barbara Brammer  
Adjutant/Paymaster LuAnn Miller  
Chaplain David Epps  
Sergeant-at-Arms Larry Heard  
Sergeant-at-Arms Ed Barbee  
Jr. Past Commandant Ron Kirstatter

District Vice Commandants in attendance included:

District 2 - Frank Corrick  
District 4 - Craig "Doc" McNabb  
District 5 - Jim Daughtry  
District 6 - Harry McCann  
District 7 - Joe Barbee  
District 8 - Tim McClelland

Appointed Positions:

VSO - Mickey Edwards  
Fallen Marines - Charles Polk  
Newsletter - Bob Force  
Historian – Bernard Bledsoe

Detachments in attendance included:

Detachment 665 - Upper Chattahoochee  
Detachment 783 - Unicoi  
Detachment 921 – Lt.Col. Jimmie Dyess  
Detachment 970 - Middle Georgia  
Detachment 1020 - "Jake" Puryear  
Detachment 1040 - PFC George Eiland  
Detachment 1083 - Joseph Schmittou  
Detachment 1196 - Maj. Stephen W. Pless  
Detachment 1260 - Maj. Lawrence Des Jardines  
Detachment 1311 - Maj.Gen. Warren R. Johnson  
Detachment 1325 - Sgt. Clyde Thomason MOH  
Detachment 1326 - West Chatham  
Detachment 1339 - Henry County Leathernecks  
Detachment 1373 - Central Georgia

Detachment 1402 - Columbus  
Detachment 1424 – Byron  
Detachment 1438 – Lake Blue Ridge

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Commandant Barnes noted that the minutes from the May 14, 2016, business meeting are available and have been posted on the website. Bernard Bledsoe moved to approve the minutes with the correction of two typographical errors. Tim McClelland seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Big Ad Meade's family sent a thank you note acknowledging those that attended Al's visitation and funeral services. The family was proud of the way we represented the Marine Corps League and the Marine Corps.

**REPORT OF PAYMASTER:**

The Paymaster's report was read and accepted by motion of Ed Barbee, seconded by Michael Clark, pending financial review.

**REPORT OF MEMBERS SICKNESS OR IN DISTRESS:**

Chaplain Epps reported on deceased members. Additional deceased members that were announced included Jim Hammond and Dave Aldridge. Members sick or in distress included Frank Goalen and David Epps. Larry Heard gave a detailed report on Frank Goalen.

**REPORT OF OFFICERS:**

**Judge Advocate:** Judge Advocate Barbara Brammer noted that there are no Chapter 9s ongoing and none are pending. She is still waiting for 10 Detachments to provide copies of their Bylaws or letters from the Detachment Commandant indicating that the Detachment is using National and Department Bylaws. She noted there was some confusion last year for delegate voting and advised that she is working to get delegate forms out early. Commandant Barnes reported that Detachments that do not have EIN current filings could have their charters revoked by National. Hal Gosnell noted that a number of Detachments are not recognized as tax exempt in the IRS database. National is working on this issue. Commandant Barnes thanked the Jake Puryear Detachment for their generous donation to the Marine Corps League Foundation at the National Convention.

**Junior Vice Commandant:** Junior Vice Commandant Guy Mitchell reported on the Grits Bowl competition standings. We are currently down about 9 members in the last quarter. If all delinquent members paid, we would actually be up by 22 members. Jr. Vice Commandant training will be held after the staff meeting.

**Senior Vice Commandant:** Senior Vice Commandant Al Yates thanked the membership for the opportunity to serve. He noted we need to focus on recruiting younger members.

**Commandant:** Commandant Barnes thanked all in attendance for participating in this staff meeting as well as the Friday night social. He announced that we will have training sessions at each staff meeting. The Commandant just returned from the National Convention and noted that the Department of Georgia was well represented with 39 present and 543 voting strength. Commandant Barnes noted that the purpose of staff meetings is to allow Detachments to participate and attend training sessions. A discussion

was held on the location of future staff meetings. The consensus was to continue having staff meetings at the current facility until a Detachment offers to host at their location. The next staff meeting will be held December 3, 2016.

Commandant Barnes spoke about delinquencies noting that there are 247 delinquent members out of a total membership of 1,369. He noted that National is changing expiration dates with all members coming due September 1. Bill Miller reported that National is working on a pro-rated system for the first year's renewals under the new system. Ron Kirstatter reported that National just released the prorated schedule. Members with expiration dates from July 2016 through December 2016 must pay \$20 in National dues no later than August 31, 2017, to remain in good standing. Members with expiration dates from January 2017 through June 2017 must pay \$10 in National dues no later than August 31, 2017, to remain in good standing. Memberships expire at midnight on August 31 of each year. Russ Vermillion recommends life memberships. There was a discussion about prorating Department dues with no action being taken. Commandant Barnes reported that the total Life Members is 676 with a total membership for the Department of Georgia being 2,048. He wants each Junior Vice Commandant to call their delinquent members and record why their renewals have not been paid.

**DETACHMENT REPORTS:** Detachment written reports are available. Additional Detachment reports were given by the following Detachments: Jake Puryear Detachment 1020, Maj. Lawrence Des Jardines Detachment 1260, Central Georgia Detachment 1373, and Lake Blue Ridge Detachment 1438.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**2016 Department Convention Committee:** Ron Kirstatter presented a close-to-final report noting that the full report will be distributed to Department Officers and Frank Corrick (the upcoming Convention Chairman). He hopes everyone had a good time at 25th annual Department Convention. There were over 100 at the banquet with a good guest speaker. The convention produced income of \$12,933.50 with expenses of \$13,853.30. The cost to the Department was \$919.80, which included a guest room for Master Chief Foley and meeting-day refreshments. The 50/50 netted \$351.50; the raffle brought in \$440.00; and the program book, which was prepared by Minuteman Press, generated \$1,004.00. Ron Kirstatter thanked the membership for getting ads for the program book.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

The 2017 Southeast Division Conference will be held in Mobile, Alabama, from March 30 to April 1, 2017. Make your reservations as soon as possible at the Marriott. Bill Miller reported that Jimmy Hackbarth will not be running for a second term as Division Vice Commandant. He reported that Archie Sweet is running for Division Vice Commandant and Butch Raynes is running for Assistant Division Vice Commandant as reported at the National Convention.

The 2017 National Convention will be August 13-18, 2017, at the Sheraton Hotel and Convention Center in Overland Park, Kansas. The main hotel is sold out, but an overflow hotel is available.

The 2017 Department Convention is being hosted by the Joseph Schmittou Detachment. Frank Corrick reported that the Convention will be April 28-30, 2017, at the Holiday Inn in Athens. The room rate is \$93/94 per night plus tax. Information is not yet posted on the website, but reservations are being accepted now.

Bids for 2018 Department Convention are being accepted with Macon, Perry, or Warner Robins as possible host sites.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Junior Vice Commandant Guy Mitchell noted that he has packets for all Detachments that include membership information. It is vital for all Detachments to renew their efforts in membership growth. He noted that membership includes recruitment, retention, and recovery. He urged all Junior Vice Commandants or their designees to contact all members that have not renewed to find out why the member is no longer active.

## **GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:**

Commandant Barnes presented the following awards:

- An award from the National Junior Vice Commandant to Detachments for exceeding their previous year's membership – Presented to Lake Blue Ridge, LCpl Squire “Skip” Wells, Upper Chattahoochee, Unicoi, Georgia Devil Dogs, Middle Georgia, LtCol Jimmie Dyess, PFC George Eiland, Joseph Schmittou, Steven W. Pless, N. Georgia Mountain Marine, Dalton, MajGen Warren R. Johnson, West Chatham, and Henry County Leathernecks Detachments
- An award from the National Junior Vice Commandant for 1st Place Membership Increase of 68.25% in the 101-200 membership class - Presented to MajGen Warren R. Johnson Detachment
- Streamer for attendance at the 2016 National Convention – Presented to the Department of Georgia

Commandant Randy Barnes reported Hank Berkowitz will be working with Mickey Edward as VSO. He noted that Jim Daughtry submitted his resignation as District 5 Vice Commandant because he is relocating to Alabama and will be transferring to the Wiregrass Detachment. Commandant Barnes appointed Dan Springer as District Vice Commandant for District 5. Districts 9 and 10 are open. Tim McClelland requested that he be switched from District 8 to District 10 leaving Districts 8 and 9 open.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Ron Kirstatter distributed unclaimed welcome bags and challenge coins to those unable to attend the Department Convention.

Bob Force discussed the importance of a web presence for Detachments (i.e., website, Facebook page, etc.) and offered to assist Detachments with getting their web presence established.

John Newport reported that the Moving Wall will be coming to Woodstock, Georgia, from November 16-20, 2016. It will be open 24 hours a day with free access, and the PTA organization hosting the Wall is looking for donations.

Willy Joe Williams asked what the qualifications are for honorary members. Michael Clark noted that honorary members can include active duty Marines, FMF Corpsman, and FMF Chaplains. Honorary members pay no dues and do not receive the League's magazine. The purpose of Honorary membership is to keep track of Marines, get them involved when they get out, and reduce the 22-a-day suicide statistic. Hal Gosnell noted that there is also an honorary member option with the criteria determined by each detachment.

Michael Clark provided a report on National activities. National Headquarters will be moving to Stafford, Virginia, (outside Quantico) and will be selling part of the current facility. The store front will be retained. The next issue of the Semper Fi magazine will be published by a new company. Michael Clark recognized the new National Comptroller, Bill Miller, for the work he is doing and noted that Georgia is on the map at National because of all the members we have that are involved in National events. He discussed delegate voting strength and noted that we need to do a better job of getting our voting strength

up at National conventions. The Blum lawsuit has settled. Michael Clark announced that he is running for National Assistant Vice Commandant for the Southeast Division.

Chad Long reported that he administers Department's Facebook page, which has around 600 people watching the page. He requested that members upload photographs and upcoming events to keep the page current.

Ron Kirstatter noted that the Department of Georgia had two photographs in the last issue of Semper Fi. He indicated that submissions should be sent to Tom Hazlett, Executive Director, at National Headquarters. The Semper Fi magazine will go back to focusing on Marine Corps League matters.

Bernard Bledsoe reported that there are three events that the Marine Corps League sponsors, Marine West, Marine South, and Modern Day Marine Expo. Georgia members assist with the Exhibit Committee (greeting attendees) and manning the Marine Corps League table. Red Blazer is the uniform for the opening ceremony, and Marine Corps League golf shirts are appropriate for the rest of the event.

Bill Miller gave his National Comptroller's report, indicating that previous annual reports contained a lot of fluff. Going forward, substantive reports will be distributed quarterly. Comptroller Miller reported that Life Member distributions were previously overpaid due to a misinterpretation of the calculation formula. The calculation formula was revised by an emergency Bylaw Amendment at the National Convention. Next year the PLM distribution will be a bit higher than the current year. In the past year, the Department of Georgia had five Detachments that did not turn in their PLM audit. He noted that PLM audits need to be forwarded to the Department Paymaster for submission to National Headquarters. Marine Miller also presented gifts to Judy Bledsoe, Barbara McCann, and Debra Jones for their assistance at the Marine Corps League Foundation table during the National Convention.

One of the members spoke about an Iwo Jima silhouette monument that was dedicated last Veterans Day in Hiwassee at the Recreation Center. Over 300 people attended the dedication. This is the only Iwo Jima monument that is not on federal property.

Joe Kusar reported that your Detachment can register with Kroger and Kroger shoppers can designate your Detachment as a recipient. Kroger will donate funds to your Detachment based on these customer designations. Bob Force noted that their Pound is registered.

Joe Kusar reported that he talked to the Commandant of the Choctaw Detachment in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, about Marines needing assistance due to the flooding. He recommended that each Detachment contribute through the Department. Joe Kusar moved that each Detachment donate \$200 (more or less as the Detachment is able) to be paid to the Department of Georgia for forwarding to the Choctaw Detachment. Michael Clark seconded the motion. Following discussion and in accordance with protocol, Joe Kusar amended his motion to have the funds paid directly to the Department of Louisiana through the Department of Georgia. Bernard Bledsoe seconded the amended motion. The vote on the amended motion was unanimously approved. A discussion on the original motion as amended was held. Chad Long suggested that the Department of GA donate a specific amount in anticipation of receipt of funds from Detachments. Bernard suggested that the membership vote on the motion currently on the floor and called the question. The original motion as amended was unanimously approved.

Michael Clark moved that the Department of Georgia donate \$2,800 to the Department of Louisiana for aid to the flood victims. The motion was seconded by Jim Daughtry and was unanimously approved.

**CLOSING CEREMONY:**

There being no further business, the Staff Meeting was closed by ritual at 1153.

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