

THE JARHEAD REVIEW



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

MARCH 2026

WWW.MCLDEPTOFGA.ORG

IN THIS EDITION

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Staff Directory
Upcoming Events
MCL Websites & Links | 13 | Young Marines in Action
Southeast Regiment Awards
A look at Albany Young Marines |
| 4 | Dispatches from the Deck
Commandant's Message
Chaplain's Corner | 15 | SE Division Field Report
79th SE Division Conference |
| 5 | Dept. of Georgia Sitrep
Quarterly Meeting Highlights and important info | 16 | MCL National Briefing
News from National |
| 7 | A Few Good Updates
Quick updates, reminders, and events from Department/Detachments | 17 | Marine Corps History
Anniversary of raising of flag at the Battle of Iwo Jima |
| 10 | Around The League in Georgia
A look at what's happening in our Detachments in Georgia | 18 | Mission Essentials
Resources for League Members |
-

From the Editor

I'm Candie Brand, and I'm excited to introduce myself as your new Department Newsletter Editor! I'm also proud to serve as Paymaster and Newsletter Editor for Detachment 1373. I've officially been a member for just over a year, but I've been part of the 1373 family since 2016, when my husband first joined. I love being involved and helping wherever I can and I'm especially thrilled to bring fresh ideas and energy to The Jarhead Review.

My goal is to make it a place where we can share what's happening in detachments across Georgia, highlight our Marines, and stay connected as one strong community. I'd love to include your stories, photos, and event updates, so please email me your submissions and ideas for future editions. While I'll do my best to follow detachment Facebook pages, hearing directly from you helps keep everything accurate and engaging.

Together, we can make The Jarhead Review something we're all proud of!

Candie

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FEBRUARY

- 7 DEPARTMENT QUARTERLY MEETING
- 26-28 National Midwinter Conference
Pentagon City, VA

MARCH

- 4-8 79th MCL Southeast Division Conf.
Savannah, GA

APRIL

- 17-19 Mississippi State Convention

MAY

- 7-10 GEORGIA STATE CONVENTION
Peachtree City

MCL Department of Georgia Website:
mcldeptofga.org

Southeast Division Website:
<https://sediv.org>

MCL National Website:
www.mcleaguelibrary.org

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DISPATCHES FROM THE DECK

DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA COMMANDANT

Rex Delk



Over my past two years, the Department of Georgia has shown unwavering support, dedication, and camaraderie as we have worked side by side to strengthen our Marine Corps League and advance its mission. Your commitment to honoring Marines, supporting our communities, and upholding the values that define our organization has been the driving force behind every milestone we've reached. It has been a privilege to collaborate with the detachment leaders and members who consistently put service first and demonstrate what it truly means to be part of this brotherhood and sisterhood.

Together, we embraced the challenge of modernizing our operations and preparing the Department for the future. Through your trust and willingness to adapt, we successfully transitioned the entire Department away from paper processes and into a streamlined, fully electronic format. This transformation

wasn't just a technical upgrade, it was a cultural shift that required patience, teamwork, and a shared belief that we could build something better for the Marines who will follow in our footsteps. Your openness to change made that possible.

As we look back on these last two years of progress, I want to extend my deepest thanks to every member of the Department of Georgia. Your support, encouragement, and partnership have made this journey meaningful and rewarding. The improvements we have achieved together will continue to strengthen our League, enhance our mission, and honor the legacy of Marines past, present, and future. I am grateful for your trust in allowing me to lead, your willingness to follow, and the opportunity to serve alongside you. I am proud of what we have accomplished as a united Department of Georgia.

Thank you all for your continued support as I advanced through the chairs and grew within the Department of Georgia. It has truly been an honor, and I am grateful for every opportunity this journey has provided. Although I will be serving more in the background moving forward, my commitment to this Department remains unwavering. I look forward to continuing to support you and to helping our Department grow and succeed in every way that I can.

Semper Fidelis, because our service never stops.

Rex

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Ronnie Griffin

My Friends, Noah didn't have the power to get all the animals on the Ark, but the Lord provided what was needed. Moses didn't have what it takes to free the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, but the Lord empowered him to lead them to the promised land. The Israelites did not have the means to get across the Red Sea, but the Lord parted the waters for them. David had no personal power to defeat Goliath, but the Lord gave him courage and strength. You and I do not have the abilities to rise and do what God calls us to do, but He refuses to leave us to our own resources. He will not call you to a task without enabling you to complete the task. You see, we have all been given what we need for life and godliness. The One who calls us to a new way of life provides to us radical overpowering Grace. Have courage, Be active, your Savior is your strength!



DEPT OF GEORGIA SITREP

QUARTERLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

SICK AND DISTRESSED:

Mickey Edwards (1402) continuing health issues
 Jay Maxwell (1196) suffering from headaches
 David Haag (783) diagnosed with lung cancer, will begin treatment
 Matthew Mollohan (783) father passed away
 Donna Tindall (1333) wife of Merrill Tindall continuing health issues
 Detachment 1333 has two members in the hospital
 Ed Kuralt cancer
 Dutch Hutt (655)
 Gunny Triplett (783) brother-in-law passed away
 Ed Gizara (564) wife's mother passed away
 Bill Cochran (1373) passed away in December

PAYMASTER REPORT:
Ed Gizara
Total Income: \$11,647.33
Total Expenses: \$5208.25
Total Net Income: \$6439.08

GOOD NEWS:

Candie Brand (1373) Detachment Associate of the Year
 Reginald Brand (1373) Detachment Marine of the Year
 Ed Gizara (564) received Health & Comfort Kits as a donation and distributed them to nursing homes and homeless. Has asked for 4000 more to be distributed throughout the state.
 Terry Holland (1402) pound donated dog food and hygiene products
 Russ Vermillion (1196) noted that over 600 birthday kits have been donated to food pantries and that the detachment has made visits to nursing homes.
 Tony Gasper (647) announced that his granddaughter has been accepted to University of South Carolina

SR. VICE COMMANDANT:

Every year we push about compliance because it is necessary to stay legal. Ed has been diligent in informing detachments of what is needed from each. On December 5, Lisa received an email from B. Lamar stating that Georgia was the 1st department in the SE Division to reach 100% compliance.
 Lisa also spoke about the push to use technology such as social media, MCL app, QR codes, etc. The Devil Dogs have KMA so are 100% electronic for dues. Some departments have been unwilling to go along. Georgia is the only Department so far to have moved to 100% on line. Thanks to all the detachments.
 May is Department Annual convention. Lisa intends to run for commandant to continue the growth.



On February 7 2026, the Department convened in Jackson Georgia, for the quarterly meeting to conduct business and discuss plans to further support the mission and activities of the Marine Corps League.

On February 6, 2026 the Department held its Quarterly Dinner at the Piedmont Brewery in Griffin, Georgia, where members enjoyed great food, refreshing drinks, and excellent company.



QUARTERLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS CONT'D

COMMANDANT:

Asked if attendees had talked to their detachments about Enclosures 3 and 4 that were discussed at last quarterly. He asked if there was any feedback. He emphasized that Enclosure 3 on uniforms was very important. Members should not take offense if corrected about uniform. It's important to present ourselves well

PAYMASTER:

Detachment paymasters should pay attention to roster. The top lines show delinquents. Keep good records. Make sure to use current forms for transmittals, applications, etc. Don't wait until the last minute to send things in. Go through the portal! National does not accept checks.

WEBSITE:

Old site was still linked, someone got through and created problems. Had to pay to get it fixed. We are having problems with BlueHost. Would like to change host. Ed recommends a change so that we can continue to grow. We have 68 pages now. The matter will be discussed and handled by the board. Rex and Ed will continue to monitor the website daily. Chuck (1311) stated that his JVC Quincy is a web designer. Rex has spoken with him. Quincy has agreed to set up a silent auction for the SE Division. Some of the items include several tickets to the Savannah Bananas for the Sunday of the conference, a two night stay at Chateau Elan, Lodge Cast Iron.

Candi noted that the paymaster report everything to the department not to National. Rex stated that a log is maintained that shows date/time stamp. Ed said the this should simplify the paymaster's job. He also suggested that each detachment should have a "turnover folder" to give to incoming officers. He also said that the department was looking to move from Zoom to Google WorkSpace, as well as changing from One Drive to Google Drive. This should make a transfer of power easier.

COMPLIANCE OFFICER:

(Lisa Delk) New year, so SOS registration due by 1-April. Go ahead and file now. If you fail to do so, you run the risk of being administratively dissolve which requires reinstatement that is timely and costly. Also, if your detachment is using a calendar year rather than the MCL fiscal year, your 990Ns are due. Commandants – after filing 990, send Bob Borka an email (DO NOT CALL) requesting that your detachment is on calendar year but would like to be enrolled on MCL fiscal year 6, group 955, deductibility of one. National will be pushing for all to be on MCL fiscal year in order to be compliant.

Tony Gasper asked if it was permissible to bypass chain of command to contact Bob. Lisa replied that it was but by EMAIL only and to cc Rex Delk. Rex added that Lisa will send an email to those detachments that need to switch.

CONVENTION:

The hosts from the last three years form a committee to help with the current year's convention. We are in need of a host for 2027. Registration is done all online which makes it easier for the host detachment. Let Rex know if interested. This year's convention is May 7-10 at Peachtree City. It is being hosted by 1196 and 1325. Hotel link is online and live. Working on final menu. Discussed menu options and took vote on \$70 option vs. \$60 option. \$70 option was chosen. Lisa will let members know when tickets to banquet can be purchased. This is a 3-day convention with the Growl on Friday night. There will not be a guest speaker at the banquet but will have a live band. Levi McKenna asked if the time of the Growl could be reconsidered. Lisa spoke about the time demands on the officers that require that events be spread out more. Randy Barnes inquired if the Growl would interfere with the MOY/AOY meeting – it will not. Tony Gasper requested that in the future, the department try to avoid scheduling the conference on Mother's Day weekend. Helen Breen commented that a couple of years ago everyone went over time, only leaving about 45 minutes for the growl. No other departments do the Growl on Saturday – Friday affords more time.

At the National Convention, numerous honors were presented, and the Department of Georgia proudly earned 2nd place for achieving an impressive 106.56% membership growth over the previous year. During the Department's August quarterly meeting, Senior Vice Commandant Lisa Delk formally presented the award to the members, recognizing their outstanding dedication and collective effort in strengthening the Marine Corps League across Georgia. Detachment 1311 was awarded 3rd place in the 51-100 category with 157% at February's Quarterly Meeting.



A FEW GOOD UPDATES

newsletter submissions

Please send all submissions to:
newsletter@mcldeptofga.org

To be featured in the "Around The League in Georgia" section of the newsletter please include the following:

- Detachment Name
- Clear Photos/flyers
- Individuals in the photos
- Event name/date
- Details about event
- What is happening in pictures
- Other pertinent details.

To submit an article, please submit in a Word document and include your name and detachment.

Please do not submit screenshots.

Political content will not be accepted

If sending pics of children please get release signed

We want to feature every detachment that sends in submissions! If 20 detachments participate, all 20 will be highlighted. If just a few submit, only those will appear. And when a detachment sends multiple photos or stories, the newsletter editor will do their best to include as many as possible—making sure your detachment's efforts get the recognition they deserve.

website submissions

Do you have an upcoming event or raffle that you want everyone to know about? Send your flyer to Ed Gizara at ga.paymaster@mcldeptofga.org and have it showcased in the Upcoming Events section of the

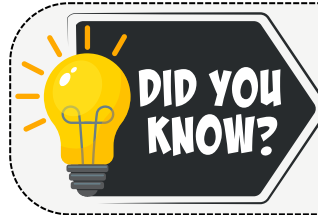
Department website. This is a great way to reach members, generate excitement, and make sure your event gets the attention it deserves. Don't miss your chance to get noticed!

facebook post submissions

If you would like to have a Detachment FB post shared on the Department FB page, please tag

Marine Corps League Department of Georgia in your Facebook posts so it can be seen and shared.

Posts that violate FB standards or MCL policies will not be shared



You can click on any of the underlined text in the newsletter to take you to the webpage

WHY SHOULD YOU CREATE A LOGIN.GOV OR ID.ME ACCOUNT?

Both accounts offer you access to manage your VA benefits and care and other government benefits online. This includes your MyHealthVet account.

Scan or click the link to create a Login.gov or ID.me account



www.va.gov/sign-in/

Then select either Login.gov or ID.me

This information was passed out by the VSO at February's Quarterly Meeting's Lunch and Learn



Show your solidarity for U.S. service members who are currently deployed around the world. On Friday wear red clothing as a visible reminder to keep deployed troops in our thoughts and to honor their sacrifices until they return home safely.

SEND IN YOUR RED FRIDAY PICTURES!



GEORGIA SB 129

Georgia Supporting Those Who Sacrificed for Service Act



“A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 5 of Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to property tax exemptions, so as to increase the amount of a state-wide homestead exemption for certain totally disabled veterans; to create new state-wide homestead exemptions for certain partially disabled veterans and partially or totally disabled first responders; to provide for definitions; to provide for related matters; to provide for compliance with constitutional requirements; to provide for a short title; to provide for a referendum, effective dates, and automatic repeal; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.”

READ THE FULL BILL HERE

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70084>


CURRENT STATUS:

Passed Georgia Senate unanimously on 3/6/2025
In the House Ways and Means Committee-no hearing scheduled
MUST PASS THE HOUSE THIS SESSION OR BILL DIES

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- The current legislative session ends on April 6, 2026
- 1) Call Rep Shaw Blackmon (Ways and Means Chairman)
(404) 656-5103 Ask to schedule SB 129 for a committee hearing
 - 2) Call your own State Representative
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/find-my-legislator>


**This is for informational purposes. The Dept. of Georgia does not endorse any candidate or political party.*



JOIN US FOR

COFFEE *and* CAMERADERIE

EVERY MONDAY, 10 AM
BLAIRSVILLE RESTAURANT | VETERANS ROOM

FOR MORE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
EVENTS, SCAN HERE 

MCL UNICOI DETACHMENT #783



MAY 16, 2025
132 Browndale Plantation,
Hawkinsville, GA, 31036



\$20 Suggested Donation

SPRING SHOOT MARKSMANSHIP COMPETITION

Sponsored by: Central Georgia Marine Corps League Detachment 1373

**ALL DONATIONS
BENEFIT VETERANS
IN CENTRAL
GEORGIA**

SCHEDULE

0900: Open Shoot
ANY CALIBERS/ANY SIGHTS
1200: Chow
1300: Competition
STANDARD MILITARY CALIBERS
IRON SIGHTS & 4X32 ACOG's ONLY





**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**

Reggie Brand
(843) 441-9727



34th DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA CONVENTION MAY 7th - 10th 2026



The 34th Department of Georgia Convention will held May 7th - 10th at the Hilton in Peachtree City, Ga. Deadline for hotel reservations is April 15, 2026. The cost for the banquet dinner is \$70.

Registration for the Department of Georgia Convention is an important step in supporting the Marine Corps League and ensuring your voice is represented at the state level. Attending the convention provides members the opportunity to participate in official business, share ideas, receive updates, and connect with fellow Marines and associates from across Georgia. Early registration helps with planning and ensures a smooth check-in process, allowing everyone to focus on camaraderie, leadership, and advancing the mission of the Marine Corps League.

CLICK THE UNDERLINED TO TAKE YOU TO THE APPROPRIATE WEB PAGE

[RESERVE YOUR HOTEL ROOM](#)

[REGISTRATION](#)

[AD SUBMISSION](#)

[DETACHMENT SPONSORSHIP](#)

Detachments are encouraged to solicit advertisements from local businesses, as well as include ads representing their own Detachments and Pounds. These advertisements play an important role in supporting both the Department and the Marine Corps League. Assistance is available through the Department for anyone needing help with ad creation.

This event is co-hosted by Detachments 1196 and 1325. For more information, please contact: Lisa Delk (Det 1196) at lisa@delk-ga.com or Jeff White (Det 1325) at commandant.det1325@gmail.com.

AROUND THE LEAGUE IN GEORGIA

“Around the League in Georgia” is our ongoing effort to highlight the outstanding work and activities of Marine Corps League detachments across the state. Each issue will showcase the camaraderie, events, traditions, and community engagements that strengthen our League and reflect the spirit of Marines serving their communities. Whether celebrating historic milestones, honoring veterans, supporting local initiatives, or strengthening fellowship within our detachments, every effort contributes to preserving Marine Corps heritage and expanding our impact throughout Georgia. We invite all members to stay engaged, share their activities, and continue celebrating the work being done by Marines and Marine Corps League members across our great state.

MAJ GEN WARREN R JOHNSON #1311

WOODSTOCK, GEORGIA ...

Detachment 1311 formed a DoD-trained and certified Ceremonial Rifle Team and conducted its first funeral honors on May 27, 2017. On January 8, 2026, the team reached a significant milestone by completing its 1,000th funeral honors mission. Over the course of nearly nine years performing this solemn and noble duty, the Ceremonial Rifle Team has never canceled a mission due to a lack of manpower. A testament to the unwavering dedication and commitment of its members.



Below is a breakdown of the 1,000 missions performed, organized by branch of service and memorial event.

Marine Corps	539	Navy	194
Army	149	Air Force	67
Coast Guard	7	Merchant Marines	2
Memorial Service	42		

This is a photo of the team at the 1,000th mission. Front row (left to right): Russ Johnson, Dale Myer, Charles Gray, Tom Cissell, Tony Minicucci, Phil Moser, Rich Sabo, Karen Lawrence Back row: John Newport, Harry Delaney



COLUMBUS, GEORGIA ...

Past Detachment Commandant of Detachment, Terry Holland was presented with the 2025–2026 Detachment Marine of the Year award by Herb Crowe and the Detachment Marine of the Year Committee.

Detachment members Terry Holland, Trevor Wood and Commandant Brent Eaton participated in a recruiting event at the Columbus Gun Show.

COLUMBUS #1402



CENTRAL GEORGIA

#1373

PERRY, GEORGIA ...

Detachment 1373 began the new year by installing its newly elected officers, recognizing outstanding members with awards, and continuing its commitment to veterans outreach through visits to local nursing homes. These efforts reflect the Detachment's ongoing dedication to leadership, service, and honoring veterans within the community.



PNC Johnny Baker installed the new officers



Marine of the Year: Reginald Brand
Associate of the Year: Candie Brand



Members of Det 1373 who participating in nursing home visit.



Martin Habecker was awarded the Distinguished Service Award

NORTH GEORGIA MOUNTAIN

#1280

JASPER, GEORGIA ...

Recruiting new members into the Detachment and the Marine Corps League is vital to sustaining the organization's mission and preserving Marine Corps traditions. New members bring fresh energy and leadership, strengthening the Detachment's ability to serve veterans, support the community, and honor those who have gone before us. A strong and growing membership ensures the League remains active and effective for future generations. Pictured, Commandant Millholland administers the oath to new members Brandon Frear and Frank Batkins.



MAJ STEPHEN W PLESS

#1196

GRIFFIN, GEORGIA ...

Detachment 1196 took part in National Salute to Veteran Patients Week (February 9–13) at the Zebulon VA Clinic, where members provided snacks, bottled water, and camaraderie to veteran patients. Observed each year during the week of February 14, National Salute to Veteran Patients Week is a time to recognize and thank the more than nine million veterans receiving care through Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers, clinics, nursing homes, and domiciliaries. The observance encourages participation from veterans organizations, military members, civic groups, businesses, schools, and the broader community in showing appreciation and support to those who have served.

Contact your local VA Clinic, medical center, or nursing home for Detachment opportunities to serve our Veterans.



Randy Barnes



Roscoe Foster, Ronnie Griffin, Veteran, Olin Lundy, Carol Griffin



Roscoe Foster, Barbara McCann, Marine Veteran Gabrielle Moreau, and Harry McCann



Roscoe Foster talking with a Vet

BLAIRSVILLE, GEORGIA ...

On Saturday, January 17th members of Unicoi Pound #206 and MCL Detachment 783 paid a visit to Castoff Pet Rescue in Blairsville. There they presented Shannon Elliott, President of Castoff Pet Rescue, with 240 lbs. of dog/cat food, a check for \$200, and boxes of blankets, towels, flat sheets, and bathmats for the residents of the rescue center. In attendance were Pound Leader PDD Wayne Roshaven, Pound Dog Robber DD Alton "Doc" Coleman, Pound #206 Mad Dog DD John Entwisle, Pound Watch Dog PUP Gunny Triplett and Pound Dog Trainer Pup Greg Fischer. While on site, the Devil Dogs took a tour of the facility and learned more about volunteering.

MODD UNICOI

#206



Pound Keeper Wayne Roshaven presenting a check to Shannon Elliott, President of Castoff Pet Rescue.



YOUNG MARINES IN ACTION

SOUTHEAST REGIMENT DIVISION 2

The Young Marines organization recently recognized the exceptional dedication and leadership of its youth members and adult volunteers across the Southeast Regiment, Division 2, which includes Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee with the presentation of the 2025–2026 Regimental Awards. These prestigious awards highlight individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to the Young Marines’ mission and who serve as role models within both the program and their local communities.

This year’s honorees truly embody the Young Marines’ core values of leadership, discipline, and service. Through their actions, they continue to set a high standard of excellence, contribute to the growth of their units, and reinforce the positive impact the program has on youth throughout the region. Their dedication not only strengthens the mission of the Young Marines but also inspires young people to embrace a healthy, drug-free lifestyle and become leaders of character.



2025-2026 Southeast Regiment Senior Young Marine of the Year

YM/SSgt Daniel Crump - Albany Young Marines
A member of the Albany Young Marines since 2020, YM/SSgt Crump has completed Senior Leadership School and has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, discipline, and mentorship among his peers.



2025-2026 Southeast Regiment Junior Young Marine of the Year

YM/Cpl Janet Lamar - Northwest Georgia Young Marines
Joining the Northwest Georgia Young Marines in 2023, YM/Cpl Lamar has successfully completed Junior Leadership School and stands out for her leadership, teamwork, and positive example to fellow Young Marines



2025-2026 Southeast Regiment Unit of the Year ALBANY YOUNG MARINES

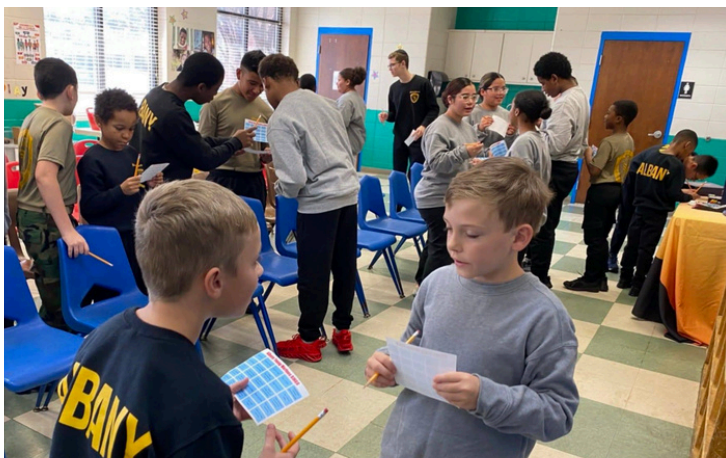
For the 2nd consecutive year the Albany Young Marines have been selected as the Southeast Regiment Unit of the Year for demonstrating consistent excellence in leadership, community engagement, and mission performance. The Albany Young Marines were also honored as the 2025 National Unit of the Year in April.

ALBANY GEORGIA

The Albany Young Marines recently dedicated time to their Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) classes, partnering with the Substance Assessment Counseling Center and Behavioral Health professionals from Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany. During the session, participants received valuable education on the risks and impacts of substance abuse, as well as emerging concerns affecting today's youth.

In addition to substance awareness, the class addressed cell phone addiction and vaping through the use of special simulation goggles and hands-on activities. These interactive tools allowed the Young Marines to better understand the physical and cognitive effects associated with these behaviors, reinforcing the importance of making healthy, informed choices.

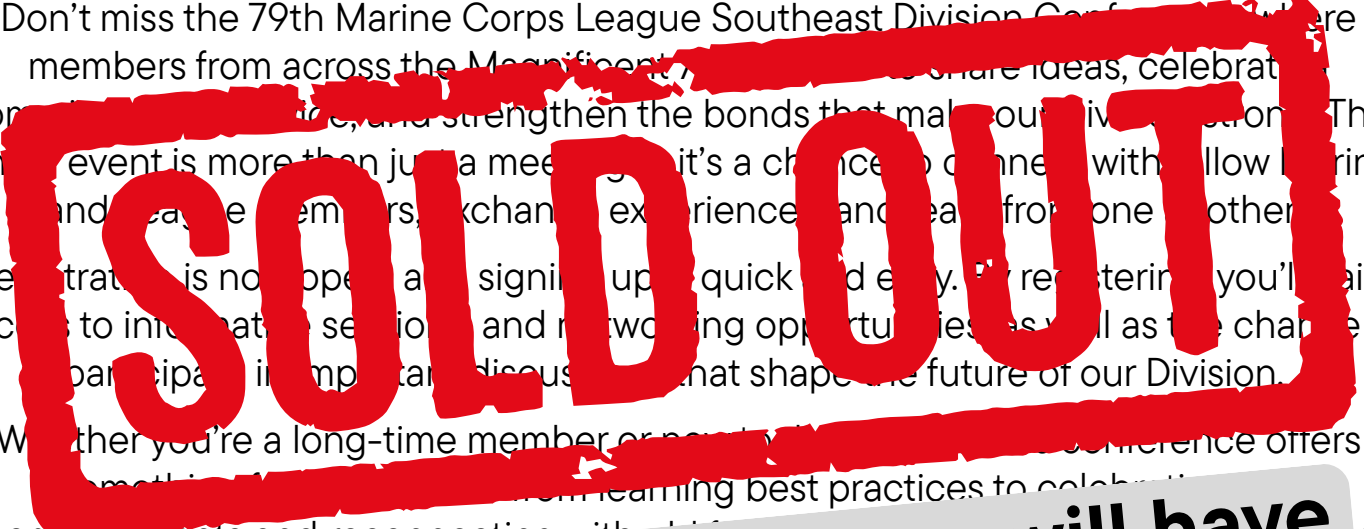
The Albany Young Marines continue to set the standard for excellence and proving once again why they are the 2025 National Unit of the Year.



SE DIVISION FIELD REPORT

79TH MCL SOUTHEAST DIVISION CONFERENCE - SAVANNAH, GA MARCH 4-8, 2026

Don't miss the 79th Marine Corps League Southeast Division Conference where members from across the Magnificent Seven will share ideas, celebrate accomplishments, and strengthen the bonds that make our lives better. This annual event is more than just a meeting; it's a chance to connect with fellow Marines and League members, exchange experiences, and learn from one another. Registration is now open and signing up is quick and easy. By registering, you'll gain access to interactive sessions and networking opportunities as well as the chance to participate in important discussions that shape the future of our Division.



Whether you're a long-time member or new to the League, the conference offers something for everyone. From learning best practices to celebrating our accomplishments and reconnecting with old friends, this is a must-attend event. Register today!

SE Division conference will have MajGen James Livingston MOH recipient as guest speaker.
For more information visit the Department of Georgia Website



NATIONAL COMMANDANT

TJ Morgan



Leading the Way: Modern Leadership in the Marine Corps League

MARINES: Leadership has always been the bedrock of the United States Marine Corps—and it remains just as vital in the Marine Corps League today. As a nonprofit, volunteer, veteran service organization, the League thrives on members who step up to lead with purpose, integrity, and vision. But leadership in this environment looks a bit different from what we practiced in uniform. It's less about rank, and more about relationships, inspiration, and commitment to the mission of serving Marines and their families.

Today's leaders in the MCL must balance tradition with adaptation. The principles we learned in the Corps (know yourself and seek self-improvement, set the example, ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished) still apply. But in a volunteer setting, influence often replaces authority. Leaders must motivate through respect, communication, and shared goals rather than orders and directives.

Effective League leaders listen as much as they speak. They empower members, recognize individual strengths, and build inclusive teams that reflect the diversity of the modern Marine community. They are transparent about decisions, accountable for outcomes, and willing to delegate; because leadership isn't about doing everything yourself, but about helping others grow.

Best practices include mentoring new members, embracing technology to improve communication, and maintaining strong partnerships with local veteran organizations and communities. Leaders should also remember that passion drives participation; when members feel valued and part of a meaningful mission, they stay engaged.

In short, the Marine Corps League needs leaders who carry the torch of the Corps' values, Honor, Courage, Commitment, and apply them with humility, empathy, and initiative. Leadership isn't just about holding a title; it's about making a difference. Marines never stop leading, they simply find new fields of battle to serve. Is it your time to lead? Take the step; you won't regret it. **Semper Fi!**

SOURCE: *Semper Fi Magazine*

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/COO

Bob Borka

Do Buddy Checks Before It's Too Late

I did a thing today. John P. Aufenanger was my friend. We served on the same team in Desert Storm. John died in 2013, and I had not paid my respects until now. Like all combat veterans, we deal with it in our own way. John let his demons get the best of him at 43 years old. He is the only member of our team that has PCS'd to the final duty station. John had lost everything. He was drowning in alcohol, lost his job at the VA, lost his family, lost the will to fight—and he didn't tell anyone. Where was I? It was the hardest salute this morning. I was so honored to have served with him and sad that he is gone.

Interestingly, John A. Aufenanger, his father, died this year (August 2025) and was a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran. He is buried in the same grave, with his inscription on the back of JP's headstone. The cut grass is still fresh. The glistening dew evaporating from the morning sun and the air is cool and crisp. It is a beautiful sunny morning at Calverton National Cemetery, Long Island, New York. I nodded in admiration to the NCA workers caring for our deceased, without pay (I visited during the federal government shutdown).

Do buddy checks on your teammates! You don't know who needs you, and that one buddy check may make the difference between hope and the grave. **Semper Fi!**



SOURCE: *Semper Fi Magazine*

81st Anniversary of the Raising of the American flag during the Battle of Iwo Jima



February 23 marks the anniversary of one of the most iconic moments in Marine Corps and World War II history—the raising of the American flag atop Mount Suribachi during the Battle of Iwo Jima. By early 1945, the United States Marine Corps had been engaged in relentless combat across the Pacific for nearly three years, facing increasingly fierce resistance as American forces pushed closer to the Japanese homeland.

The Battle of Iwo Jima began on February 19, 1945, when more than 70,000 U.S. service members, including approximately 60,000 Marines, launched an assault against an island defended by over 22,000 deeply entrenched Japanese troops. Extensive networks of tunnels, caves, and bunkers allowed the defenders to withstand heavy pre-landing bombardment, resulting in intense and prolonged ground combat once Marines moved inland. After four days of brutal fighting, Marine units succeeded in isolating Mount Suribachi, the island's highest point and a key strategic objective.

A platoon of Marines was ordered to scale the mountain and secure the summit. Reaching the top with little resistance, they raised a small American flag using a length of pipe found among the debris, marking the first time a foreign flag flew over Japanese soil. The moment was soon immortalized by photographer Joe Rosenthal, becoming a symbol of determination and sacrifice.

Although the flag raising provided a powerful morale boost to Marines on the island and Americans at home, the battle was far from over. Fighting continued for more than a month, and Iwo Jima was not declared secure until March 26. The Battle of Iwo Jima remains one of the most defining chapters in Marine Corps history, reflecting extraordinary courage, sacrifice, and perseverance—values that continue to shape and inspire Marines to this day.

MISSION ESSENTIALS

VA HEALTH & BENEFITS APP

DOWNLOAD THE VA HEALTH AND BENEFITS APP ON YOUR SMARTPHONE



- Access health care tools
- Refill prescriptions
- Review and cancel your VA medical appointments
- Send and receive messages with your VA health care team
- Download common VA letters and documents
- Proof of service at your fingertips

A blue graphic with white text and icons. It features the "Veterans Crisis Line" logo with a star and dots. Below it, it says "DIAL 988 then PRESS 1". To the right, it lists contact methods: "Call Dial 988 then Press 1", "Chat VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat", and "Text 838255".

The Veterans Crisis Line is free and confidential. When you call, chat, or text, a qualified responder will listen and help. You decide how much information to share. Support doesn't end with your conversation. Responders can connect you with the resources you need. You DO NOT need to be enrolled in VA benefits or healthcare to connect.

IMPORTANT LINKS

VA Website:

<https://www.va.gov>

VA REACH Program:

<https://www.va.gov/REACH/>

Georgia Dept. of Veterans Affairs:

<https://veterans.georgia.gov>

Georgia Veteran's Benefits:

<https://veterans.georgia.gov/state-benefits>

Georgia Hud:

<https://www.hud.gov/states/georgia>

MyHealthVet:

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/manage-health/?next=loginModal&oauth=true&verification=required>

The below links accompany the Lunch and Learn session from the August Quarterly Meeting and are designed to help you put the information you learned into action. By following the step-by-step prompts on each page, you'll be able to quickly and easily create your own professional digital business card and customized QR codes. In just a few minutes, you can have shareable tools that make networking and connecting with others simpler, faster, and more effective.

DIGITAL BUSINESS CARD



<https://blinq.me>

QR CODE GENERATOR



<https://www.qrcode-monkey.com>



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