



Marine Corps League
Commandant Dennis A. Brockland

Department Convention Meeting Minutes
13-June-2009

Ramada Convention Center, Burlington, NC
Host: LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment #1209
Host Commandant: Mark Grimley

Meeting called to order at the time of 0900; Commandant Brockland presiding.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Cmdt Brockland started out by dedicating this meeting in the memory of all North Carolina Marine Corps League Members that have passed away over the past year. Cmdt Brockland welcomed everyone for attending and also recognized Cmdt Mark Grimley and the LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment #1209 for hosting this Convention.

Meeting opened

The Color Guard, supplied by the Davidson and Randolph County Young Marines, advanced, posted the Colors and Sgt-at-Arms John Harding led in Pledge of Allegiance. The National Anthem was sung by Kelly Crawford; a native of Burlington, NC. Chaplain Billy Cochran led the meeting in the opening prayer.

Cmdt Mark Grimley was asked to address the members and thanked them for attending. Cmdt Grimley thanked the 2009 DoNC Committee for all of their time and efforts for putting together a great Convention and trusts that everyone in attendance has been enjoying themselves and continues to benefit from all that is being offered.

Cmdt. Brockland then asked the Mayor of Burlington, NC, the Honorable Ronnie K, Wall, to address the membership. He presented the Department of North Carolina a proclamation honoring 7-14 June, 2009 as Marine Corps League week in Burlington.

The Public Relations Officer, Bob Petka, for the LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment #1209 was then called to the podium to address the membership on behalf of the Governor of North Carolina, the

Honorable Beverly Perdue, and presented a proclamation on behalf of her declaring throughout the State that 7-14 June, 2009 is officially Marine Corps League week.

Finally, the Convention Mascot, "Stonewall", presented by Lee and Tommy Allen, in the honor and memory of the recently late Gene Allen (Husband and Father) who was a member of the LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment #1209.

(25 minutes in session at this point – first break 10 minutes)

2. Recognition of National Officers

- National Marine of the Year 2006, Navy Cross recipient - Joe Blick
- National Marine of the Year 2001 & 50th Chief Devil Dog - George Barrows, Sr.
- Dept. of Virginia Aide-de-Camp & 51st Chief Devil Dog – Don Garland
 - He addressed the membership and mentioned that he was running for the Mideast Division Assistant National Vice Commandant position at the National Convention and asked for our support in his endeavor.
- National Mideast Division Vice Commandant - Juan "Chief" Graciano (Excused)
- Assistant Mideast Division Vice Commandant - Jim Tant
- 2003-2007 Past Mideast Division National Vice Commandant – Steve Wilson
- National Mideast Division Aide-de-Camp - Bill Chapman
- Mideast Division Webmaster - Jim Haslam
- National and DoNC Credentials Committee - Gene Blick
- 2010 National Convention Chairman – Danny Bracken
- Special recognition for professional development classes held at the Mideast Division level – Bruce Rakfeldt
- National VAVS Officer - Jim Luther

Recognition of Past Department Commandants

All Past Department Commandants were asked to stand and be recognized at this time.

- Pete Meletis, (Iredell County Det.); 2005-2007
- Michael L. O'Connell, (James E. Hobart Det.); 2004-2005 (Excused)
- Andrejs Bedelis (Shawn Knisley Det.); 2003-2004 (Excused)
- Steve Wilson, (Charlotte Det.); 2002-2003
- Percy Sudsbury (Greater Greensboro Det.); 2001-2002 (Excused)
- Joe Blick, (Onslow County); 2000-2001
- George M. Barrows, Sr. (Onslow County Det.); 1988-1993
- Jack Petrarca (Tar Heel Det.); 2007-2008

Recognition of the 2008 Department Marine/Woman of the Year

- Bruce Rakfeldt – Marine of the Year
- Judy Pritchard – Woman of the Year

Recognition of Guest(s) and Invitation to address the membership

- **North Carolina Worthy Pack Leader – PDD Richard Rust**
Richard thanked the LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment for all that they have done to make this Convention a success. He also stated that 2-30 new Dogs have joined the NC Pack

over the last year have advanced approximately 40 dogs to Devil Dog to be able to advance to Pedigree at the 2010 National Convention in Greensboro next year. He is very proud to be the Pack Leader for North Carolina and will continue to serve as such as long he is able to.

- **Assistant Mideast Division Vice Commandant – Jim Tant**

Jim addressed the membership and read aloud some of General John Lejeune's words describing the Marine Corps League and the bond that the League members have for each other.

3. Recognition & Representation of Newest/Upcoming Detachments

New NC Detachments

Mountaineer Detachment #1320; Cmdt. Dennis Ray
Hampstead Detachment #1321; Cmdt. Donald Tancredi
Surry County Detachment #1322; Cmdt. Troy Poindexter
Northwest Triad Detachment #1314; Cmdt. Joe Vodenichar

Forming Detachments

Dunn, NC – Looking to form a Detachment there on 25-June-2009.
Also working on Detachments in McDowell County, Goldsboro, Troy and Alexander County.

4. Roll call

Department Officers

PRESENT- Dennis Brockland (Commandant), John Grindel (Sr. Vice Commandant), Wallace Darling (Jr. Vice Commandant), Russell Becker (Judge Advocate), Billy Cochran (Chaplain), Steve Wilson (Aide-de-Camp), John Harding (Sgt-at-Arms), Ralph Farthing (Assistant Sgt-at-Arms), Jack Petrarca (Jr. Past Commandant), Bob Learn (Paymaster), Pete Meletis (Chief of Staff), Jim Haslam (Young Marines Service Officer & Dept & Mideast Webmaster), Bill Dowdle (Toys for Tots Coordinator), Charles Sherlin (VAVS Service Officer), Kevin Rumsey (Eagle Scout Coordinator), Steve Winsett (Legislative Officer), Ed White and Danny Bracken (Professional Development), Bruce Rakfeldt (Adjutant)

Absent or excused - Dick Camery (Public Relations).

District Vice Commandants

West District-Randy Hughes
Midwest District-Hank 'Doc' Kaczmarek
Northcentral District – "Arbe" Arbelaez
North District – Gerald Dangler (Excused)
Northeast District – Vince Tesoro
South District – OPEN
Southeast District – George Barrows
South central – Ed Luisa
East District - Doug Wendling

Detachment Attendance

#257 John V. Berg (0), #260 Greater Greensboro (10), #262 Onslow County (4),
#733 Tar Heel (6), #750 Charlotte (6), #789 Rockwell [Inactive](0), #848 Blue Ridge (4),
#872 Eno River (0), #914 PFC Charles D. Hare (2), #973 Smoky Mountain (2),
#983 Shawn Knisley (0), #1001 Sand Hills Area (1), #1005 Central Brunswick County (0),
#1011 Cherokee (0), #1021 Stanly County (0), #1024 Roanoke Rapids (0),
#1036 Carolina Borders (2), #1067 Cherry Point (0), #1070 Cape Fear (0),
#1075 Percy John Fulton (0), #1096 Gen. A. Hal Turnage (2), #1097 Iredell County (2),

#1103 Davidson County (7), #1162 Gen. Raymond G. Davis (5), #1163 Catawba Valley (7), #1164 NC Foothills (0), #1165 Cpl Johnny A. Williamson (0), #1175 Cabarrus (0), #1186 Down East (1), #1187 Brushy Mountain (0), #1193 PFC Terry C. Smith (0), #1197 Table Rock (14), #1208 John E. Ferguson (0), #1209 Lcpl. Alan D. Lam (30), #1221 Cpl. Chris S. Ebert (0), #1222 Sgt. Doug Myers (0), #1223 Sanford (0), #1232 PFC Jerry L. McKinney (2), #1236 Carry-On (3), #1242 PFC Bruce Larson (0), #1252 Richmond Leathernecks (0), #1257 Air, Land, NC (3), #1258 Albemarle (0), #1262 Tri-County (5), #1264 Outer Banks (1), #1265 Cpt. Jeb F. Seagle (5), #1266 Mt. Mitchell (0), #1276 Gold Leaf (1), #1279 Columbus County (0), #1292 Orange County Regulators (0), #1298 Walter Frank Osborne Jr. (0), #1314 Northwest Triad (3), Mountaineer #1320 (0), Hampstead #1321 (1), Surry County #1322 (1)

(In total, 130 members present, represented by 27 Detachments)

At this time, Cmdt Brockland asked PDC/Past M-E NVC Steve Wilson to address the membership. Steve discussed how much the DoNC has grown over the years and he is very proud of the direction we are heading towards. He encourages every MCL Member to challenge themselves to open new doors in their lives and to continue to grow personally to benefit their lives as well as for the Marine Corps League.

JPC Jack Petrarca was asked to come forward and address the membership. He commended Cmdt Brockland, along with his Officers and Staff, for a job well done over the last year and also wanted to thank the Host Detachment for putting together a great Convention. He is proud to be a Marine Corps League Member of the Department of North Carolina.

5. Report of Officers

Adjutant's Report - Copies of the Spring Quarterly meeting minutes from 18-April-2009 were distributed via the Department Website and E-mail. In the interest of time, a motion to approve the minutes as written was passed, voted on and accepted.

Paymaster's Report – Cash brought forward (checking account) from the last report was \$2,834.35, paid out \$307.52 and deposited \$813.74, for a current balance, as of 11-June-09, of \$3,340.56. The money market fund consists of \$10,135.86. Total cash on hand totals \$13,476.42. Any further detailed information is readily available through the Department Paymaster upon request. A motion from the Floor was asked for by Cmdt Brockland to accept the report as written. It was passed, voted on and accepted.

Copies of last year's budget, versus what was spent or taken in against that budget, were handed out to each Department Officer and a representative to each Detachment present.

The 2009-2010 budget was then displayed for everyone to view. Due to the economic stress put upon the Department, the Department would lose approximately \$1,000 due to not receiving the LIFE annuities in the amount that was projected a year earlier. To make up for this loss, a motion to increase the Department dues from \$3 per Member to \$4 was brought up. This motion was made, seconded and approved. This is to go into effect on 1-July-09.

A motion to approve the 2009-2010 budget was passed, voted on and accepted.

Chaplain's Report: Billy O. Cochran – There were 5 Notices of Death reported for the period of 4/18/09 –6/13/09:

Smoky Mountain Det. #973: John A. Perdue; 8/29/08

Cpl. Chris Ebert Det. #1221: Charles Bradley; 5/5/09

NC Foothills Det. #1164: Billy J. Francis; 5/8/09

NC Foothills Det. #1164: James Guyton; 6/2/09

Catawba Valley Det. #1163: Jimmy H. Berry; 5/18/09

A moment of silence was given in the memory of all of these Members that have passed away.

Chaplain Cochran reiterated one of his primary goals as Department Chaplain. He is determined to ensure that there is closure on every Marine Corps League Member that is called to muster by the Supreme Commandant. He wants to make sure that every Detachment submits a Notice of Death form for every Member that passes away in the Department of North Carolina. This should be done as soon as possible, but preferably no later than 30 days after the passing of the Marine Corps League Member. Once he receives that form, he can have that Member removed from the National rolls and he can send out a condolence card and letter to that deceased Marines family. Chaplain Cochran has prepared a customized a condolence card, which he read to the membership, that not only speaks on behalf of the Chaplain of the DoNC, but on behalf of every Member of the DoNC.

(Second break - 10 minutes)

District Vice Commandant Reports

West District - Randy Hughes; Due to his current health conditions, he does not have nothing to report on at this time.

Midwest District - Hank "Doc" Kaczmarek; he has visited the Gen. Raymond G. Davis Detachment, where he assisted installing the upcoming year's Officers, NC Foothills Detachment where he was the Installing Officer for their Installation, Table Rock Detachment, Walter Frank Osborne Jr. Detachment, John E. Ferguson Detachment, Iredell County and the Capt. Jeb F. Seagle Detachments. He is currently looking at new Detachments in Alexander County. Doc is also putting together a DVC training class that will be ready by the Fall Quarterly meeting. All Detachments are doing well and the lines of communication are open. He has traveled 362 miles this past quarter, totaling 3,163 as of his last report.

North central District – "Arbe" Arbelaez; the Gen. Allen Hal Turnage Detachment had its first Toys for Tots golf tournament. It was a great turn-out by all. Almost \$3,000 was raised. The winner of the tournament donated back all of his winnings to the Detachment so more toys could be bought. He is also working with the Rowan County Veterans Council in distributing Bibles to all Veterans that return home. This Bible also includes information on many of the area Veterans services so that assistance is no more than a call away. More information of Arbe's quarterly report will be sent via e-mail to the DoNC Cmdt.

North District – Gerald Dangler; excused from this meeting. No report given at this time.

Northeast District – Vince Tesoro; Tri-County Detachment has been a big part of a Viet Nam Veterans memorial program. They also participate in monthly Flag raising ceremonies. The Gold Leaf Detachment is having an Installation of Officers this coming Tuesday. They are also starting Toys for Tots events to start raising money early. The Down East Detachment is growing in their membership. They are concentrating on younger members (under 40) to get them involved in the MCL.

Southeast District – George Barrows; he has submitted his report, as required. He will report later on in the meeting on topics that belong in different genres of the meeting.

South central – Ed Luisa; he visited the Sanford Detachment #1223, the Charlotte Detachment #750 & the PFC. Bruce Larson Detachment # 1242. All of these Detachments are doing well and performing the mission of the Marine Corps League. He is also working on two new Detachments in two Counties.

East District - Doug Wendling; he represents the Outer Banks and Albemarle Detachments. Both are doing well and growing slowly. The Outer Banks Detachment is currently participating in the “Socks for Troops” program. The Albemarle Detachment cleared \$8,000 for the Marines Helping Marines program.

South District – Open position; no report given at this time.

Commandant Brockland – He stated that with the assistance of his Staff, he has made 89 trips throughout the State, the Division and nationally, to various MCL functions. He has performed 18 Officer Installations, visited 47 Detachments, held two DVC training sessions, performed five Detachment Chartering ceremonies, attended four Department meetings, two Veterans Council meetings, three National MCL meetings, three Marine Corps Balls, two Christmas parties and numerous 2010 National Convention meetings. The Marine Corps League is alive, well and VISIBLE in North Carolina. He is proud of his Staff and proud of the Marine Corps League.

Senior Vice Commandant John Grindel – He stated that he has been slowed down slightly due to his broken ankle, but is now back n the game and has enjoyed all of the traveling he has been doing since coming back to full duty. He also reinforced the need to retain every MCL Member in the League. Work to keep everyone’s faith strong in the mission and keep the momentum going to increase our membership.

Junior Vice Commandant Wallace Darling – He was very excited to talk about all the trips he had made over the past year to all of the various functions and Detachment meetings that he attended. He looks forward to the upcoming Detachment that is forming in Goldsboro. He also supports Ron Cooper returning as a DVC for the Department.

At this time, the Cmdt and Jr. Vice Cmdt handed out Meritorious Unit Commendations. The awards are being handed out to the three Detachments that have maintained or improved their membership status over the past year. The recipients were:

Brunswick County Detachment #1005 –Small Detachment
Gen. Raymond G. Davis Detachment #1162 – Medium Detachment
Greater Greensboro Detachment #260 – Large Detachment

Judge Advocate Russell Becker – Every active Detachment has submitted a set of By-laws and have all been approved. There are no Detachments in the DoNC without approved By-Laws. This is outstanding. He does ask that each Detachment go over their individual By-Laws and ensure that their most recent copy, including any changes that may have taken place, have been approved and are on file with the DoNC Judge Advocate.

He also discussed a number of DoNC By-Law changes that needed to be voted on by the attending membership. There are a number of recommended changes to the By-Laws.

#1 – **Article 1; Convention registration fee**. It was voted on and approved that the DoNC Convention registration fee has been increased from \$5 to \$10 per attending Member, effective this day.

#2 – **Composition of the Board of Trustees**. A motion was made from the Floor to accept item B (The current DoNC Officers and the three most immediate Past DoNC Commandants). This motion was voted on and defeated by the membership. Item A was then brought back up to be voted on (The current DoNC Officers and ALL of the Past DoNC Commandants). This motion was voted on and defeated by the membership as well. As there being no alternatives to consider, this specific item has been dissolved and the current composition of the Board of Trustees in the DoNC By-Laws will remain the same.

#3 – **Article 2; Duties of the DoNC judge Advocate**. To have the DoNC Judge Advocate look over any contractual agreements (for advisory purposes only) that any part of the DoNC enters into prior to agreement to the contract. This motion was voted on and defeated by the membership.

(1.5 hour break for lunch)

Judge Advocate Russell Becker (Cont.)

Upon continuing the meeting after lunch, Cmdt Brockland stated that, in the interest of time, the remaining DoNC By-Law amendments will be continued with at the next [Fall] Quarterly meeting.

Another issue that Russell brought up was the correct way to forward membership disciplinary investigation/action up to the Department level, where at the Detachment level; it is not able to be properly taken care of. This is all in the By-Laws as how to manage this.

Sgt-at-Arms; John Harding – No report at this time.

6. Report of Project Leaders and/or Committees

Toys for Tots; Bill Dowdle – Bill read a moving letter, which was written to 'Arbe', by a school teacher at an elementary school. This teacher, and all of her co-workers, were deeply touched and inspired by the selfless acts of the Marines and volunteers that participate in the Toys for Tots program. They witnessed 'miracles' this past Christmas due to this program and can't express enough how thankful they, as well as the children, were to enjoy the Holiday season. Bill couldn't express enough how much this program makes a difference in the lives of every North Carolinian that we assist. He asks everyone to use this letter as motivation and to continue doing all they can to make this program even more successful this year.

DoNC MCL License plate program; George Barrows speaking for Frank Cativiela who was not in attendance – To date, there are 176 registered applicants, along with approximately 15 more received in through application that were handed out at the Convention. If each Detachment were able to submit three completed applications, we would be able to finalize this program and start distributing the license plates as soon as possible. This application is also available on the DoNC website.

Cmdt. Brockland asks the membership to stimulate this license plate program so that we can get these plates to the Marines that have signed up for them.

Young Marines Program; Jim Haslam – Presently there are four Battalions; one of these newly formed in North Carolina. This program is now 15 years old in this State and he is proud of the growth of this program. He encourages all Detachments that would like to start their own Unit to contact him to get the process started.

VAVS; Charles Sherlin – As of 13-June-09, the 9 currently documented Detachments that properly submit their VAVS hours to him, have accumulated 5,265 volunteer hours. Charlie challenges every Detachment Commandant to appoint a VAVS Officer and to get their own program started as soon as possible.

Eagle Scout program; Kevin Rumsey – Kevin stated that next year, the Boy Scouts will be celebrating their 100th Anniversary. This is quite a milestone for the Scouts. He asks that each Detachment look into setting up an Eagle Scout program and/or merit badge counselors to assist these aspiring young people to obtain their ultimate goal of Eagle Scout. Currently, only 2% of the Scouts ever obtain this rank so it is important for us to do whatever we can to help them. If your Detachment is not involved with this program, and wish to be, you may contact Kevin at rumminator@nc.rr.com.

DoNC Webmaster; Steve Winsett & Jim Haslam – Steve introduced the new 'League Press' section of the DoNC Website. This new section allows every League Member to access syndicated news very quickly, ranging from Detachment up through National news, also to include Veterans, DOD and other information that is relevant to every Marine. This new section can be found under www.ncmcl.net or through a link on the DoNC homepage.

Jim stated that he wants to keep all of the Detachment Commandant information up to date. This includes a picture and contact information. Please get this information to Jim to add to the Department website if it is not already there/updated.

7. New Business

The Jr. Vice Commandant announced the locations for the following DoNC Quarterly meetings:

Fall quarterly meeting – Hosted by the Blue Ridge Detachment on 19-September-09
Winter quarterly meeting – Hosted by the Gen. A Hal Turnage Detachment on 30-January-10
Spring quarterly meeting - Hosted by the Carolina Borders Detachment; April-2010 (day TBA)
2010 DoNC Convention – Hosted by the Tar Heel Detachment; 12 through 13-June-10

8. Good of the League

Kellis White, a Member of the Charlotte Detachment, discussed a program called Americans Honoring Americans (ran by Jackie Sullivan) that he was asked to be a guest of. One part of this program is designed to bring Veterans to NASCAR races. This is just one way, for the volunteers in this program, to 'thank' Vets for their service to our Country. They continue to add on to this program and currently have a house where 15 homeless Vets reside. With all of this hard work, and the first hand experience that he was able to participate in, he asks that every Detachment look into this program and possibly donate some money to it to keep it funded and running. You can find out more at www.americanshonoringamericans.org.

Bill Chapman talked about the need to do all we can to help our aging Viet Nam veterans. These Vets truly need all of the support they can get. We should do whatever we can do to assist them in getting all of the benefits they deserve.

Bob Peters, of the Air, Land NC Detachment, discussed their Toys for Tots program and the success they had with sponsorship. He also stated that their Detachment would be sending representatives to the Wound Marines Barracks with a \$1,500 donation check.

Awards - Cmdt Brockland handed out awards and certificates of appreciation to the members of his Elected and Appointed Staff for all of the work that they provided over the past year. A certificate was also given to Moe Grindel for her support over the past year as well.

Department level Meritorious Unit Commendations were handed out to the following Detachments for hosting a DoNC quarterly meeting over the past year: Tri-County, Davidson County, Sand Hills Area & LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachments.

Distinguished Service Awards were given to the following: John Grindel, Wallace Darling, Russell Becker, Bob Learn, Jim Haslam, Vince Tesoro, Bill Dowdle, Danny Bracken, Jim Luther and Steve Winsett.

Distinguished Citizen Awards were handed out to the following: Hank 'Doc' Kaczmarek, 'Arbe' Arbelaez, George Barrows, Steve Winsett and Bruce Rakfeldt.

PDC Pete Meletis shared some inspiring words about us, as Members, of the Marine Corps League. Our ultimate mission is to be faithful to God, Country and Corps. As League Members, we need to share with our communities the God given privileges and experience we have been blessed with to assist them in any way that we can.

9. Elections

Nominations and Election Committee - Steve Wilson discussed that he would be running the Elections, being overseen by Judge Advocate Russell Becker for accuracy with following this procedure per the Department Bylaws.

The successful Nominations from the Floor to serve as the Elected Officers for 2009-2010 were:

Commandant - **Dennis A. Brockland**
Jr. Vice Commandant - **Wallace Darling**

Sr. Vice Commandant - **John Grindel**
Judge Advocate - **Russell Becker**

The names above were then voted in as the Elected Officers for the 2009-2010 year and the Nomination Committee was therefore dissolved, per a motion from the Floor, seconded, voted on and approved.

10. Announcements

Marine of the Year Committee; Bill Chapman - Nine Nominations were submitted for the Marine of the Year Award. After the recession of this meeting, the Committee will meet to determine the recipient of this year's award. The Nominations came from the following Detachments:

1. Tar Heel Detachment #733
2. Blue Ridge Detachment #848
3. Smoky Mountain Detachment#973
4. Catawba Valley Detachment #1163
5. Down East Detachment #1186
6. Table Rock Detachment #1197
7. LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment #1209
8. Tri-County Detachment #1262
9. Capt. Jeb F. Seagle Detachment #1265

Woman of the Year Committee; George Barrows - Three Nominations were submitted for the Marine of the Year Award. After the recession of this meeting, the Committee will meet to determine the recipient of this year's award. The Nominations came from the following Detachments:

1. Greater Greensboro Detachment #260
2. Table Rock Detachment #1197
3. Capt. Jeb F. Seagle Detachment #1265

11. Closing of Meeting

Meeting was recessed at 1545 and will re-open again at 1800 for the Banquet and the Installation of Officers.

Singing of the Marines Hymn

50/50 raffle and prize drawings

The Banquet and Installation Ceremony started at 1800.

Major General Tom Wilkerson was the Guest Speaker for the evening.

Alan and Brenda Lam, the parents of LCpl. Alan D. Lam, were recognized with Honorary LIFE Memberships for the LCpl. Alan D. Lam Detachment #1209, dated back to the Chartering of the Detachment back on 1-October-2005.

Peter T. Meletis received the 2009 God & Country Award.

Peter T. Meletis received the Distinguished Citizen Gold award for service to the Marine Corps League on behalf of the Commandant of the National Marine Corps League presented by National Mideast Division assistant Vice Commandant James Tant.

The 2009 Department Woman of the Year was Katrina Avery

The 2009 Department Marine of the Year was Hank 'Doc' Kaczmarek

The Convention officially closed at 2315.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce R. Rakfeldt
Adjutant
Department of North Carolina
Marine Corps League