



## **MINUTES 74th ANNUAL SOUTHEAST DIVISION CONFERENCE 2019**

**Charleston, South Carolina 21 - 24 MARCH 2019**

**Conference host:  
LOW COUNTRY DETACHMENT 803**

### **DEPARTMENT COMMANDANT'S COUNCIL**

The meeting was called to order at by SEDANDVC Michael Clark on Thursday 21 March 2019.

Present at the meeting were officers and staff of the Southeast Division, Commandants from each of the Departments and many other members of the Marine Corps League. National JVC Johnny Baker was also present.

Adjutant George LaMont conducted a roll call of Department Commandants with all present.

ANDVC Clark called for reports from the Department Commandants. The written reports were verbally summarized (Note: each written report is archived to the Adjutant records of the meeting).

- Department of Alabama Commandant A.B. Grantham reported.
- Department of Florida Commandant George LaMont reported.
- Department of Georgia Commandant Al Yates reported.
- Department of Louisiana Commandant Ron Broussard reported.
- Department of Mississippi Commandant Ron Polk reported.
- Department of South Carolina Commandant Jim Stone reported.
- Department of Tennessee Commandant Ken Kotchevar reported.

ANDVC Michael Clark reported on the Mid-Winter conference. He emphasized the need for each Detachment to have a Marine 4 Life Coordinator and a Legislative Officer.

NDVC Archie Sweet reported with an emphasis on the importance of the MCL/M4L Liaison and the program.

National JVC Johnny Baker reported on National business. He encouraged resolution of Chapter 9 at the lowest possible level. ROI are not being submitted as required. Chain-of-command is essential. Many questions can be resolved at the lowest level if the chain-of-command is used. The idea of raising membership and life member dues was presented and discussed.

The meeting was adjourned until the Joint Session.

## **JOINT OPENING CEREMONY AND MEMORIAL SERVICE**

NDVC Archie Sweet called the meeting to order on Friday 22 March 2019 in accordance with the MCL ritual.

Colors were presented by members of the NJROTC of Summerville High School with the singing of our National Anthem.

NDVC Archie Sweet recognized the following VIP & guests:

- National Commandant Wendell Webb;
- National Junior Vice Commandant Johnny Baker;
- MCLA SEDVP Carol Mazzara;
- Past MCLA SEDVP Joyce Brickett
- Past MCLA National President Debra Evans
- Past SEDNVC Jimmy Hackbarth
- NEDNVC Tony D'Angelo
- MCLA National VP Evelyn Joppa
- PCDNVC Ray Dailey

Crowne Plaza Director of Sales Angie Gibbs welcomed the membership.

Chaplain Terry Witt conducted a memorial service for all fallen members. Since the 2018 SED Conference members were reported to have passed away throughout the Division:

- Alabama --- 20
- Florida --- 85 & 12 MCLA members
- Georgia --- 40
- Louisiana --- 15
- Mississippi --- 14
- South Carolina -- 30 & 1 MCLA member
- Tennessee --- 24 & 2 MCLA members
- TOTAL SED --- 228 & 15 MCLA

MCLA SEDVP Carol Mazzara addressed the meeting.

SEDNVC Sweet placed the meeting in recess until the beginning of the MCL business meeting.

## **SOUTHEAST DIVISION MCL BUSINESS MEETING**

The business meeting of the SED MCL was called to order on Friday, 22 March 2019 by SED Sgt.-at-Arms Butch Raynes at the direction of SEDNVC Archie Sweet.

SED Adjutant George LaMont conducted a roll call of officers and staff of the Division.

- DVC Archie Sweet – Present
- ADVC Michael Clark – Present
- Adjutant George LaMont – Present
- Paymaster Glen Barry Evans – Present
- Sgt. at Arms Butch Raynes – Present
- Dept. of Alabama Commandant A. B. Grantham – Present
- Dept. of Florida Commandant George LaMont – Present
- Dept. of Georgia Commandant Al Yates – Present
- Dept. of Louisiana Commandant Ronnie Broussard – Present
- Dept. of Mississippi Commandant Ron Polk – Present
- Dept. of South Carolina Commandant Jim Stone – Present

- Dept. of Tennessee Commandant Ken Kotchevar – Present

Adjutant LaMont reported all present.

The Department of North Carolina Commandant Jeff Jones was recognized as a guest.

National JVC Johnny Baker reported on the Vietnam Commemorative. Those members present that served during the Vietnam era and not previously recognized were presented with the Commemorative pin.

The conference was dedicated to all our departed comrades.

Sgt.-at-Arms Butch Raynes read the rules of the conference. Motion by Marine Glen Barry Evans and second by Marine Dick Brandt to accept the rules as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjutant George LaMont reported the minutes of the 2018 conference have been posted to the SED website for the past year. Marine Bill Miller made a motion to accept the minutes as posted. Second by Marine Jim Hackbarth. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjutant George LaMont reported no correspondence that had not already been distributed other than bids for the 2020 conference which will be addressed later.

Paymaster Glen Barry Evans reported that the financial records of the SED were reviewed by Commandants Ron Polk, Mississippi & Ronnie Broussard, Louisiana. There were no discrepancies found. The financial report was presented to the membership. Marine Johnny Baker asked about the location of the SED accounts and whether an EIN has been obtained by the SED. Paymaster Evans reported that the SED has its own independent account and does have an EIN from the IRS.

Barbara D'Angelo of "Vets for Warriors" organization provided a presentation to the membership.

Chaplain Witt reported on members sick or in distressed.

SED ANDVC Michael Clark reported on the Commandant's Council.

Sgt.at Arms Butch Raynes – no report.

Webmaster Bill Lamar – no report.

Aid-de-camp Jerry Cherne – not present, no report.

MODD SEDVC PDD Randy Barnes – no report.

VAVS Gerald Kiehl reported.

Young Marines Liaison John Gionet reported.

Eagle Scout coordinator Mickey Edwards reported.

YPF coordinator William Gonzalez – no report.

SEDNVC Archie Sweet presented a report on the National Mid-Winter conference:

- Sprint has a hearing-impaired phone available to qualified persons;
- Reminded everyone to utilize the library on the National web site;
- A new transmittal form is now available;
- A larger NOD form will soon be available;
- The MCL is financially in the black. There is a change in budget preparation in that a committee will no longer be utilized although approval of the budget remains with the membership.
- Red blazers will no longer be available through the Ship's Store. JC Penney will have a "Stafford" red blazer available for sale on line but not in their stores. The MCL buttons will need to be purchased from the Ship's Store;
- Question and discussion from the audience on female white blouses occurred. The microphone was not used by the speakers causing the discussion to be inaudible.
- Items sold in the Ship's Store must be in compliance with USMC
- Uniforms for Honor Guard Funeral Details is now prescribed by the MCL membership for uniformity;
- Rust insurance costs must be controlled by the MCL. Covered losses must be reported timely but more important internal controls must be in place to control losses; Bill Miller, Department of Georgia reinforced the need for internal controls.
- Young Marines need more units throughout the country.
- Marine 4 Life program is a high priority program of the MCL and the USMC.
- Social media is being utilized more and more. This is not a source for reporting on problems or dirty laundry. Use caution to not post information that may compromise individual safety or Detachment financial information. A member reminded all to protect the home of family of deceased during funerals. Use caution with photos of large checks used for promoting donations; especially with display of account numbers.

Several members added discussion in support of items presented from Mid-Winter, but the microphone was not utilized, and audio was not enough to provide details of the discussion. Items discussed included "Mission Readiness", the use of "211" for social services, wearing of the Vietnam commemorative pin.

Credentials Chair Marilyn Tharpe presented the interim credentials report. Departments were directed to address any questions to the chair at the registration table.

The meeting was recessed for lunch.

The meeting was reconvened in accordance with MCL ritual.

SEDNVC presented National awards to David Martin a Distinguished Citizen Gold and to Department of Louisiana Detachment 875 1<sup>st</sup> place VAVS award for under 50 members.

National JVC Johnny Baker conducted nominations for SED.

- Nominations for National Vice Commandant
  - Michael Clark, Department of Georgia was nominated by Hal Gosnell, Department of Georgia and second by Bernie Bledsoe, Department of Georgia. Michael Clark accepted the nomination.
  - Archie Sweet, Department of South Carolina was nominated by Ron Polk, Department of Mississippi and second by Mike Stewart, Department of Florida. Archie Sweet accepted the nomination.
- Nominations for Assistant National Vice Commandant
  - A.B. Grantham, Department of Alabama was nominated by Jack Hopping, Department of Alabama and second by Steve Stephens, Department of Alabama. A.B. Grantham accepted the nomination.
  - Jim Stone, Department of South Carolina was nominated by Tom Aires, Department of South Carolina and second by Dan Hoffman, Department of South Carolina. Jim Stone accepted the nomination.
  - Butch Raynes, Department of South Carolina was nominated by Chuck Tidwell, Department of South Carolina and second by Donald Beck, Department of South Carolina. Butch Raynes accepted the nomination.
- Being no other nominations, the nominations were closed.

SEDNVC Archie Sweet presented Distinguished Citizen Silver awards as follows:

- A.B. Grantham, Alabama
- George LaMont, Florida
- Al Yates, Georgia
- Ronnie Broussard, Louisiana
- Jim Stone, South Carolina
- Ron Polk, Mississippi
- Ken Kotchevar, Tennessee
- Terry Witt, Chaplain
- Bill Lamar, Webmaster
- Butch Raynes, Sgt.-at-Arms.

SEDANVC Michael Clark spoke on several topics: the importance of communications to Detachments; officers should provide a report when called upon “no report” is not acceptable; members and officers take oaths that they are expected to adhere to; the league belongs to the red covers; pay attention to the legislative committee reports.

David Hatfield, National Scholarship Chairman introduced George LaMont and Jerry Holt as members of the committee. David Hatfield & Bill Miller spoke on scholarship applications, requirements, awards, financing, and future changes to the process. Bill Miller presented a challenge for each Detachment to donate \$100 to the MCL Foundation for the scholarship.

SEDNVC Archie Sweet spoke on responsibility of members throughout the MCL. To voice an opinion, one needs to be informed. Members need to be in attendance and participate at the Detachment meetings. Detachment officers need to be in attendance and participate in Department meetings. Department officers need to be in attendance and participate in Division and National meetings. Detachment Commandant should notify the Department Commandant whether they will attend Department meetings or who will be representing them if they are unable to attend.

A member from the Department of Georgia spoke on Marine victims from the tornados in Alabama. Department of Alabama Commandant A.B. Grantham reported that every effort was made to identify any MCL members or Marines were impacted by the tornados.

A member from the Department of Georgia spoke on programs and activities within the Detachments and participation by members.

The meeting was recess until Saturday morning.

SED NVC Sweet directed the passing of a hat to collect donations for the MCL Foundation. Donations are for the general fund of the Foundation and not earmarked for a specific project of the Foundation. \$813.00 was collected.

The meeting was reconvened in accordance with the MCL Ritual.

Department of North Carolina Commandant Jeff Jones addressed the membership. He thanked all for donations and prayers to help relieve members and Marines in North Carolina from Hurricane Florence.

SED M4L Liaison Scott Westervelt presented on the Marine 4 Life Program. He urged all Detachments to participate by appointing a Detachment M4L Liaison. He emphasized that the program is intended for transitioning Marines returning to civilian life but others requesting assistance can be addressed through other programs.

National Commandant Wendell Webb addressed the membership.

- The M4L program is the most important program of the MCL today. It is owned by USMC to assist Marines transitioning to civilian life.
- The “library” on the National website is where to find most of the information one may need concerning the MCL.

- Spoke on funding and programs within the MCL such as training for the dental field.
- Relationships with other VSO and the USMC.
- Sharing of HQ office space with the Women Marine Association.
- Suicide prevention and working with others for a coordinated effort.
- Knowledge of your local community to aid Marines transitioning back to civilian life.
- Funeral Honors, T4T, coordination councils, and MCL relationships with other organizations and the USMC.
- Notice of Death forms are important. They need to be utilized and in a timely manner.
- RUST insurance requires awareness of the plan by all levels of the MCL.
- Budget procedures are changing. A detailed proposal will be presented at the National Convention in Billings.

The meeting recessed for 10 minutes.

Bill Miller, Department of Georgia and member of the MCL Foundation Board of Directors asked if anyone with experience in grant writing would volunteer to assist the MCL Foundation. He further announced that there is an opening on the Foundation's Board of Directors.

National JVC Johnny Baker presented to the membership.

- Communications is essential for the success of the MCL. Those in attendance need to share with their Detachment members what they hear and learn at the conference.
- The chain-of-command is essential. Many questions and issues can be handled at the lowest level of the chain and in a quicker manner.
- There is a \$2000 scholarship available from Delta Dental to members or families of members in dental training. More information will be soon forthcoming.
- Follow the MCL ritual, bylaws and procedures to avoid many problems.
- Notice of Death may be submitted via email but be sure to copy all who need to know.

Al Yates, Commandant Department of Georgia provided an update for the 2020 SED Conference in Warner-Robbins, Georgia. 26 – 29 March 2020 at the Courtyard Marriott 478-602-6200 for reservations.

Dick Brandt & Dave Martin presented a bid on behalf of the Department of Louisiana to host the 2021 SED conference at the Crowne Plaza Executive Center in Baton Rouge. \$105.00 plus tax and including breakfast is the room rate. 18 – 21 March 2021 is the proposed date.

Clifton Addison presented a bid on behalf of the Department of Mississippi to host the 2021 SED conference at the Imperial Palace Casino in Biloxi 17 – 21 March 2021 is the proposed date. The room rate is variable but \$116.32 average plus a \$13.00 per night resort fee and taxes.

A brief break for caucus prior to vote for the 2021 conference location.

A vote by those members present was conducted to select 2021 conference location. The bid went to Department of Louisiana for Baton Rouge to host the 2021 conference.

SED Paymaster Glenn Barry Evans presented on transmittals with how to properly complete and submit. Additionally, he provided information on recent changes to the transmittal form.

The meeting adjourned for lunch.

The reconvened in accordance with the MCL ritual.

Ray Dailey candidate for National Judge Advocate addressed the membership.

Joseph D'Angelo candidate for National Judge Advocate addressed the membership.

A.B. Grantham, Department of Alabama read a message on behalf of T.J. Morgan a candidate for National Judge Advocate.

David Hatfield, Department of Tennessee questioned the reason for the Division SOP not being updated for so long. SED NVC Sweet responded that Jerry Cherne has been tasked with updating the SOP. It is not yet ready for presenting to the SED BOT for review and approval. It is anticipated that it will be presented to the BOT within the next month. Once approved it will be shared with the membership.

Motion by David Hatfield that the host Detachment charge a separate registration fee for conferences. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Karl Ekstrom. The motion was amended to reflect \$5.00 as the separate registration fee. The motion to amend was approved. The original motion failed.

Credentials Chair Marilyn Tharpe presented the final credentials report.

National JVC Johnny Baker presided over elections. Judges and tellers were Randy Barnes, Past Commandant Department of Georgia; David Hatfield, Past Commandant Department of Tennessee; John Tharpe, Past Commandant Department of South Carolina; and Dick Brandt, Past Commandant Department of Louisiana.

The Departments caucused due to a change in the number of delegates since the first caucus. Following the caucus elections were conducted in accordance with the National Bylaws.

- Archie Sweet, Department of South Carolina was elected to a second term as the SED National Vice-Commandant.
- In the first round of voting for Assistant Vice Commandant there was not a majority winner. Jim Stone withdrew his name as a candidate. On the second round of voting Butch Raynes of the Department of South Carolina was elected to a first term as the SED Assistant National Vice-Commandant.

The tally sheets of the judges and tellers were presented to the Adjutant for archival in the SED records.

The session recessed until the banquet.

The session reconvened in accordance with the MCL Ritual.

SED NVC Archie Sweet recognized and welcomed distinguished guests.

Chaplain Witt provided prayer and blessing of the meal.

John Tharpe Department of South Carolina introduced Major General Mike Regner who in turn introduced Brigadier General James Glynn, Commanding General Parris Island and Eastern Recruiting Region as the guest speaker.

SED MCLA VP Carol Mazzara and National MCLA JVP Evelyn Joppa presented the Frances Watt award to Jimmie Owens of the Barefoot Bay Unit MCLA.

The Tom Perone Award was presented to the Department of Louisiana.

The Milton Ochman Award was shared by Department of Georgia and Department of Mississippi.

The traveling award for the greatest attendance at the conference was presented to Detachment 1134 of the Department of South Carolina.

The Carter Award SED Marine of the Year was presented to David Martin of the Department of Louisiana.

The conference was concluded in accordance with the MCL ritual and adjourned until the 2020 conference in Warner-Robbins, Georgia.

NOTE: reports, bids, election tally sheets and such are maintained as electronic format in the official records of the SED Adjutant.

Respectfully submitted,

George LaMont, SED Adjutant