



Marine Corp League Department of Massachusetts
85th MCL Convention 2022 from Wednesday-Sunday, June 1-5, Double Tree Inn by Hilton, Hyannis, MA 02620

Thank you for all those who had attended and supported our state Marine Corps League...

The Convention Agenda had been carefully programmed to include meetings, amenities, and special guests' lecturers from the Veteran Administration Boston and the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District, Greenfield.

The Saturday's Business Convention was held on June 4th and opened on time at 0800, broke for lunch at 1100 and regrouped again 1400-1530.

Department Commandant Brian Brooks opened the meeting and directed the Sgt-at-Arms Keith Buckhout to lead the members in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed

by Chaplain Roger Hoffman reading the opening prayers. The roll call was taken by Adjutant Frank, and Commandant Brian addressed and recognized the VIPs by their official positions.

ROLL CALL

VIPs: Dept. Commandant Brian Brooks recognized and acknowledged all the dignitaries to include Lt. General Chiarotti, Jr.; Past National Cmdt. Dennis Tobin; National Sr. Vice Cmdt. Warren Griffin; National Chaplain Howard Chafer; New England Vice Cmdt. Dave Porter; Asst. N.E. Div. Vice Cmdt. Pat Maguire; N. E. Div. Chief of Staff Larry Chretien; N. E. Div. Chaplain Jane Deptula; N.E. Div. Paymaster John “JR” Rutovich; N. E. Compliance Officer Bernie Heaney; N. E. Div. Adjutant Walt Benson; N. E. Div. Legal Officer Larry Herman; N. E. Div. Photographer Peter King; N. E. Div. Liaison for the Young Marines, Bruce Katz; and Past National Commandants’ Fran Curnow, Warren Griffin, and Bernie Heaney.

All others:

(Note there will be a repeat of some Department Marines.)

PRESENT (Elected)--Dept. **Cmdt. Brian Brooks**; Dept. **Sr. Vice Cmdt. Jon Zwirblia**; Dept. **Jr. Vice Cmdt. Mike Hines**; Dept. **Judge Advocate Steve Cheney**; **Finance Chairman Fran Curnow**, and **Finance Officers’ Tony Garro, Dan Bishop, and Frank Serra**.

PRESENT (Appointed)—**Paymaster Bernie Heaney**; **Adjutant Frank Serra**; **Chaplain Roger Hoffman**; **Sgt-at-Arms Keith Buckhout/Pack Leader**; **Quartermaster John McEntegart**; **Photographer Peter King**; **Pack Leader Keith Buckhout**; **Convention Committee co-chairmen Jon Zwirblia and Brian Brooks**; **Legislative Committee Warren Griffin**; **Toys for Tots Tim McCrory and Bill Auld**; **VAVS Tim McCrory**; **Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom Brian Brooks and Jon Zwirblia**; **Scholarships Dominic Ricci and Brian Brooks**; **Young Marines Bruce Katz**; **Eagle Scouts Chris Cekovsky**; **District 2 Vice Cmdt. Richard Broadnax**; and **District 6 Vice Cmdt. Tim McCrory**.

PRESENT (or Representing the Commandant)—Art Enos, **Burlington**; Ron Timm, **Cape Cod**; Dave Triplett, **Captain Wm. Glynn**; Steve Coddins, **Essex County**; James Summers, **Honorable Few**; Bruce Aldrich, **LCpl Van Gyzen**; John McGrath, **1st Lt Brian McPhillips**; Rick Seguin, **New Bedford**; Mike Whalen, **Metro West**; William Maguire, **Norfolk County**; Brian Brooks, **Oak Ridge**; George Fiffy, “Bernie” for

Pequoig; Jonathan Denham, **Plymouth**; George McMasters, **Pvt Charles Shutt**; Jim DeLisle, **South Central**; Christopher Cekowsky, **Westfield River Valley**; Tim Carroll, **William Caddy**; Jon Zwirblia, **Worcester**; Tom Hazlett, “Terri Laskey” for **Executive Detachment**.

APPOINTED OFFICERS—Bernie Heaney (**Paymaster/Compliance Officer**), Frank Serra (**Adjutant**), Roger Hoffman (**Chaplain**), Keith Buckhout (**Sgt-at-Arms and PACK LEADER**), John McEntegart (**Quartermaster**), Peter King (**Div. Photographer**), John Rutovich (**Div. Paymaster**), Brian Brooks and Jon Zwirblia (**Convention Committee**), Tim McCrory and Bill Auld (**Toys 4 Tots**), Tim McCrory (**1 of 5 VAVS**), Warren Griffin (**Legislative Committee**), Brian Brooks and Jon Zwirblia (**Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom**), Dominic Ricci and Brian Brooks (**Scholarships**), Bruce Katz (**Young Marines**), Chris Cekovsky (**Eagle Scouts**), and Jim Hastings (**Vietnam Marines**.)

DEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

There had been much but nothing significant to report to the membership.

SICK OR DISTRESSED

Rick Seguin, New Bedford Cmdt., commented that one of his members was in ICU w/COVID; and one of the detachment’s former commandants, Marine Del Garcia, is presently with Hospice. Cmdt. Brian asked that Chaplain Roger send out cards to them and to let them know that our better thoughts are with them.

PAYMASTER’S REPORT

Dept. Paymaster Bernie Heaney presented a lengthy and detailed report on our Finances, on our 990 Compliance, and the FY23 proposed Budget. He also reminded us that he does transfer funds from our Public Donations a/c which is our primary support to our MCL General a/c. And he commented that the Burke Restitution a/c (aka/”The Thief”) has paid up-to date and has paid back better than half of what he had stolen. Bernie read off the balances of our bank a/cs, commented about our Compliance being at 88% as of 12/31/21, and mentioned the additional line-item changes to the budget. Changes were suggested and had been unanimously agreed to by all four members of the Finance Committee and other official-Trustees’ input. A motion was called for to accept the budget. It was made by Tim McCrory and 2d by Roger Hoffman and unanimously approved.

VA CAREGIVERS' SUPPORT PROGRAM and the UPPER PIONEER VALLEY VETERANS' SERVICES

We had two lecturers from the CAREGIVERS SUPPORT PROGRAM—**Ed Flemming** out of Boston, and *VSO Director* **Timothy Niejadlik** from the UPPER VALLEY VETERANS'S SERVICES. The two, in-concert, VA representatives talked for close-to-an hour, and they did leave brochures, pens, etc. Our *takeaway* left us informative of many “qualifying” health issues that normally we would not have been aware. And it was comforting to know that veteran members should not feel intimidated nor that a vet might be undeserving if he/she does apply for disability. ***Vets’ “entitlements” had been earned simply by possessing a DD 214, i.e., the dedication to have agreed to voluntarily sacrifice their lives, if necessary, for duty to our country.*** FYI: All towns have a VSO available and are ready to serve. The members did ask questions and it was obvious that the lecturers were well prepared, informative, and left many of us feeling we had been updated as to VA benefits and pleased to have received this information.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Commandant Brian Brooks: Presented a \$1,000. check to Gunnery Sgt. Danis, Haverhill High School MCJROTC. A select number of the H.S.'s MCIROTC members were in attendance and had been responsible for our Color Guard at the Convention. It should also be mentioned that they were also at Honorable Few detachment's Cornhole Tournament last year to attend the remembrance ceremony for active-duty Sgt. Rosario Pichardo, KIA in Afghanistan. (?-FYI: 1st Sgt Grinstead is Gunny Danis's 1st Sgt and he [the 1st Sgt] is an active member of the Honorable Few detachment.)

Sr. Vice Commandant Jon Zwirblia: Reported that, (1.) He swore in the new officers at the Westover attachment, (2.) Took possession of Woburn detachment's rifles and returned them to TACOM, (3.) Sent out communications to detachments who had not submitted their rifle inventories, (4.) Attended Woo Sox baseball night, (5.) Attended Honorable Few detachment's fund raiser, (6.) Attended *zoom meeting 1/11/22* and sent out power point information on that meeting, (7.) Attended military appreciation hockey night in Worcester, (8.) Attended Quad State, (9.) Assisted the installation of the Shutt detachment officers w/Dave Porter, and (10.) Took on the administrative responsibilities of

the year-long planning of scheduling, programming, coordinating, etc., etc., of the “2022 Convention” with co-chairman Brian Brooks.

Jr. Vice Commandant Mike Hines: (Mike is also the MA. Division Sgt-at-Arms.) He commented that we have on record, 913 Paid Life Members and 194 Continuous Paid Members, totaling an *1,107 VOTING STRENGTH*. He also made mention as to *not call* Hq. CO Bob Borka and to contact those of us in the Department to answer questions or assistance. He had a single question from the membership: “JR” (Division Paymaster John Rutovich) asked when the next roster would be available. At the time this was asked, it wasn’t available. It is now as of 7/14/2022.

Judge Advocate Steve Cheney: Covered two (2) bylaw changes. They are as follows: (1.) *There will not be need for two signatures on checks.* ONE SIGNATURE IS ACCEPTABLE. It will be either the commandant’s or the paymaster. There is authorization to “assign” a 3rd name, if needed. And (2.) Our Department’s Fiscal Year is to include July 1-June 30 of each year. A motion was made by Tim McCrory to accept both bylaws, 2d by Peter king and unanimously approved.

Chaplain Roger Hoffman: Marine Roger files three pages of his activities with me (the adjutant), single spaced (*and in #9 pica font.*) What does that mean? It means I could record another 6-pages plus of the activities of what this Marine does for the League. He is irreplaceable (my opinion and I’m confident others will echo that.)

To summarize: Roger has attended **25 wakes**, attended **35 MCL Rituals**, attended **27 funerals**, escorted **28 MC members**, attended **45 interments**, was **Chaplain at 35**, sent out **Remembrances to 38**, attended a **Flag Retirement**, was in **2 bike runs**, **8 memorials’ services**, **4 Parades**, attended **all Dept. meetings**, and **12-V2V meetings**. I have all of his activity records on file and if anyone would like copies, contact me and I’ll scan them to you. *Semper Fi Roger!*

NOMINATIONS

Summary of whom was elected or reelected:

Reelected Brian Brooks, Commandant

Reelected Jon Zwirblia, Sr. Vice Commandant

Reelected Mike Hines, Jr. Vice Commandant

Reelected Steve Cheney

Reelected Fran Curnow (Finance Committee Chairman)
Reelected Dan Bishop (Finance Committee member)
William Maguire (*new* Finance Committee member)
Reelected Frank Serra (Finance Committee Member)

Past National Commandant Dennis Tobin installed the elected officers. He then said a few words of thanks for being invited to Cape Cod and our MCL MA Department. Among other words of praise, he commented that he very much liked coming to Cape Cod and emphasized the importance of all of us enjoying ourselves at our League and Convention meetings.

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE

This is not considered Good of the League; however, **National Sr. Vice Commandant Warren Griffin** wanted the members to know that our present National Commandant Johnny Baker had cataract surgery in the state of Alabama and that it didn't go well. He temporarily lost his vision in his right eye. It is somewhat improved but, as of yet, he cannot see peripherally and that his right eye is presently in a fixed-frontal position.

Also, Warren, said that we are now to recognize the "FMF Naval Personnel" who participated in Iraq and Afghanistan and those armed-forces personnel who are entitled to wear the EGA. *It should be good for membership recruitment.*

Warren felt it necessary to remind members, too, that we (especially those of us retired) should feel responsible for attending funerals of active-duty Marines. He, himself, had attended the funeral of Leominster, MA., active-duty Marine Captain Ross Reynolds who was one-of-four killed in a training exercise in an Osprey helicopter, 3/21/2022 in Norway. Griff mentioned that only 7-9 members from the League had attended and he was disappointed by the poor showing.

Department Paymaster Bernie Heaney asked that we increase the annual Young Marine Award from \$200. to \$500. A motion was made to accept, 2d and unanimously approved. *Thank you! We can and should appreciate the discipline, the dedication, and the sacrifices that a young ambitious, outstanding, military-focused person demands of themself. It is only fitting that we, too, recognize and appreciate that exemplary effort with a more reasonable and equitable dollar sentiment. SF, fs*

Sr. Vice Cmdt. Jon Zwirblia wanted the membership to recognize and appreciate that Warren Griffin has been recognized on FB for all his contributions to veterans

community at Framingham State. In appreciation, Warren was given a generous round of applause.

Jon also recognized and expressed appreciation that there are many more “red garrison covers” in attendance. ***“That” is the focus of this current Administration, and they will continue to be reaching out to all the detachments to keep them involved, included and to encourage their active participation.***

New England Division Vice Commandant Dave Porter acknowledged and awarded a certificate of Appreciation to Paul T. O’Reilly (not present.) Dave mentioned how Paul has had barbeques at his home here on the Cape for our conventions, hosted the opening of our initial 1stSgt Jim Laskey Golf Tournament, and has been a dedicated member of the League for many, many years.

D. V. C. Dave also recognized both Cmdt. Brian B. and Sr. V. Cmdt. Jon Z. for their exceptional dedication and hard work over the past fiscal year. Both Marines received MCL ***Distinguished Citizen Silver*** awards. He (Dave) also had emphasized his fullest support for Cmdt. Brian and that we are to come together and leave the negativity out. We’re all Marines and there is no place for dissension. Dave thanked the members for coming and he, too, received a round of applause.

Commandant Bruce Aldrich, LCpl John Van Gyzen thanked the membership for recognizing and making him the Marine of the Year 2021. Bruce also mentioned a program he is supporting known as the PB ABBATE RETURN TO BASE. Bruce passed out fliers and did say that donations would be appreciated. For more information, please check it out at PBABBATE.ORG (they are also on FB.) It is a facility free to veterans to come together and reboot their transition from military to civilian life.

Marine Seth Mansur from South Central Det. #1094 had made a request to the Department asking for memorial-service support for a fallen Marine in France. He (Marine Mansur) provided the background and connection of a WWII fallen Marine named Sgt. Charles Perry. Marine Mansur claims that Jim Sottile’s twin brother, Marine Vincent Sottile, resides in Grasse, France, and is an active member of MCL Det. 1094 South Central. For several years, apparently, Vincent has visited Sgt. Perry’s cemetery site 3X annually to honor this fallen Marine. Marine Mansur is asking that the Dept. of MA allocate a sum of \$200. annually to

provide for flowers and “some” transportation costs for Marine Vincent Sottile to continue his visits and that we establish perennial funds to ensure his (Vincent’s) replacement when he is no longer able nor available. **Division Paymaster “JR” suggested this request be referred to the Finance Committee for review. Cmdt. Brooks did request that Marine Mansur withdraw the motion and said that it should/would be referred to the Finance committee. Seth agreed...**

There is no precedent for this unusual an “perpetual” request for our Department of MA; therefore, no decision has yet to be made.

Quartermaster John “Mac” McEntegart commented that Jim Hastings was not present because he has COVID. Mac spoke of a past Dept. of MA. Young Marine-of-the Year Brian Falange. This outstanding young man has since become a Corporal (E4) in a short time in his present active-Corps enlistment. He is stationed at the US Embassy, Brussels, Belgium. “Mac” mentioned that he had known of this young man for many years and told us that he was also the honor graduate at boot camp. Mac also mentioned that he does not use computers and did take the time to write to Brian F. when he was at boot camp. The story Mac related was that when “recruit-Brian” was at P.I., his D.I. had called him out referring to him as Maggot” and commented to all the other recruits in a sarcastic-and-mocking tone that, **“No one writes letters anymore.”** But Brian told him, **“It was from an ol’ Marine.”** *(We can almost picture the levity and laughs among the platoon of recruits. Even if it wasn’t all that funny, we did look forward to any sign of humanity from any of our D.I.’s. Kind of miss all of that! I want to be 17 again...)*

J. J. McGrath Commandant of 1stLt Brian McPhillips Det/”Metro West” had asked for \$1,800. for a Flag Burning/ Car Show event for the Brockton VA. The commandant spoke with praise of the detachment 1115’s Jr. Vice Cmdt. Patrick Ballinger. Patrick is employed by the Brockton VA, and he has often used his own out-of-pocket moneys to provide for the Brockton vets. This event that he is involved with is a first-ever “approval” in that it had been approved by the town-- apparently it has never happened before. Bottom line: Yes! He will be getting the moneys he has requested. There is a line-item budget for Brockton and both our Dept. commandant, and the paymaster said that they would work it out. There will also free hot dogs available, and they do expect many, many locals will be attending. Commandant J. J. also encouraged anyone who has a special bike that they would be most welcome.

Shutt Detachment will be having their Annual Golf Tournament June 17th.

Commandant Ron Timm of Cape Cod #125 commented he would like to promote and support other detachments activities with that of 125's. It's a fine idea and something that could be beneficial to any-an-all detachments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On-line Registrations: **Sr. Vice Cmdt. Jon Z.** commented that this issue will be on his checklist to be corrected next year, 2023. Also, that reimbursement for rooms will be in the lobby beginning at 0900 and to please bring your room receipt when departing.



ADJOURNMENT

Commandant Brian Brooks asked that the **Sgt-at-Arms Keith Buckhout** call the members to order and to salute the colors.

Chaplain Roger Hoffman then read the closing prayers and reminded the members to remember all those Marines who have passed away.

Sr. Vice Jon Zwirblia reminded the members to secure new members and favor us by attending future meetings.

The commandant asked the Sgt-at-arms to declare the meeting closed. And with the single rap of the gavel, it came to an end.

Respectfully submitted,
SF, *Frank Serra*
Department Adjutant

NOTE: The minutes are recorded on a Sound Organizer. It is accurate but sometimes I misinterpret, or it is hard to hear with unavoidable-background noise. Please contact me. I want to make it right. Thanks!