

**MARINE CORPS LEAGUE  
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN  
2023 STATE CONVENTION  
JUNE 2-4 LANSING, MICHIGAN**

Following the Memorial Service and Joint Opening the Convention was opened at 1440 hours.

**ROLL CALL**

The following elected/ appointed officer were present:

Commandant – Art Menard	Senior Vice Cmdt – Ray Rowley
Junior Vice Cmdt – Ray Rayl	Judge Advocate – Stephan Fletcher
Paymaster – Larry Sweerin	Chaplain – Fred Green
Jr. Past Cmdt – Jon VanTol	

**Vice Commandants**

SE Zone 1 – Phil Smith	Eastern Zone 2 – Norman Root
Southern Zone 3 – Forrest Secord	SW Zone 4 – Michael Moross
Western Zone 5 – Dave Masunas	Central Zone 6 – Troy Stewart
Northern Zone 7 – Frank Rosinski	UP Zone 8 – Tracey Tippet – Excused

Adjutant – Tracey Tippet – excused	Chief of Staff – Warren Tracey
Sgt at Arms – Tracy Berg	Legislative Director – Mark Sutton
Historian – Dale Erion	VAVS Director – Steve Kelley
Ft Custer Nat’l Cemetery Liaison – Michael Hornev	
Great Lakes Nat’l Cemetery Liaison – Ray Rayl	
Eagle Scout Coordinator – Dave Masunas	
Wreaths across America – Lisa Fountain	

**Detachments Present were:**

Belcher-Lane-Williams #146	Capital # 148
Cascades #149	Fred Cochran #151
Dearborn # 152	Downriver # 153
Macomb County # 154	Flint # 155
Montford Point # 158	Cpl. Stanley L. Moore #159
David Murnighan # 161	Northwest # 162
Upper Peninsula # 444	Muskegon #703

Kalamazoo # 879

John C. Rock # 902

Oceana/Brett Witteveen # 1225

Alpena # 1327

Edson-Kline-Vanslyke # 1423

U.P. Devil Dogs # 1478

### **COMMANDANT'S REPORT – Art Menard**

Cmdt. Menard thanked the Red Knights and the Capital Detachment for hosting this event.

The Board of Trustees in late February authorized a large raffle with a vehicle prize of up to \$50,000.00 with tickets available for sale at this convention. The winner will be announced at our 2024 Convention giving us a full year to sell tickets and hopefully turn this in to the best fundraiser this Department has ever had.

At the Jackson Midwinter we accepted two Detachments voluntary surrender of their charters. North Oakland County Detachment 570 and St. Joseph County Detachment 1401 are in escrow. I have received word that G.P. Porta 163 has had some positive communication and maybe they will be turning things around there.

The Marine Corps League is 100 years old this year. The National Convention will be held 13 – 18 August 2023 in Oklahoma City. There will be a 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ribbon authorized for all Marine Corps League members in good standing in 2023. There are 20 Detachments present for a Quorum.

Michigan is doing well in recruiting.

The Central Division Conference will be held at the Delta Inn in Kalamazoo on April 5 – 7 2024.

National Officers were recognized along with Past Department Commandants. We are hopeful that the Central Division Conference will be held at the Delta Inn in Kalamazoo. (Nothing is secured as yet).

### **SENIOR VICE COMMANDANT'S REPORT – Ray Rowley**

Only 19 of 35 Detachments participated in the Department Raffle this year. A total of 1,195 tickets were sold. Only a \$929.00 profit was made. The U.P. Devil Dogs sold the most tickets.

### **JUNIOR VICE COMMANDANT'S REPORT - Ray Rayl**

Sent out the Membership Recruiting Program to the membership for the year and it was not successful. I only had response from the Shoreline Detachment.

I attended the Central Division Conference in Plainfield, Indiana on 31 March where Cmdt. Art Menard received the Division's Marine of the Year Award and Chaplain Fred Green received the Associate Member of the Year Award. Congrats to both.

On April I attended the Livingston County Veteran's Council's "Veteran and Auxiliary Member of the Year" at the Pinckney American Legion.

In April I attended and recognized five Eagle Scout Courts of Honor and presented the Marine Corps Leagues Good Citizenship Award to the new Eagle Scouts.

I placed an article in the Huron County Daily Tribune explaining the purpose of the Marine Corps League with the intent on starting up a new detachment in the Huron/Tuscola County areas.

**JUDGE ADVOCATE'S REPORT – Stephan Fletcher**

Review the bylaw changes for the Downriver # 153 Detachment

Reviewed the proposed bylaw changes for John C. Rock 902 Detachment

Installed the officers and staff of Detachment 158

**JR. PAST COMMANDANT'S REPORT – Jon VanTol**

Congratulations to soon to be Jr. Past Commandant Art Menard.

**CHAPLAIN'S REPORT – Fred Green**

The Chaplain mentioned the fact that both he and Commandant were recognized at the Central Division Conference by receiving the Marine and Associate Member of the Year, respectively. We have had 16 members added to our death role from our Mid-Winter Rally. There are some friends we are missing their companionship.

**1<sup>st</sup> ROUND OF NOMINATIONS**

Office of Department Commandant	Office of Sr. Vice Commandant
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Ray Rowley	Ray Rayl
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Ray Rayl	
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Office of Jr. Vice Commandant	Judge Advocate
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Phil Smith	Stephan Fletcher
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Paymaster	3 Year Trustee
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Larry Sweerin	Mark Sutton
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## **ZONE VICE COMMANDANT'S REPORTS**

Southeast Zone # 1 – Phil Smith

Eastern Zone # 2 Norman Root

Southern Zone # 3 – Forrest Secord

Southwest Zone # 4 Michael Moross

Not able to make visitations due to health issues

Western Zone 5 – David Masunas

I have been passing all the information about the raffle to all the Detachments.

To make this raffle a success we will need to take part in it and sell as many tickets as we can. I would like to thank Scott Hellman for stepping up and running this raffle for the Department.

Also Eagle Scout Coordinator

For the time period of August – presently the Department has presented 83 Eagle Scout Good Citizenship Awards. I was contacted by the Shoreline Detachment

1027, and they have presented 49 and the Upper Peninsula has presented 3.

I continue to be the Central Division Scout Representative as well as the Department.

If a Scout has never received the Marine Corps League Good Citizenship Certificate, I will make sure they receive one, once an Eagle Scout, always an Eagle Scout.

Central Zone # 6 – Troy Stewart

Gave an oral report to the membership

Northern Zone # 7 -Frank Rosinski

Frank briefly informed the membership of the death of Alpena's passing of Matt Hegman. Also mentioned the Detachment Picnic.

U.P. Zone # 8 – Tracey Tippett – Excused

Central Division Vice Commandant Mike Sturch noted that there is a lot of information on the wearing of the proper uniform. Keep doing what you are doing and do it well.

Do not post on Facebook because the uniform police is out there.

**The following reports were received and distributed throughout our membership.**

Great Lakes National Cemetery Liasson – Ray Rayl

Ft. Custer National Cemetery Liasson – Michael Hornev

Department Historian – Dale Erion  
Department Awards Chairman – Phil Smith  
Department Foundation – Tim McGee

### **TIME AND PLACE COMMITTEE**

The Time and Place Committee has a bid package for the 2024 Department Mid-Winter Rally. The bid is being submitted by two Detachments; The Montford Point Detachment and the Downriver Detachment. The site is the Doubletree Hilton Dearborn.

Dates: January 19 – 21 2024

Room Rates: 165.00 per night, tax is all inclusive

Includes Breakfast Buffet for each guest

Strip ticket: \$65.00 which includes Registration, Hospitality and Banquet

For the Central Division Conference, a bid package for the Delta Hotel by Marriot in Kalamazoo . The cost per room is \$104.00 tax inclusive. No Strip Ticket cost currently. This will be hosted by Kalamazoo Detachment and MCLA.

Motion to accept both bids by Mark Sutton, supported by Jon VanTol.

Motion carried.

### **LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR – Mark Sutton**

The House is recommending \$4,250,000 for the veteran service grants for 23-24. Work has begun on finding land for the new D.J. Jacobetti State Veterans Hom in the UP to build on.

There has been talk of building a state veterans cemetery in Michigan, again. The Commanders group does not agree with a proposal to place one in the Grayling National Guard base., because it still leaves the UP out of the equation.

Look for bills to be submitted to change the property tax exemption for disabled veterans. Counties still want their money, and no one wants to give it to them.

### **Fund Raiser Event**

Muskegon Marine Scott Hellman reported on his vehicle raffle for the department. It will go from May to next May. The winner will have a choice of any vehicle they would like, up to \$50,000.00 tax, title and license included. It can be a car, motorcycle, boat, camper or motorhome. The vehicle can be new or used, but it must be purchased from a licensed dealership. The tickets are \$20.00 each. There are four prizes to be given away: The grand prize, \$5000.00, \$1000.00 & \$500.00. Also the detachment that sells the winning ticket gets

\$2000.00. There is also a \$30,000.00 cash option if desired. If less than 3500 tickets are sold it will revert to a 50/50 drawing.

The proceeds go to the general fund of the Department of Michigan. The Foundation is not involved in this raffle.

The simple rules for the raffle are;

1. The winner must be 18 years old and have a valid social security number for the 1099 form.
2. Tickets must accompany payment for them to be eligible to win.
3. Make checks payable to Dept. of MI, MCL
4. Please do not send cash, if possible, I do have a plan if cash is sent to me.

Past MCL Judge Advocate, Robert Henkens from the Kalamazoo submitted a resolution to get rid of the War Time Reference in the Act 214 of 1899.

The motion was made by

And supported by

Motion carried

#### **CREDENTIALS CHAIRMAN** – Steve Kelley

Credentials Chairman read the number of Delegates authorized and number present from each Detachment

#### **VAVS** – Steve Kelley

Hospitals are open for business since the COVID pandemic. Most are open with out the wearing of masks.. I am looking for volunteer representatives for the Ann Arbor and the Grand Rapids facilities.

#### **PAYMASTER'S REPORT** – Larry Sweerin

During this year I have attended:

MCL Department Fall Staff Meeting in Davison on 8 October

Elkhart Area Marines MCL Detachment 1397 Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Kalamazoo Detachment 879 Birthday Celebration

MCL Department Mid-Winter in Jackson on 22 January

MCL Central Division Conference in Plainfield, Ind on 30 March

It has been a great experience working with the Detachment Paymasters, answering their questions and making their job and mine easier.

Need two copies of the Transmittal Reports, One for National and one for me.

There is the short and long form, I suggest using the short form for easier

completion. On applications for membership do not put in the Social Security numbers. They are not a necessity.

When recruiting, keep track of who recruits who and keep the Recruiting Form up to day for the Department Recruitment Program.

Life Member dues are doubling by July 1<sup>st</sup>, so if you are contemplating becoming a Life Member, do it now.

A discussion took place on investments, renewals and new applications, in addition to deceased members.

### **BUDGET & FINANCE – Tim McGee**

The budget will remain the same with the exception of the Car Raffle and the Ads, which be increased from \$200.00 to \$600.00.

A motion was made by Tim McGee to accept the Budget and support by Jim Touhy. Motion Carried

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The hotel management was recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation being presented by Cmdt Menard.

A motion was made to purchase an full page ad for the National Convention and a full page ad for the Dept Mid-Winter by PDC Phil Zamora and support by unknown.

Motion carried

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Round of Nominations :**

Commandant	For Sr Vice Commandant
Ray Rowley Ray Rayl	Ray Rayl Phil Smith

For Jr Vice Commandant	Judge Advocate
Phil Smith Stephan Fletcher	Stephan Fletcher

For Paymaster	3 Year Trustee
Larry Sweerin	Mark Sutton

### **ELECTION OF DEPARTMENT OFFICERS RESULTS:**

Commandant – Ray Rayl	Sr. Vice Commandant – Phil Smith
Jr. Vice Commandant – Stephan Fletcher	Judge Advocate – Scott Hellman
Paymaster – Larry Sweerin	3 Year Trustee – Mark Sutton

The Convention will recess until the banquet.

Following the banquet, the 2023 Pack Dog of the Year was selected. PDD Wendy Zamora (Red Knights Pound 138)

Others selected were:

Department Marine of the Year – Steve Kelley (John C. Rock 902)

Department Associate Member of the Year Steve VanTol (Edson Kline VanSlyke 1423)

Richard Monroe made an Honorary Past Department Commandant 2023 by PDC Council.

The newly elected officers were installed by Central Division Vice Commandant Mike Sturch.

The Convention was closed .

Respectfully Submitted

Ray Rayl

For Adjutant Tracey Tippett