



Spring 2025

THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK'S **GROUND POUNDER**

Editor: Tom Wortmann PDC PPL

DEADLINES ARE THE 10TH OF MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER AND DECEMBER

In Memory of



Donna Hildebrandt

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Commandant
David Wiggs

Sr. Vice Commandant
Micheal Piscioti

Jr. Vice Commandant
Rosemarie Soto

Judge Advocate
Janis Lunger

Jr. Past Commandant
Dean Lawton Jr.

Adjutant

Vacant

Chief of Staff
Carlos Garcia

Paymaster
Robert Ostrander

Webmaster
Vacant

Chaplain
Nick Paluszkiwicz

Sergeant at Arms
Susan Whitlow

NY Pack Leader
Skip Diamond

*For a complete list, or to report
discrepancies, contact the Adjutant.*



Commandant's Corner

David Wiggs



I wish to extend my sincere thanks to all who attended our Department Convention this past weekend. I received many compliments. And I also extend my thanks to everyone who had a hand in the convention's preparations. A lot of work by many hands went into its success. Further gratitude goes to Jr. Past Commandant Dean Lawton and my fellow officers and team for their work over the past two years. And finally, I value and respect all who took part in the past elections, whoever your vote was cast for, because the process of choosing our path forward is a solemn duty of the membership. Thank you all!

As your Commandant my plans are straight forward.

First, I will stress the proper use of our chain of command. Simply, the chain of command refers to a structured line of authority where each level is accountable to the one above it. Proper use of the chain allows for communication both up and down so that the word is being passed efficiently and time is not wasted.

Second, I am always open to suggestions and ideas. But while I want to hear from you, I must put a caveat in place now. As many of our members, I have a full-time job and am not always available by phone during working hours. If you leave a message, be assured, I will return your call or if it is more effective, I will pass your call and info onto whichever officer is best able to address your concern. Also know, I review messages and emails multiple times a day.

Third, upcoming events include the Fall Meeting in Elmira New York.... more on that as soon as details are solid, and the New York 250th birthday celebrations. Jr. Past Commandant Dean Lawton has been working with Albany for the state cake cutting ceremonies on November 10 and will attend. And soon as we have a Web Sgt in place, I will send out a call to each detachment via their Area Vice for information on your plans to commemorate the 250th. At that time please response, include the event, date, place, point of contact and any other relevant info for your commemorations.

Lastly, communication is the key to success. We are a volunteer organization to aid our fellow Marines, their families and our communities. Be part of the process, better still, be a positive part of the process!

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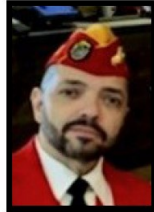


OFFICERS' Messages



From the desk of ...

**Department Senior Vice
Commandant
Michael Piscioti**



Marines and Associates,
Thank you for supporting this year's 94th Department Convention; it was truly one of the best. Congratulations to the newly elected Officers and appointed Staff Members of the Department of New York. Remember, we are here to assist you—please use the Chain of Command.

We look forward to seeing you at our next Department meeting, tentatively scheduled for October 10th and 11th. Thank you and again and have a great summer!

SEMPER FI!



We are looking for a few good men and women. If you look at the staff listing on page one, and want to submit your name for a rewarding job in helping your fellow Marines, please submit your name to the Commandant.

From the desk of ...

**Department Junior Vice
Commandant
Rosemarie Soto**



First off, I would like to express that I am honored to have been elected as Junior Vice Commandant for the Marine Corps League, Department of New York. I'm truly humbled by the trust you've placed in me, and I will do my utmost to uphold the responsibilities of this position with integrity, respect, and dedication.

My focus will be on strengthening our recruitment Senior Vice Commandant Michael Piscioti and Commandant David Wiggs in all initiatives, and ensuring our members feel seen, valued, and involved. I want to foster camaraderie, honor our traditions, and encourage the continued growth of this Department.

I'd also like to announce that our new Chaplain Nick Paluszkiwicz from 458 Edward J. Brewer Detachment. We're excited to have him take on this important role in supporting the spiritual and emotional well-being of our members. We'll be sending out more information as it comes to us.

Again, thank you, and please don't hesitate to reach out with ideas, questions, or concerns. I'll do my best to answer with the same transparency and commitment that I bring to this role. Semper Fi

Rosemarie Soto

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THE JUDGE ADVOCATE SAYS

Marines,

It is with deep gratitude and humility that I write to you today as the newly elected Judge Advocate for the Department of New York. I am incredibly honored to have earned your trust and confidence, and I take this responsibility with the utmost seriousness and respect.

Since joining the Marine Corps League in 2012, I have been privileged to serve alongside some of the most dedicated and inspiring Marines and Associate Members in our great state. Currently serving as the Junior Vice Commandant of the E.J. Brewer Detachment in Elmira, NY, I have seen firsthand the strength, integrity, and passion that each of you brings to this organization. These qualities are what make our League not only strong, but truly exceptional.

As Judge Advocate, I am committed to upholding the standards, values, and bylaws that guide our work, and to serving as a resource for all detachments across the state. Whether you're seeking guidance, clarification, or support in matters of policy or procedure, I want you to know that I am here for you. My door is always open, and I will work diligently to ensure fairness, consistency, and transparency in all that we do.

The Marine Corps League continues to grow, evolve, and lead with purpose. It is my firm belief that together, through mutual respect and unity, we can continue to honor our mission and strengthen the bonds that make this League a second family to so many of us.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve. I look forward to working with each of you in the months ahead.

Semper Fidelis,
Janis Lunger

Important Notice

Steve Topilnycky, has resigned as Department Adjutant, Paymaster & Webmaster at the conclusion of our 94th Convention.

During the coming weeks, access to our online accounts, and his mclnewyork.org emails accounts that he used to manage his different duties, will be transferred to Commandant Wiggs or to whom he appoints.

His spt1@mclwestchester.org email address will be for Westchester County Detachment #254 business only from now on.

DO NOT SEND ANY POSTAL MAIL TO THE P.O. BOX 360, HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON ADDRESS. Any Department of New York mail received from this point forward will be forwarded to the Commandant.

More details will be coming once received from Commandant David Wiggs.





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MILITARY ORDER OF DEVIL DOGS

"The Fun and Honor Society of the Marine Corps League"



(left) Traditionally each year, the Pack of New York, Military Order of the Devil Dogs, donates money to the local children's hospital. This year they donated \$3,000 to the Colisano Children's Hospital in Syracuse NY. Afterwards they held a growl and a good time was had by all. Woof woof.



Pack Leader PDD Cathy Wiggs turned the reins of the Pack over to PDD 'Skip' Diamond making him the new Pack Leader.

Junior Past Commandants Message

It has been an honor to serve the last two years as your Department Commandant. We made some super friends both inside the Marine Corps League and outside and traveled all over the country representing the Department of New York.

As I sit and write this report, I'm trying to reflect on things I wanted to accomplish. Unfortunately, I can only think of some of the items that I wanted to do but failed. One thing I wanted to do was visit as many Detachments as possible for meetings. With the many things happening I was only able to visit some. I wanted to have all our Detachments complete their PLM audits. This past year I believe we only missed 100% by a couple of Detachments.

I would like to wish the incoming Officer's of the Department all the luck and good fortune moving forward. I will continue to be of any help that anyone may need. Please remember this is your Department and all of the Officer's are here to help and serve ALL of the membership.

Thank you for all you do, please be safe.
Semper Fi, Dean

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MARINES HONOR EAGLE SCOUTS



(left) An Eagle Scout Ceremony took place at St. Theresa's Catholic Church Staten Island. It was attended by Kyle Wasnieski, Sgt. Angel Mendez Detachment Commandant and DNY Eagle Scout Coordinator Volker Heyde.



Pictured left to right, Volker Heyde, Scouts; Christofer Pfuhler, Sandun Perera, Sunka Perera, Quinton Tuthill, and Kyle Wasnieski



(Above) Brian Gregory (right) and Dave Meitz (left) of the Sunrise Detachment stand with newly minted Eagle Scout Ethan C. Mei



Eagle scouts, Dylan Chimento and Aiden Cecchetti of Troop 235 in Whitestone NY received their certificates as presented by Marine Thomas Maher (left) of the Father Cappadonna Detachment and Volker Heyde (right) of the Department of NY

Congratulations to all

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION



A NEW DETACHMENT OF THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE IS FORMING IN QUEENS!

Where: 61-57 Maspeth Avenue
Maspeth, NY 11378

Open To: All Marines & Sailors
Awarded the FMF
Device (Even those
still on Active Duty)

Contact: John at (347) 829-9063 for
more information & to sign-up

Pass the Word!

In the next issue of the GP, "I will dedicate a page to advertise your detachment's 250th event, coin or otherwise in every issue of the Ground Pounder until the birthday if enough detachments submit enough to warrant it, if not enough to warrant a full page, it will still be somewhere in the 'Ground Pounder.'"

The National is moving away from membership number and changing over to 'Profile' numbers.

. Note on Profile IDs: 'V' will start being put in front of all members to denote a veteran.

For Detachments that have Associates veterans, please let your AVC know so we can have National denote the Associates that are Veterans. They will be denoted with a 'VX'.

Please start getting ready to receive to the PLM audit. The detachment will receive the official PLM Audit document in July.

Please remember the Detachment Commandants and the Detachment Paymasters may download their Detachments Roster.

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Staff Meeting

The Spring Department Staff Meeting took place on March 25th and was hosted by the Carmen Ramputi Detachment #861 located in Beacon NY. They use a Veterans Hall that houses all the veteran groups in the area. This was a very nice location with lots of meeting rooms, a bar and much more. The detachment also provided lunch which was a very nice gesture and all at no cost to



the Department. Their hospitality was most welcome to all who attended before, during and especially after the meeting on Saturday. A number of us accepted the offer to share a few beers after the meeting in the bar area and it was clear that they were happy to host us. The Department presented them with a certificate of appreciation and a check.

Business wise, the Commandant spoke about the upcoming Department convention in Syracuse. All which was found on the Department website. He spoke of changes to the National website which was discussed during the National Mid-Winter Conference in Washington. He strongly suggested that all paymasters check this out. The Junior Vice spoke of the number of members we are losing. Not just by death or transfers but by non renewals. Detachment need to do more to get their members to renew as well as recruit. That is the job of every member, to bring in new members. But think about why we are losing members? Is there something we are not doing? Is there room for improvement? Check out the Department website for ideas. The Adjutant told us that the number of 990's submitted is going down. A detachment could lose it's tax exception by not submitting theirs and it could be expensive to get back once lost. The Huntington De-

tachment's Charter has been suspended but five members of that Detachment have picked up the slack and are doing the job of getting the detachment back up and running. In doing so the Department is considering reinstating their charter.

Also discussed was access to the National database. Each member can have access to look at and change their data. Your Detachment's Commandant can have access to look at and change their members data and print out their roster.

Transmittals can be downloaded and filled in on your computer but they should be downloaded and saved in your computer before submitting. Filling it in on the computer insures that all parties involved can read it properly. If you must print it out and complete it, please do so in print and make it legible.

The department is still looking for someone to head the legislative committee and if we want a rifle and pistol team, we need someone to chair that committee as well. If interested,

(Continued on the next page)

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Around the State

Spring Staff meeting continued

please contact the commandant.

Marine for Life Chair reported that there are just five Marines for Life Reps around the state and we could use more. Currently they are working with area colleges to let them know we are there and willing to help as needed.

The Chaplin asked that we remember those who have passed in your Detachments and offer guidance and care to those facing their own struggles and try to bring comfort to those in need by calling them, visiting them in the hospital or at home if unable to attend meetings.

The adjutant spoke of the Database portal and how it can be used to update your own profile. Paymasters and Commandants can do much more. If you do not have access to the database, contact your paymaster. If you are a paymaster and do not have access, contact the Department Adjutant. Training can be found in the Member Only Library under "101 Detachment Database Procedures." The Department encourages all members to get this training. See your staff for the password. Lastly, if your Detachment is planning any type of 250th, birthday celebration, be it a ball, a shirt, a challenge, coin or anything, let the Department know so we can pass the word as well as putting it in the Ground Pounder and our website.

Area Vice Commandant, Richard Buck had this to say about the meeting:

"This weekend was the NYS Department meeting. It was held in Beacon NY.

A Big thank you for a great job done by the Carmen Ramputi Detachment 861, who hosted the Spring NYS Department Meeting. They received a citation, Flag ribbon and each member receives a ribbon for their MCL uniform.

Also, would like to thank each Detachment in South-east for having at least one member from their Detachment at the meeting."

At the meeting it was requested that each Detachment let the Department know if they are planning a 250th Marine Corps Ball.

Please send the details of your Ball (Date, cost, location) to us.



Left) Tony Pullium, Commandant of the Carmen Ramputi Detachment accepts a Meritorious unit Citation for the detachment from Dean Lawton Sr, DNY Commandant.



Do you have your league plate yet?
Ask your paymaster for the form.

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Memorial Day Ceremonies

Brett-Toomey Detachment

Submitted by Steve Capirci

On Sunday, May 25, 2025 at the Veterans Memorial in Lackawanna, NY. The Bett-Toomey Detachment #216, was very honored to have attended the Memorial Day Ceremony there.



Proudly submitted by Steve Capirci,
West Area Vice Commandant.



Steve Capirci
and
Commandant
Dennis Chapman
had the pleasure of
meeting NY
State Senator
April Baskin.



Thank You
★ FOR YOUR ★
SERVICE

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Memorial Day Ceremonies

Sergeant Angel Mendez Detachment

Submitted by Jennifer Battiloro



Stepping off at the start of the parade with Marines from Fleet week.



Detachment member Mike Sulsona, who lost both legs in Vietnam, never misses a parade thanks to detachment members like Sean Torres Jr.



Presenting of the colors at the start of the ceremony.



Memorial wreath



(below) Members pose with the visiting active duty Marines, Sailors and Coast Guardsmen from Fleet Week at the end of the Memorial Day parade and ceremony.



Rendering a salute

(below) Commandant Wasnieski and Chaplain Montella pose with District Attorney McMahon, City Councilman Carr and Congresswoman Malliotakis after the ceremony.



Members of the detachment afterwards.



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Memorial Day Ceremonies

Lt. John Bobo Detachment

Submitted by Thomas Robbins



Color Guard (LtoR) Commandant Kingsley Chandler GySgt Ret. Bugler, Adjutant Bill Talarico, and John's Bobo's brother, Bill Bobo, SVC John Attanasio, Bill Bobo's wife Ann, Chaplain Nate McKenzie, JA Dave Kindzia



Conrad Kania Detachment Member Alex Poulsen reads the Bobo Medal of Honor Citation



Sr. Vice John Attanasio reads the opening statement.



(L to R) Commandant Kingsley Chandler, (GySgt Ret.), Sr. Vice John Attansio, Marine Frank Hickey, Chaplain Nate McKenzie and Adjutant Bill Talarico present the colors at the American Veterans Memorial Monument in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

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Around the State

Electric City, Detachment 222

Electric City is an active and very involved Detachment that likes to post their events only on Facebook. As I said earlier, that limits their exposure to the membership. As a Facebook member and a friend of this Detachment, I have taken the liberty of copying much of their posts to show the rest of the state the things this detachment does in hopes that others will get the idea and copy some of them or even create their own and submit them to me. Well done Marines.

Cemetery Flag placing

Despite the down pour of rain, detachment members gathered at 9 AM and went out and placed flags on every veterans grave. And by looking at the pictures, it wasn't just members but friends and family as well.



Afterwards they all shared a Breakfast together



(Left) Annual
Scotia-
Glenville
Ceremony



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Memorial Day Ceremonies

Rockland County Detachment



The Rockland County detachment is another detachment that posts their events only on Facebook and does not send to the Ground Pounder. Here is what I found on Facebook



Memorial Day activities in Rockland county
This detachment puts on a fine display of honor and patriotism reminding all that Memorial Day is a day of remembrance and reflection.



The placing of memorial wreaths and the firing of the salute in honor of those no longer with us.

A job well done.



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Around the State

facebook

I want to talk for moment about Facebook. Many members have a Facebook account, but many more do not. As I look over Facebook I see a number of detachments posting photos of their events there, but these same members are not sending the same to me to put in the Ground Pounder. What I see of interest, I do capture and repost here, but how much am I missing?

When you post your events and photos it shows everyone that you are proud of what your detachment did, so why not show ALL the members and not just those with Facebook accounts? Every member of the department should be getting the Ground Pounder so posting it here guarantees that all of our members see it so please, post on both.



Long Island Area Detachments would like to congratulate Suffolk County Detachment commandant Jaclyn Imperati, who went to Tauro Law school, on passing the NYS Board of Law Exam! One of three steps to being admitted to the New York State Bar Association. She is currently a legal assistant to a judge and is unsure of which field of law she will practice when licensed.



Reporting for duty at the Pearly Gates



Past West Area Vice Commandant Earl Herrington reports that Past Southtowns Commandant Jack Farmer passed away on April 27th.

Northeast Division Staff Meeting

At the Division Staff meeting held in Binghamton NY, the department shined with three of our own receiving awards. Both Steve Topilnycky and Mike Piscioti received the Distinguished Citizen Silver Award and Commandant Lawton received the Distinguished Service Award.

Not involved? Get involved. There is not an officer at any level of the league who could not use help. Ask and get involved.



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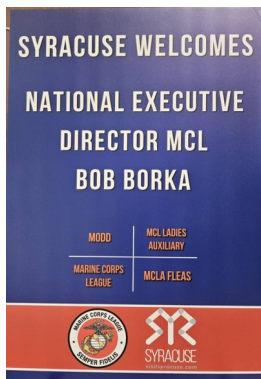


2025 Department Convention

Once again our annual convention (94th) took place in Syracuse NY. As many department past commandants that could be found were invited. Those that attended were invited to a Past Commandants breakfast. On the day before business starts there has always been The Foundation Golf Outing is open to all who wished to join in the fun. Below are some pictures of our fine golfers.



(Left) NY Foundation Golf outing. from Left: Natl. COO Bob Borka, Mike Waluk, Ed Arcuri, Tom Arcuri and Fred DeAbreu. Now that they have teed off, they are out looking for their golf balls (right)



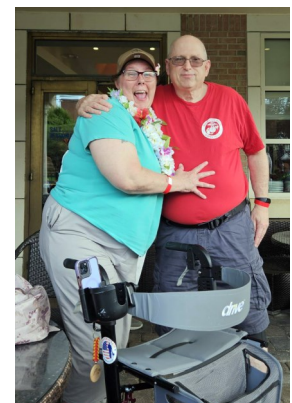
Member were welcomed by signs in the lobby. (above)



(left) Members of the Sunrise Detachment greet members to the convention.

Outgoing Commandant Lawton wanted something different for once so instead of the usual Formal Dress Banquet, so he held a Hawaiian Shirt Pig Roast. Only requirement was that you dress in casual Hawaiian style attire. (see next page)

(Left) Steve Topilnycky with April Strickland of the Electric City Detachment





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2025 Department Convention

Continued



There were plenty of people in attendance for this first time event. As always it started off with the singing of the Marine Corps hymn. A good time and good eats were clearly had by all.



(Below) Our Judge Advocate in Hawaiian style with her almost coconut bra with some very unscrupulous people around her.



(Below) PDC Fr. Ricardo Sheppard and Area Vice Volker Heyde share fun times during the Pig Roast.



With their bellies full everyone gathered for a picture.
(Below)



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AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS



Many awards were given to the officers of the Department for their help and support of the Department over the past two years. The Department can never get enough help and are always looking for help so it is important that they recognize those who step up and support the Department. All received Distinguished Citizen Silver medal.



100% membership renewal ribbons were given to the:
Newburg Detachment #249,
Rockland County Detachment #243, the Westchester County Detachment #254 and
Carmen Ramputi # 861 (to presented to the Detachment at their June meeting)

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2025 Department Convention

Continued again



(Right) Least we forget those who passed before us at the annual memorial service. Here PDC Forbes inserts a flower. One is inserted for every member lost.



(Above) Marine Rocky Graziano was awarded Department Marine of the year.



(Below & left) One of the many nice things that took place at the convention was Lance Corporal Jacob Cogswell USMC being awarded the Navy and Marine Commendation Medal by Bob Borca COO of the Marine Corps league, for saving lives during a boating trip.



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2025 Department Convention

Your new Department Officers for 2025-2026. (right)
Congratulations to them all.

Commandant

David Wiggs

Sr. Vice Commandant

Michael Pisciotti

Jr. Vice Commandant

Rosemarie Soto

Judge Advocate

Janis Lunger

Jr. Past Commandant

Dean Lawton Sr

Area Vice Commandants:

East - Timothy Forbes

Long Island - Carlos Garcia

Metro-NY - Heyde Volker

North - Walter Peterson III

Northwest - Dave Brisbane

North Central - Thomas Arcuri

South Central - Michael Tullo

Southeast Richard Buck

Southwest - John Sabatini

West - Steve Caprici

Taking the Oath of Office



(Left) The Past National Commandant, Dennis Tobin, swore in the new Department officers (above) with Commandant Wiggs looking on. The members should support these fine people as they will need your help during the upcoming year. Not one of them will say no to your offer to assist them.



Heath issues prevented me from attending this convention. Because of that I asked a number of members to send me pictures and information and they did. All of the convention photos and information you see was submitted by them. Tom Arcuri, Volker Heyde, David Wiggs, Steve Topilnycky, Dean Lawton Sr. and others. Your input was most appreciated and these pages reflect that.

Thank you.

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Miscellaneous

Does your Detachment or Pound have a challenge coin?

Are you thinking of making one up for the Corps upcoming 250th anniversary or for any other reason?

Show it off here. Share it with us, your coin, design or even ideas. I know my Pound is working on a new pound coin.



The National 250th Convention Registration is now Open

Please visit the Marine Corps League website to register for the 2025 National Convention.

Registration and Ad Book submissions are now OPEN!

<https://www.mcleaguelibrary.org/convention/>

The **Link** to the Local Host Committee Website is also live!

<https://mcl250.org/>

Please check it out.

Please note – Sales for local events, including the banquet are now on sale. These are found on the Local Host Committee site.

Spring is here,

So let's get those Rose program details up and running in your detachment. Did you know that the Rose Program was stated in New York by a Chief Devil Dog? The Rose Program is a great fund raiser for your detachment and there is no real work involved.

Once you have your roses and a place to set up, (always get permission) you just sit there and hand out roses to all those who donate. No marching, no standing just sitting and the uniform is your cover, nothing more. What could be easier? Any member, regardless of age can chip in and they should. You set the time and dates. The only requirement is to have comradery and raise money for your detachment.



Is every member receiving the Ground Pounder?

If you know of some member who is not receiving the Ground Pounder, do something about it. It is distributed via the department mailing list the Department adjutant also sends it to all the Area Vice Commandants.. They in turn should forward it to all the detachment commandants who are suppose to pass it on to their membership. Sometimes the Chief of Staff is involved, sometimes other officers depending on the detachment but every member should receive it. When you get it, pass It on, remember, there are no restrictions on who can receive it so please, if you know of

a Marine who is not receiving it, or any veteran who may be interested, please, make it a point to pass it on. Everything on this newsletter is here to be shared. Any suggestions or ideas can also be shared because this is YOUR newsletter. You control the content.

Do your fellow members a favor, pass it onto others. We know a number of members are still not receiving it and we hope to fix that in the near future.

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Around the State



Sunrise Detachment

Sunrise detachment members (right) celebrate the 100th birthday of member Corporal Cliff Doering (left). Photos found on Facebook submitted by member Jackie Redler.

Their newsletter appears at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SunriseDetachment/>



WOOF WOOF Dogs of the Order & Supporters!

There are emails that are going around that are trying to SPOOF some of our staff. They are pretending they are our officers and they are not. Please, if you receive any of these emails from any of our staff to include the Chief, please check the email that it is coming from and confirm it against our roster before you answer it. These scam emails are trying to get you to do things like buy gift cards or give up personal information. If you are not 100% sure it is from who it says it is, MAKE A PHONE CALL! It always better to be safe than sorry.



We were honored by the appearance of Marlyn Loeven in attendance at the convention

Updates

At the Department Convention, the PDC's agreed upon a new associate member memorial service. It was approved by the division and will soon be in the National Member Library.

It was also decided to rewrite the Departments Marine of the Year requirements as many people had problems with the old way.

Stay tuned for those changes when they come out.

