



HAPPY 250TH BIRTHDAY AMERICA



THE GROUND POUNDER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK

TOM WORTMANN - EDITOR



Submissions email newsletter@mcnewyork.org or click here

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Sr. Vice Commandant

Micheal Piscioti

Jr. Vice Commandant

Rosemarie Soto

Judge Advocate

Janis Lunger

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Susan Whitlow

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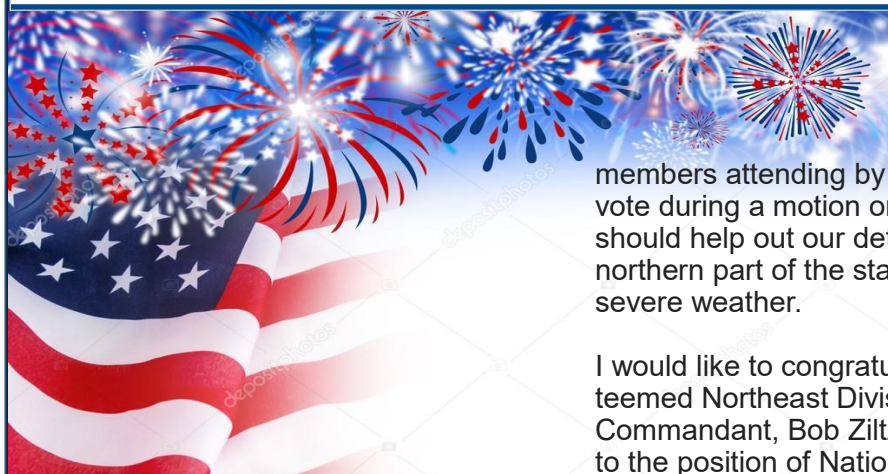
For a complete list, or to report discrepancies, contact the Adjutant.



Commandant's Corner

DAVID WIGGS

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK



Marines and Associate members,

As the temperature drops and the fall approaches, I hope everyone had a fun and productive if not relaxing summer. I bring you news from the National Convention. A couple of important items have changed for the Department. A bylaw was passed to standardize department regions in the League. All departments will now name their regions as Districts. So once the Department Judge Advocate has had a chance to update our bylaws, the name "Area" will become "District", i.e. Southeast Area Vice Commandant will become Southwest District Vice Commandant. Another change of importance, is a bylaw that passed allowing meetings to be held by zoom. The only stipulation is that

members attending by zoom can not vote during a motion or election. This should help out our detachments in the northern part of the state that see more severe weather.

I would like to congratulate our esteemed Northeast Division Vice Commandant, Bob Ziltz on his election to the position of National Judge Advocate and I would like to congratulate our very own Past Department Commandant Dean Lawton on his appointment as our new Northeast Division Vice Commandant. Joining Dean will be Chris Saldono, Commandant of New Jersey as the Assistant Northeast Division Vice Commandant.

I look forward to see everyone next month in Owego, NY for our Fall Department Meeting, October 10th.

Semper Fi,
PDD David Wiggs



DEADLINES

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Semper Fi

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Staff Officer Reports

Department Senior Vice Commandant Michael Piscioti



Marines & Associates,

I want to start by reminding everyone that the Marine Corps League is here for you.

The Marine Corps League was created to ensure that we (Veterans of the Corps) had a place for camaraderie—a place to share your stories and have a good time. Since I've been in the MCL, I've noticed that members are forming cliques and alienating members. We here in the MCL are all green; we are all Marines. So please remember to reach out to your Brothers and Sisters. Invite them into conversations and ask them about themselves. The best place to do this is a Department Meeting or, even better, the Department Convention.

Our next Department meeting will be around October of this year (details to be announced). We are also planning a different/fun Department Convention the first weekend in June 2027 (so save the date).

The National MCL Convention of 2027 will be in August, located in Buffalo, NY. Details will be available very soon.

Get involved and motivate other members. You are the League. Stay safe. Semper Fi!

Department Junior Vice Commandant Rosemarie Soto

As we welcome the fall season, I would like to share a few thoughts after attending this year's National Convention in Indianapolis. It was a great opportunity to exchange ideas and bring home information that can help strengthen our Detachments and the Department of New York.

One important topic was **membership and retention**. While recruiting new members is important, we cannot forget about the members we already have. Please reach out to those we haven't seen in a while. A phone call, letter, or simple newsletter can help keep members informed and remind them that they are still an important part of our Marine Corps League family.

We should also look for more opportunities to **include our families** at the Detachment, Department, and National levels. Our families are an important part of our lives and support what we do. Picnics, dinners, family days, and other informal gatherings are great ways to bring everyone together.

When recruiting, don't feel that you have to "sell" the Marine Corps League. Get to know the person first. Ask about their life and their service, listen to their story, and then share who we are and what we do. Building relationships is what will ultimately help us grow.

I also encourage everyone to visit and become familiar with **MCL Link** and the resources available to our members. Please continue sharing information about Marine Corps League programs, including scholarship opportunities available through the Marine Corps League Foundation.

Finally, let's get excited about **New York hosting the 2027 National Convention in Buffalo!** This will be our opportunity to showcase our department, our hospitality, and our pride.

Thanks to our Detachment officers, District Vice Commandants, Associate Members, volunteers, and everyone who continues to support our department. As your Junior Vice Commandant, I remain committed to supporting our Detachments, strengthening membership and communication, and being a resource whenever needed.

AMERICA





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THE JUDGE ADVOCATE SAYS

Well, the 2026 National Convention is officially in the books, and if you're anything like me, you may be wondering, "Okay...so what changed?"

That is exactly what your Judge Advocate has been digging into!

The **2026 National Bylaws were approved at the National Convention on August 13, 2026, and became effective August 14, 2026.** The 2025 edition has officially been cancelled. National also issued a new 2026 edition of the Administrative Procedures, with changes throughout Chapters Two, Three, Five, Six, Seven, Nine, and Ten, as well as several enclosures.

So, yes...it's time to get those books out again!

And before someone tells you, "We've always done it that way," please do me a favor:

Open the book.

A Few Changes That Caught My Attention

Important: The National Bylaws provide the framework, but our own Department Bylaws and procedures still matter. We can't simply create a new structure and assume everything is automatically covered. When in doubt...you know who to call.

Associate Member Voting

There is also important language regarding **Associate Member voting rights.**

Associate Members may not vote on regular or associate membership applications, participate in the nomination process, or vote for elected officers. However, a Department or Detachment may, through its own Bylaws and/or Administrative Procedures, allow Associate Members to vote on certain internal affairs **as long as the matter does not affect MCL policy, such as Bylaws or Bylaw changes.** Associate Members also may not hold elective office.

This is one of those areas where it is especially important to look at **both** the National rules and your own Detachment or Department governing documents before holding a vote.

Chapter Nine – Grievances & Discipline

I'm going to repeat something I've said before:

If you ever find yourself dealing with a grievance or disciplinary matter, call me early.

Chapter Nine continues to require specific procedures, documentation, notification, and timelines. The 2026 changes include updated requirements involving electronic signatures and electronic delivery/read receipts, along with revisions to the forms and hearing procedures.

These aren't the kind of rules where we want to say, "I think this is how it works."

This is a "get the book, get the form, check the timeline, and call the JA" situation.

The goal of Chapter Nine is to ensure matters are handled **expeditiously, fairly, and justly.**

That's something I think every Marine can get behind.

A New Change I REALLY Like

Here's a change that I think is particularly important for those of us who serve in the Judge Advocate role.

Under the new Administrative Procedures, rulings made by the **National Judge Advocate between conventions must be submitted as proposed changes to the National Bylaws or Administrative Procedures at the next National Convention.**

If the membership approves the proposal, the ruling is incorporated into the governing documents. If the membership rejects it, the ruling is nullified and removed from the National Member Library.

In other words, National is creating a clearer path for turning interpretations into actual governing language rather than allowing unofficial interpretations to live forever in the mysterious world of "Well, I heard the National JA said..."

And believe me...

I LOVE that.

(continued on the next page)

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THE JUDGE ADVOCATE SAYS Continued

Your JA's Reminder

As we settle into these changes, here's my advice to every Detachment officer:

DO:

- ✓ Make sure you are using the **2026 National Bylaws and Administrative Procedures**.
- ✓ Review your Detachment Bylaws to make sure they are consistent with the current National documents.
- ✓ Make sure newly elected and appointed officers know where to find the governing documents.
- ✓ Review Chapter Nine before you ever need Chapter Nine.
- ✓ Ask questions **BEFORE** making a decision that could create a problem.

DON'T:

- ✗ Rely on an old copy of the Bylaws sitting in the bottom of a desk drawer.
- ✗ Assume that because something has been done a certain way for twenty years, it is still correct.
- ✗ Let the loudest person in the room become the unofficial Judge Advocate.
- ✗ Guess.

That last one deserves repeating:

DON'T GUESS.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with saying: **"I don't know. Let me check and get back to you."**

Actually, that's probably one of the smartest things an officer can say.

And Finally...

As I begin another term as your Department Judge Advocate, I want to again thank all of you for the confidence you have placed in me.

I take this position seriously, but I also believe the JA's office should be approachable.

You don't need to have a legal question worthy of the

Supreme Court to contact me.



If you're unsure about a meeting procedure, a vote, an election, a bylaw, a grievance, an officer's authority, or something just **doesn't smell right** reach out. **Call me. Email me. Ask me.**

I'd much rather spend ten minutes helping you find the right answer than spend ten hours helping clean up a problem that could have been avoided.

We're all volunteers. We're all learning. And none of us has every answer.

But together, we can make sure we're doing things the **right** way.

So, Marines, grab your 2026 Bylaws, grab your APs, keep Robert's Rules close, and let's move forward with a little less *"I heard..."* and a lot more *"Let's check the book."*
I'm always here for you.

Semper Fidelis,
Janis Lunger
Judge Advocate



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MILITARY ORDER OF DEVIL DOGS

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

Dogs of the Order. First I would like to say thank you for electing me as your New York Pack Leader. Second I would like to thank Mark Malecki of WENY Pound #37 for accepting the challenge and for becoming the Pack Dog Robber. This upcoming year, 2027, is going to be special. All of you Devil Dogs have a great opportunity to advance to the degree of Pedigree Devil Dog in Buffalo at the National Convention. The National Convention for the next year will be in Colorado Springs and I believe the following year will be in the Southeastern quadrant. In Indianapolis they had 110 Devil Dogs advance and I believe that the NY Pack can make a big showing next year. So mark your calendars for August 8-14, 2027 get with your Pound Dog Robber and submit your advancement application. Also we will be holding a Pack Growl on October 10, 2026 in Owego, NY. The address is [191 McMaster St., Owego, NY 13827](#). Easy on and off exit #64, I-86. Please come on out and support the Pack and the Children's Hospital Fund and have some fun.

Woof Woof

Dean

PDD Dean Lawton Sr

Pack Leader

New York Pack



The Officers of the Pack of New York for 2026-27

Sr Vice Pack leader James Knapp

Jr Vice Pack Leader Joe Huber,

Smart Dog Tom Arcuri,

Dog Trainer Rose Soto,

Watch Dog Dennis Tobin,

Police Dog Mikie Piscioti,

and the New Dog Robber is

**Mark Malecki who foolishly did not run
out of the room fast enough after being
appointed Dog Robber and was
also appointed Barking Dog.**



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MARINES HONOR EAGLE SCOUTS



(Top left) This ceremony was held at the Elks club on Staten Island on June 17, 2026.

Left to right. 'Department Eagle Scout Coordinator Volker Heyde, Scouts Nicholas Chilson, Benjamin Berfond, and Michael Saliy.



(left) The Lockport Devil Dogs honored six new Eagle scouts. Commandant Mark Malecki presented a Good citizen award along with a check for \$200 for their futures.



(left bottom) This is a picture of the Eagle Scout Ceremony attended by Area Vice Commandant Richard Buck for three scouts held in Carmel Troop Number 1, The following scouts were elevated: Left to right, Xander Robinson, Christian Shea, and Josh Steinberg

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REST IN PEACE



Farewell

Our presence at services is the ultimate form of respect to the deceased and their family. Family is deeply touched by seeing at least one of us present. If you are close to the service, please make every effort to represent the MCL and wear your cover.

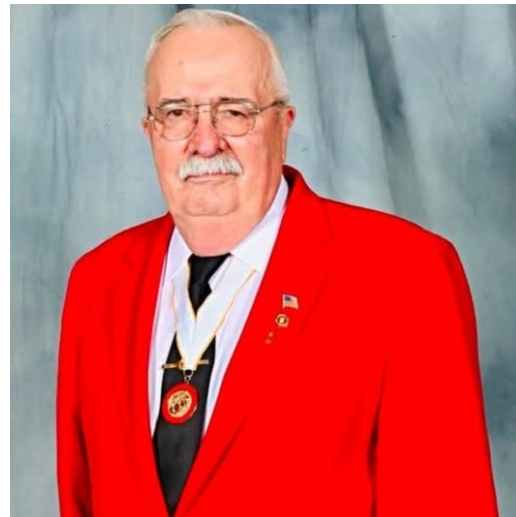
Robert E. "Bob" Becker, Jr., 87, passed away peacefully on July 5, 2026.

He served in the United States Marine Corps from 1960-1966 and then joined the USMC Reserves in Albany, where he served until retirement as First Sergeant in 1982.

First Sergeant Becker's legacy is as a tireless advocate for fellow Marines and Veterans. In 1973 he was a founding member of Marine Corps League Electric City Detachment #222, serving as a Commandant for five terms, and helped to form seventeen new MCL detachments across New York. He is the past Commander of American Legion Post 1092, DAV Chapter 88 and Toys-For-Tots Chairman. His lifetime of service included eighteen years as Legislative Chairman for the National Marine Corps League, President of the Schenectady County Veterans Council and Chairman of the Rotterdam Veterans Committee.

In 1990-1992 he was elected and served as the Commandant of New York State Marine Corps League. In 1997 he was honored with the Four Chaplains Humanitarian Award and from 1997-1999 served as the 50th National Commandant of the Marine Corps League which brought his advocacy to the National level and across many States to further aid and assist fellow veterans for their service to America.

Bob was recognized for his veteran's advocacy in 2011 when he was named National Marine of the



Year and in 2019 inducted into the New York State Veterans Hall of Fame as well as being recognized with many other distinctions in his lifetime of charity and service. Many will remember him as the paymaster of the Department of New York for many years.

Bob will be interred at the Gerald B. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery.





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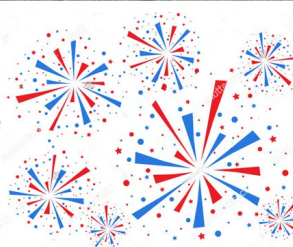
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Happy 4th of July Marines



Both the Lockport and the Sgt Angel Mendez Detachments posted Independence Day photos



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Around the State



Jim Hatch Detachment fundraiser with Detachment Adjutant/Paymaster Dave Wiggs (also Department of NY Commandant), Detachment Jr. Vice Commandant Dennis Card and Auxiliary members Bonnie Lawton and Shirley Card. We raised money for the Detachment scholarship fund. Also raised funds for Operation Chow Hound.



Ulster County Detachment celebrates the opening of the Putnam county veterans museum.



(Above and right) Sgt Angel Mendez Detachment prepares to fire the salute during the Vietnam Veterans Day of Remembrance



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Around the State

Putnam Detachment is visited by their State Assemblyman



(above) One of the greatest honors of my year is hosting our annual Veterans Luncheon and spending time with the men and women who have served our nation. Bringing together veterans with representatives from state, county, and local organizations helps ensure they have access to the benefits, services, and support they have earned through their service. Our message is simple: thank you. Your sacrifices will never be forgotten. Submitted by Matt Slater, NY State Assemblyman.



(right bottom) The South Richmond High School is a school especially created for mentally challenged students. (right) The Sgt. Angel Mendez Detachment awarded a \$500.00 Scholarship to the outstanding student of the graduating class of 2026, Anthony Feliciano. Presenting the award is the past commandant of the Detachment Marine Volker Heyde. Also present to congratulate Anthony, was the principal of the H.S., Mr. Anthony Casella. The graduation took place on June 24, 2026.



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Around the State



During Det #1201 fundraiser last Saturday we raffled a basket given to us by Agway which contained dog toys, treats, etc. So today as Pound Keeper of Mad Dawg Pound #382 I presented a check to the Stray Haven SPCA (Waverly, NY) Executive Director Marine Nelson Rodriguez for 50 Big Bones.
(He was also gave him an application)



MCL Putnam County NY Detachment 242 Burger Night at Mahopac VFW June 25th



Pictures from Sea Cadets Graduation Ceremony in Carmel NY on Saturday June 13th 2026

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Around the State



Each year on Memorial day weekend, NYC hosts Fleet week. Service members, mostly U.S. Marines from visiting warships are hosted by the Detachment. This year due to our 250th celebration, the fleet sailed in for the fourth of July instead. Doing what they do best, the Sgt Angel Mendez Detachment hosted the visiting U.S. Marines and sailors from visiting warships ships as well as some Spanish Navy's sailors and Marines. They were well fed, entertained and treated very well as you can see.



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Around the State

Dedicated Marines Serving Our Country and Community for Over 60 Years

By Steve Capirci

During my short time with the Marine Corps League Lockport Devil Dog Detachment #232, I have had the great honor and privilege of speaking with many of our senior Marines about their experiences in the United States Marine Corps, their dedicated service to the Marine Corps League, and their continued commitment to our veterans, our community, and our great nation.

These dedicated Marines have spent more than 60 to 70 years serving our country, supporting our veterans, helping their communities, and caring for their families. Their service is a testament to the meaning of honor, courage, and commitment.

Believe me when I say this: it isn't just about war stories. It is about the leadership, dedication, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment they have demonstrated throughout their lives. They have continued to serve long after their active-duty days ended—standing shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Marines, supporting our veterans, helping their communities, and honoring the families who stand behind them.

I am truly proud and honored to know some of these special Marines, including *Sid Parish, Steve Kosut, Gary Stemper, and the legendary Earl Herrington*. These Marines represent the very best of the Marine Corps tradition: ***Once a Marine-- Always a Marine.***

Pictured here is our dedicated Commandant, Mark Malecki, and the one and only legendary Earl Herrington.



Semper Fidelis!



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Did you know...



"Pogey Bait"

We've all heard the term but
where did it come from?

Well, The Marines have a long history of
service in China before the second world war
and picked up many of the terms we still use
today such as "Gung Ho" (working together)
and "skivvies" (underwear) . Well, "Pogey
bait" also came from China because the
Chinese called the prostitutes. 'pogeys'.

Candy was readily issued to Marines overseas
and they used it as a way to get the 'Pogeys'

attention as well as sometimes use for
payments of the local prostitutes.

Therefore the term 'Pogey bait' was born.

VETERANS ARE ELIGIBLE TO SHOP THE EXCHANGE TAX-FREE FOR LIFE

Tax-Free
Shopping

Military-exclusive
pricing

Members-only credit
option

Free shipping on orders
over \$49



Marines and Associate members.

As some of you may know the Department of New York has been selected to host the 2027 National Convention in Buffalo.

We are in the early planning stages for the Convention but one thing I do know is that we will need volunteers. If you are planning on attending the Convention great, but if you can volunteer for a couple of hours that would be appreciated.

If you don't plan on attending the full week but would still like to help out that would be great also. I just want to get the dates out for everyone to mark their calendars. **The dates are August 8-14, 2027** and the site is the Buffalo Hyatt which is located downtown.

Most of the activities will be held in the Convention Center right next door.

Please mark your calendar and if you would like to volunteer, please send an email at Buffalo2027@mcnewyork.org or click this link

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Did you know...



History of the Montford Point Marines

History As the First African American Marines

The Montford Point Marines made history as the first African American Marines in the U.S. joining in 1942. Despite facing discrimination and prejudice, they played a crucial role in the desegregation of the Arm Forces and served in various campaigns during WWII.



Significant Contributions

The Montford Point Marines were trained for Anti-Aircraft Defense and other rolls, and they were the first black unit to deploy overseas, with many seeing action at key battles like Saipan, Guam, Peleliu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

Challenges

Their contributions to American history are significant, and they remain largely unknown due to the challenges they face and the prejudice they encountered.

Rapid Advancement

At that era the first black Marine to make rapid advancement through the ranks of the Marine Corps, was a Marine named Henry Baul who was promoted to the rank of Gunnery Sergeant and Commended Operations in the 90mm Anti-Aircraft. He was known as "Top Gun"!



Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255

PRESS 1

Curiosity of the Lockport Devil Dog Detachment



Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net

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Did you know...



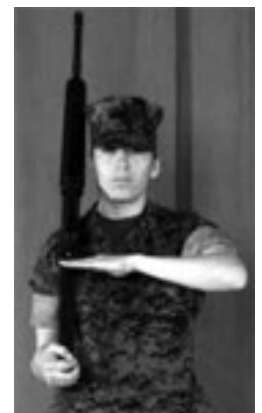
Origins of Saluting: The salute became a formalized gesture in military contexts, where gestures such as raising an empty hand, indicated no hostile intent. The Romans practiced a form of salute, raising their arms to greet leaders, which is reflected in the Latin word "salutare," meaning "to greet". During the age of chivalry, knights would raise their visors to identify themselves and show they were unarmed, which is thought to have influenced the modern hand salute. This gesture symbolized mutual recognition and respect among warriors.

Evolution of the Salute: with soldiers historically removing their hats in the presence of superiors. By the 18th century, this evolved into the simpler act of touching the visor with two fingers or saluting with the whole hand, especially as headgear became more cumbersome.

Standardization: By the early 19th century, the modern military salute, bringing the right hand to the forehead with the palm down—was established. This gesture was influenced by naval customs, where sailors would salute with their palms down to avoid showing dirty hands to superiors. According to the Armed Forces History Museum, today's standard salute – right hand touching the brim of the head cover with the palm down – was in place by 1820. The museum says the palm down portion of the salute may have been influenced by the salute style of the British Navy at the time. A sailor's hands were often dirty, and exposing a dirty palm – especially to a superior – would have been deemed disrespectful. A correlating legend has it that Queen Victoria was once saluted with a dirty hand, and declared thereafter that British sailors would salute with their hands at a 90-degree angle. According to the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School, a British order book from 1745 dictates "men are ordered not to pull off their hats when they pass an of-

ficer, or to speak to them, but only to clap up their hands and bow as they pass." A page on the Quartermasters' website explains that military headgear had become so complicated and cumbersome by the time of the American Revolution, saluting was just an expedient change to protocol.

Conclusion: When it comes to the military salute, everyone seems to agree on two things: (1) it is always a sign of camaraderie and respect, and (2) no one knows its exact origin as every country had their own version. But everyone has a theory.



The rifle salute,
both types (left
and right)

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

UPCOMING MCL EVENTS

Department of New York **Fall Meeting** will take place on October 9th and 10th 2026 in Owego, NY

The Hotel will be the Best Western Owego Inn
20 Hickories Park Road, Owego NY 13827
Phone (607) 687-9000

Do not call the 800 Reservation Desk

Group Code Marine Corps League

Meeting Location (Saturday) is at the Owego Fire (FDVO) training Facility

McMaster Street, Owego, NY

Hospitality and Meetings (Friday) will take place at the Owego VFW, 207 Main Street.

NATIONAL MID WINTER CONFERENCE

Virginia Beach VA

February 22 to 28th 2027

Department Mid Winter Staff Meeting

TBA

Spring Staff Meeting

Beacon NY

TBA

NEWLY APPROVED MODD STAFF RIBBONS

Approved at the 2026 Supreme Growl

KENNEL

Elected



Appointed



PACK

Elected



Appointed



POUND

Elected



Appointed



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