



**SOUTHWEST DIVISION
NATIONAL VICE COMMANDANT
MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
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Date: February 6, 2021
To: Commandant, Marine Corps League
From: NVC Southwest Division
Subj: Mid-Winter Report

Marines: This is my first Southwest Division Report as the newly elected National Vice Commandant. It has truly been a remarkable learning experience over the last several months. As a member of the League for 40 years this June 2021, this has really been my first exposure to the innerworkings of the higher echelon section of the Marine Corps League. I am very appreciative for the fact that our League Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Bob Borka and our current National Senior Vice Commandant Marine Johnny Baker have been able to take time from their busy schedule to help me become acquainted with how things work on the National Level. I often find myself in a quandary on how things are properly done but attending the virtual conferences on several occasions has been enlightening. I also must thank Judge Advocate TJ Morgan for always being there for me when I have called for assistance and advice. TJ and I go back a-ways as I was his Platoon Leader for his advancement to Pedigree Devil Dog.

This past year has really put a cramp into my initial plans for this Division when I first took over the top spot. I had envisioned being able to travel to many Detachments within the Division to get some hands-on knowledge as to the workings of other Detachments and Departments. Instead, I have had to rely on ZOOM meetings to get to know many of the leaders of the Detachments and Departments that comprise the Southwest Division. I have been able to make only 1 trip to a Detachment out of state to attend in person. I made the trek to the town of Pahrump, Nevada to attend one of their monthly meetings. I walked away impressed with the way they conducted their meetings and the level of involvement with the local community. Their Detachment Commandant, Marine Griggs, runs a great program there and is surrounded by Marines and Associates who really care about the League and their community. I have also attended several ZOOM meetings with the Department of California and am convinced that I made the appropriate choice to have Marine Jim Loorya act as my Assistant NVC. He has a tremendous grasp of the workings of

the League, has an outstanding staff to support him, and is enthusiastic about the League and where it is headed.

We were able to charter a new Detachment in Scottsdale for the Department of Arizona and the Commandant of that Detachment successfully did something that a lot of Detachments have not been able to accomplish – he stocked his Detachment with younger Marines who have a great enthusiasm for the League and the Corps and I am convinced that once we get through this current obstacle, we will see great things come out of the Scottsdale Detachment. I was able to attend the Fall Conference of the Department of Arizona held in Glendale and was impressed with the turnout of Marines who travelled from across the state to attend. We were able to conduct our business as usual and will be holding our upcoming Spring Conference and State Convention.

Our Detachments in Hawaii are surviving even with the most stringent mandates on file for any state in the union. They have used different forms of communication to maintain contact with each other either by ZOOM meetings or e-mails and have been able to conduct the business of the League.

The Departments of California and Nevada are currently in the planning stages for their respective State Conferences and Conventions. The Department of Arizona will hold their Spring Conference in Tucson the first week of March and the plans for the State Convention are currently underway. All Detachments and Departments have been supplied with the Emergency Election Procedures and are well equipped to handle elections within the guidelines outlined in the recently approved Procedures.

Our website for the Division is being competently managed by Marine Mark Dennis who has done a tremendous job of putting together a website that will be the envy of other Divisions.

Our Division is making progress in areas that were long ignored and we have charted a path that we will follow to raise the image of this Division in respect to its standing in the League. I have dedicated my articles in the Semper Fi Magazine to raising the awareness of the Southwest Division throughout the League as we are the farthest Division away from the hub of the League and Marines across the land need to know about us out here in the far west. It is my belief that the Southwest Division was the first of the Divisions to design and manufacture a unique Division Banner and Flag and that flag will hopefully fly over the meeting room during the upcoming National Convention in Springfield, Illinois. With the cooperation of my staff, and the Commandants of the Departments within the Division, Southwest Division will grow in stature and erase any negative stigmas that might have been attached to it.

Semper Fidelis
Patrick J Connell