

The Southeast Division experienced a number of significant weather events in 2021. This was the third most active hurricane season on record, and our states were frequently impacted. We wish to express our sincere gratitude to those Detachments, Departments, Divisions and individual League members who responded with financial aid to help our members and their communities recover.

We didn't completely rely on outside assistance, however. We had Detachments that formed a response group that spread out in their communities to put tarps on roofs, prop up foundations, and provide food and meal distribution points to their neighbors. All in all, this was an excellent demonstration of how we Marines continue to serve our Nation and our Communities. Kudos to all.

League members have an active Facebook page dealing with the subject of Honor Guard units. Many units struggle to muster enough members to staff a full detail – most often because of insufficient manpower, but sometimes due to a shortage of other resources. In my home state of South Carolina, we are on the verge of getting legislation passed which will provide a \$100 stipend to VSO Honor Guard units when they provide a funeral detail at a veteran's funeral. Several other states throughout the county provide a similar stipend, but most do not. We have built a business case and developed a research paper that has been a great aid in gaining legislative support in the state. At this point we are just one step away from the legislation being presented to the governor for final adoption. It's a little too early to begin celebration, but we are optimistic because of the headway we've made. If any other League members or organizations would be interested in pushing this issue in your state, we'd be happy to share the material we've developed. I think we've all observed that the Reserve and Guard units in our states frequently fall short of providing full Honor Guard services to which a deceased veteran is entitled. We are in an excellent position to fill the void.

Looking inward, we're finally beginning to experience a resurrection of normal Detachment meetings. We've experienced too many months where Detachment and Department meetings have had a significant drop-off in attendance – for valid reasons. As we're learning to cope with the virus, regulatory and social distancing requirements, we are finally starting to turn the corner. Let's all work on getting members back into the fold and to return to the activity levels that we need to attain.

Semper Fi,

Jerry Holt
NVC, Southeast Division