



NORTHEAST DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT – AUGUST 2026

The Northeast Division remains the Marine Corps League's largest Division, representing the Departments of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. During the past year, the Division continued to emphasize sound administration, organizational effectiveness, compliance, and support for programs that directly benefit our members and veterans.

The Northeast Division Conference, held in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, marked another successful year for the Division. Representatives from all three Departments participated in a well-attended weekend of business, training, fellowship, and collaboration that reflected the strong working relationship among the Departments of the Northeast Division.

Several administrative improvements were introduced during this year's conference. Registration was conducted almost entirely through an online system, eliminating nearly all paper forms while simplifying registration and recordkeeping for both attendees and conference staff. The conference program book was redesigned to become a lasting reference document, incorporating information on Division leadership, Veterans Service Officers, the Marine Corps League Foundation, and other resources intended to remain useful long after the conference concluded.

The Division also continues to benefit from the organizational structure established following incorporation several years ago. Financially self-sufficient, the Division now conducts its annual conference without requiring direct financial assistance from the Departments while generating sufficient resources to support League initiatives. As a result of this year's conference, the Northeast Division will once again present a contribution to the Marine Corps League Foundation during the 2026 National Convention.

Administrative oversight and compliance remained a major focus throughout the year. Under the leadership of Division Compliance Officer Jacob Bertin and Division Chaplain Rosemarie Soto, the Division continued assisting Departments and Detachments with corporate compliance requirements and administrative reporting. Particular emphasis was placed on improving the accuracy of membership records through an extensive review of unreported deceased members. This project corrected hundreds of membership records while providing Departments with more accurate membership information and strengthening the integrity of the League's national database.

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The Veterans Service Officer program continued to make measurable progress under the leadership of Division Veterans Service Officer Richard Buck, who also serves as the Northeast Division representative on the National Marine for Life Committee. Through his leadership, the Division now has five active Veterans Service Officers serving veterans throughout the Northeast Division, with continued efforts underway to expand coverage. In recognition of his outstanding service and leadership, Richard was presented the Northeast Division's Victor T. Fisher Award during this year's Division Conference.

Although each Department has developed its own traditions, strengths, and priorities, they share a common commitment to the mission of the Marine Corps League. One of the Northeast Division's greatest strengths is the willingness of our Departments to share successful ideas, support one another, and collaborate on initiatives that benefit the entire Division. Whether improving administrative practices, expanding veterans services, strengthening charitable programs, or supporting national initiatives, the combined experience of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania continues to make the Northeast Division stronger than the sum of its individual parts.

Department of New Jersey

The Department of New Jersey conducted its annual convention in Galloway, New Jersey, in late April 2026, where Department Commandant Christopher Soldano was re-elected to a second term. Consistently ranked among the Marine Corps League's largest Departments, New Jersey continues to demonstrate exceptional organizational strength and innovation. The Department has been particularly successful in expanding the Veterans Service Officer program, continues to actively support local Youth Physical Fitness competitions, sponsors a nationally recognized service dog program benefiting veterans, and has successfully incorporated corporate sponsorships to enhance its annual convention. New Jersey also pioneered electronic convention registration within the Northeast Division, and many of its successful practices became the model for this year's Division conference registration system.

The Department maintains an active Marine Corps League Auxiliary whose members provide outstanding support to veterans, Marines, families, and Department activities throughout the year. Likewise, New Jersey's Military Order of the Devil Dogs remains an active and visible component of the Department. These accomplishments continue to make New Jersey an important source of innovation and leadership within the Northeast Division.

Department of New York

The Department of New York conducted its annual convention in Syracuse, New York, in early June 2026, where Department Commandant David Wiggs was re-elected to a second term. As one of the League's largest Departments, New York continues to provide outstanding leadership in the Veterans Service Officer and Marine for Life programs, particularly throughout eastern New York under the leadership of Richard Buck. The Department also benefits from the Marine Corps League of New York Foundation, which provides scholarships and humanitarian assistance to Marines and their families.

The Department continues working to rebuild and strengthen its Marine Corps League Auxiliary while maintaining active participation throughout the Military Order of the Devil Dogs. Despite the geographic size of the state, New York's experience in veterans services continues to benefit the entire Northeast Division through the sharing of successful programs and leadership.

Department of Pennsylvania

The Department of Pennsylvania conducted its annual convention in the Pocono Mountains in mid-June 2026, where Department Commandant Victoria McCoy was re-elected to a second term. Despite the extensive membership audit completed during the year, Pennsylvania remains the Marine Corps League's largest Department. The Department continues to support a broad range of League programs, including Scouting, Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS), scholarship initiatives, youth activities, and humanitarian assistance through the Marine Corps League of Pennsylvania Foundation. While recruiting accredited Veterans Service Officers has proven more challenging because many larger veterans organizations receive partial state support for their service officer programs, the Department continues working to strengthen this important mission.

Pennsylvania also benefits from a very active Marine Corps League Auxiliary while the Military Order of the Devil Dogs remains an active and well-supported component of the Department. Pennsylvania's breadth of programs and organizational resources continues to provide valuable support to both the Department and the Northeast Division as a whole.

Looking Ahead

One significant effort during the year extended beyond the Northeast Division. After advocating for the development of a long-range strategic planning document for the Marine Corps League, I volunteered to lead that effort on behalf of the National Board of Trustees. Drawing upon Board input and plans previously developed within both the Northeast Division and the Department of Pennsylvania, the resulting National Business Plan, unanimously approved in June 2026 by the National Board of Trustees, establishes the League's first comprehensive strategic framework for long-term organizational planning and provides a roadmap for the League's future development.

The adoption of the Marine Corps League's National Business Plan establishes a common strategic direction for the entire organization. Successful implementation will depend upon cooperation among National leadership, Divisions, Departments, and Detachments. The Northeast Division is committed to fully supporting that implementation by serving as an effective link between National leadership and our Departments. Through communication, administrative assistance, leadership by example, and the sharing of proven practices, the Division will help Departments and Detachments adapt National initiatives to their local needs while providing constructive feedback from the field to the National Board of Trustees. Working together in this manner strengthens the flow of information, promotes organizational consistency, and better positions the Marine Corps League to accomplish its mission in the years ahead.

The accomplishments described in this report were made possible through the dedication of our Department Commandants, Division officers, committee chairmen, Auxiliary members, Devil Dogs, and the many volunteers who freely contribute their time and talents in service to the Marine Corps League. Their willingness to work together across Department lines continues to strengthen the Northeast Division while advancing the mission of our national organization.

Semper Fidelis,



Robert C. Ziltz, Jr.

National Vice Commandant, Northeast Division

Chair, National Budget Committee

Ex Officio, National Public Relations Committee

Ex Officio, National Uniform Committee