

To: TJ Morgan, National Commandant, Marine Corps League
From: Patrick Maguire, National Vice Commandant, New England Division, Marine Corps League
Subject: National Convention Report

New England Division Report

Division Overview

Membership

Membership across the New England Division has continued to decline over the past year, reflecting a trend that many veteran service organizations are experiencing. Unfortunately, both the Department of Vermont and the Department of Massachusetts were forced to close Detachments due to declining membership and an inability to sustain operations. While these closures are disappointing, they highlight the importance of continued recruitment and member retention efforts throughout the Division.

Several other Detachments are also facing membership challenges. Despite these difficulties, Department and Detachment elected officers remain committed to strengthening their organizations by recruiting new members, retaining current members, and encouraging greater participation within their communities. Many Detachment Commandants continue to devote countless hours to keeping their Detachments active and moving forward.

Recruitment remains one of the Division's highest priorities. The most successful recruiting efforts continue to come from members who are visible and active within their local communities. Participating in parades, veterans ceremonies, community events, and charitable activities provides valuable opportunities to introduce the Marine Corps League to prospective members. However, many Detachments are operating with limited manpower, making it difficult to maintain a consistent presence at these events. As a result, several Detachments have increased their use of social media and other online platforms to promote the League and connect with potential members. While these tools have proven beneficial, there is still no substitute for face-to-face interaction and community involvement.

Compliance

Division Compliance Officer Marine Cheri Monnell has continued to work closely with each Department and Detachment to ensure compliance with National Marine Corps League policies and procedures. Her guidance has been instrumental in helping units address administrative issues and maintain accurate records. While many compliance matters can be resolved quickly, others require additional coordination and follow-up before they can be brought into full compliance. Departments have been responsive and continue working toward resolving outstanding issues.

Paid Life Member Audits

Paid Life Member audits have remained an ongoing challenge throughout the Division. Several Departments and Detachments have experienced delays in reconciling membership records, requiring additional time and coordination to complete the audit process. Although progress has been made, bringing all records up to date remains a priority. The Division will continue assisting Departments as needed to ensure membership records are accurate and current.

Community Involvement

Despite the membership challenges, Detachments across the New England Division continue to make a positive impact within their communities. Members regularly participate in Color Guards, Honor Guards, military funeral honors, memorial services, patriotic ceremonies, and veterans events. Many Detachments also support local schools, youth programs, charitable organizations, and community service projects. Their continued dedication reflects the core values of the Marine Corps League and demonstrates that our members remain committed to serving others long after their military service has ended.

Division Conference

This year marked the implementation of a new conference format for the New England Division. Each of the six Departments conducted its own one-day Department Convention prior to attending the Division Conference. This allowed Departments to complete their business before coming together at the Division level, resulting in a more focused and efficient conference.

Overall, the response to the new format was very positive. Feedback received through the post-conference survey indicated that attendees appreciated the streamlined schedule and the opportunity for more meaningful discussions during the Division Conference. Participants also provided several constructive recommendations, which will be reviewed as planning begins for next year's conference. The Division remains committed to building on the success of this year's event while making improvements where appropriate.

Looking ahead, the New England Division will continue to focus on strengthening membership, supporting our Departments and Detachments, improving compliance, and expanding our presence throughout the communities we serve. While challenges remain, the dedication of our members and Detachment/Department officers gives us confidence that the Division will continue moving in a positive direction.

Department of New Hampshire

The Department of New Hampshire consists of six Detachments that continue to provide Military Honors and support to Marines and veterans throughout the state. Recruitment efforts, including *Lunch with Leathernecks* and *Lanes with Leathernecks*, have resulted in six new members, with additional outreach initiatives being developed.

Commandant Dumont continues to work with Detachments to identify needs, encourage collaboration, and strengthen participation. While membership and engagement remain challenges for several Detachments, the Department is focused on increasing visibility through community events and strengthening struggling Detachments to build a more active and unified organization.

Department of Connecticut

The Department of Connecticut continues to support Marines, veterans, and their communities through the efforts of its Detachments. The Department conducted its first One-Day Convention on June 6, 2026, completing elections and installation of officers. Connecticut was also well represented at several Marine Corps League events, including the National Convention, Mid-Winter Conference, Semper Fi Society Luncheon, and the New England Division Conference.

The Department and its Detachments recognized the Marine Corps' 250th Birthday through various celebrations, including a ceremony at the State Capitol, Birthday Balls, dinners, and local cake-cutting events. Several members were recognized through Department awards for their outstanding service and dedication.

Membership and Detachment sustainability remain a challenge. County Commandants continue working with Detachments to ensure compliance requirements are met, while efforts are underway to support struggling Detachments and retain members. Despite these challenges, Connecticut Detachments continue to provide valuable community support through programs such as Toys for Tots, Rose Days, Military Honors, and Color Guard participation.

The Department recently approved an increase in Department dues from \$5 to \$10 per member, the first increase in 30 years, to better support ongoing operations and financial needs.

Department of Vermont

The Department of Vermont currently consists of two active Detachments: Donald Cook Detachment #608 and Brattleboro Detachment #798. The Green Mountain Detachment has officially closed, and the Robert H. Vincelette Detachment has submitted paperwork to surrender its charter, with all property and records returned to the Department.

Despite these challenges, the remaining Detachments continue to serve their communities with dedication and pride. Donald Cook Detachment #608 remains active and continues to fulfill its mission through strong leadership and regular meetings. The Department's Toys for Kids of Vermont program was once again a success during the 2025 holiday season, with increased volunteer support helping provide assistance to families throughout the state. The Department looks forward to continuing this important community outreach effort.

Department of Maine

The Department of Maine consists of seven Detachments and two Devil Dog Pounds, with a combined membership of 304 Marines, Navy Corpsmen, Associate Members, and supporters throughout the state. The Department and its Detachments remain actively engaged in supporting veterans, their communities, and Marine Corps traditions through programs such as Toys for Tots, scholarships, funeral honors, memorial services, fundraising efforts, and community outreach.

The 2025 Toys for Tots campaign was highly successful, with increasing community support and volunteer involvement. Detachments also continued their commitment to honoring veterans through Memorial Day events, Wreaths Across America, Eagle Scout recognitions, parades, and Marine Corps Birthday celebrations, including expanded efforts recognizing the Marine Corps' 250th Birthday.

Like many Departments, Maine continues to focus on recruitment and retention. Efforts are underway to increase visibility through veteran events, partnerships with Marine Corps recruiting and reserve units, outreach to other veteran organizations, and greater community presence. Despite membership challenges, the Department and its Detachments continue to demonstrate strong dedication, fellowship, and commitment to serving Marines, veterans, and their communities.

Department of Rhode Island

The Department of Rhode Island welcomed three new members since the last National Convention. One new member joined the Bucci-Atwood Detachment, and two new members joined the Sgt. Brian St. Germain Detachment. While membership growth remains a challenge, the Department continues to focus on recruiting new members and encouraging participation throughout the state.

Several Rose Collection fundraisers were conducted during the year. These events not only helped raise funds to support Department and Detachment activities but also provided opportunities to engage with the public and increase awareness of the Marine Corps League and its mission.

The Department By-Laws Committee completed its review of the Department By-Laws and submitted the revised document to the National Judge Advocate for review and approval. This effort helps ensure the Department remains in compliance with National requirements and maintains current governing documents.

The Department Color Guard remained active throughout the year, participating in nine events, including parades, military funerals, and ceremonial functions. Their continued presence at these events reflects the Department's commitment to honoring Marines, veterans, and our communities.

The Department continues to maintain its membership with the United Veterans Council of Rhode Island and values its strong working relationships with other veterans organizations across the state. These partnerships allow us to work together in support of veterans and participate in events that benefit the veteran community.

Throughout the year, Department members participated in numerous community and veterans events across Rhode Island to promote the Marine Corps League, increase public awareness, and recruit prospective members. These outreach efforts remain an important part of strengthening the League and supporting our mission.

Looking ahead, the Department of Rhode Island will continue to promote the principles and values of the Marine Corps League while working to strengthen membership, support our veterans, and serve our communities. We remain committed to building a strong Department and setting a positive example for others to follow.

Patrick S. Maguire

Patrick Maguire
National Vice Commandant
New England Division

