



Edition 3 (Final) 2024

THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK'S **GROUND POUNDER**

Editor: Tom Wortmann PDC PPL

railmaine@gmail.com

SUBMISSION DEADLINES: 10th of March, June, September, December

In Memory of



Donna Hildebrandt

2024 **OFFICERS**

Commandant
DEAN LAWTON, SR.

Sr. Vice Commandant
DAVID WIGGS

Jr. Vice Commandant
MICHAEL PISCIOTTI

Judge Advocate
CATHLEEN WIGGS

Jr. Past Commandant
THOMAS ARCURI

**Adjutant Paymaster
and Webmaster**
STEVE TOPILNYCKY

Chief of Staff

VACANT

Chaplain
ROSEMARIE SOTO

Sergeant at Arms
SUSAN WHITLOW

NY Pack Leader
CATHLEEN WIGGS

Auxiliary President
JOAN MARIE
della BADIA

Past Auxiliary President
KAREN SEELEY

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

PASSING OF THE HAT

I hope the Commandant will forgive me for stealing his column but I wanted to talk to you, our membership about this newsletter.

I also hope everyone remembers me, I am Tom Wortmann, Past Department Commandant, Past Pack Leader and former Editor of this newsletter.

When I was the Department Junior Vice, I reintroduced this newsletter to the department years after the "Empire State Marine" newsletter was retired. I felt the membership wanted and needed a newsletter and I started and ran this newsletter as it's editor from 2017 to 2021 up until I was elected Department Commandant. At that time I asked for someone to take it over for me and as you all know, Donna Hildebrandt stepped up and took over. She very quickly turned my simple newsletter into a National award winning magazine. In other words, she took the seed I planted and harvested a garden.

You also know that Donna suffered a brain hemorrhage and passed away not that long ago. It was a great lose to all of us. She is missed by all. At the Fall Staff meeting Commandant Lawton asked me to take back the helm so you, the members would still have a newsletter. I accepted the job but I will be honest with all of you, I've seen and admired Donna's work and I will tell you, I can't hold a candle to her.

She did not only this newsletter but her detachments, some VFW's and an American Legion post as well, as I found out after her husband sent me her files. I will do my very best to provide you, the department membership, with a newsletter every quarter as best as I can but always keep in mind that this is 'YOUR' newsletter, not mine.

This newsletter highlights our detachments and provide news from the Department and National. It is not intended to replace any news blast you will receive from the adjutant, or any other 'official' mailings you may receive from time to time. It's intention is simply to inform you about Department and local detachment events around the state and in some cases, the Division and the nation. I hope to be informative as well and add in some helpful hints or suggestions.

(Continued on page 10)

DEADLINES
ARE ON THE TENTH OF
March, June, September, December



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
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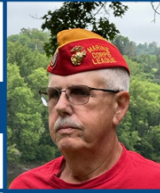
OFFICERS' Messages



Commandant's Corner

DEAN LAWTON, SR.

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK



Members of the Department of New York,

I've been trying to come up with an article for this issue of the Ground Pounder. As I sat watching football, post-Thanksgiving Day, I received a note from Dave from the Department of North Carolina. If you all remember at the fall meeting in Binghamton, I told you about Dave and his efforts to make sure NO active-duty Marine's family go without a Thanksgiving dinner. We passed the hat at the meeting and received \$450.00 in cash. I then asked for a motion that the Department donate \$1000.00 to his cause. Below is the note from Dave.

"Good morning, Dean, had a great week at MCAS Cherry Point thru the entire Camp Lejeune area bases. We gave away 1,825 turkeys, 32 hams, over 3000 bags of food and 25-\$100 commissary gift cards. The units and USO did a head count of the Marines, FMF Corpsman's and all family members. We touched almost 11,000 for Thanksgiving this year.

The help your department provided was outstanding, especially with the effect of the hurricane relief here. It is truly heartwarming and appreciated."

Now that is what I would call 'Marines helping your fellow Marines'.

I am proud to serve as your Commandant and to represent you in any way possible.

From myself and my family we wish everyone a blessed Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Semper Fi

Dean

As we enter the holiday season, let us not forget those that cannot be with their families during this time because they are serving our country either at home or aboard. Let us also, not forgot those among us that served our country and may not have family to celebrate with. Take time this year to reach out to our old members and give them a word of cheer.

It is also time to take an account of everything your detachment has accomplished over this year. Next month the department will be reaching out to each detachment to total the numbers of these activities. It is important to not only show national but also the Marine Corps how much we have helped and accomplished in our mission to support all Marines and their families. Happy Holidays and Semper Fidelis,

David Wiggs, Senior Vice Commandant



As members of the Department of New York, Marine Corps League. We are obligated to recruit new members.

The Department has closed several Detachments due to lack of interest, lack of motivation, and lack of membership. One thing that I have seen is that as our members age we either get more involved or we fade off. Our younger Marines / Members are too involved with their families. This is understandable. So the question is how do we fix this issue? I am seeking help in this and would appreciate any advice or input. Please give my office a call at: 845-248-1318 or email me at:

mclpisciotti@gmail.com.

Mike Pisciotti, Junior Vice Commandant



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MILITARY ORDER OF DEVIL DOGS

“The Fun and Honor Society of the Marine Corps League”

Devil Dogs!, Woof! Woof!

As we come to the close of one year and onto 2025, the 250th birthday year of our beloved Corps, I hope you will take time to do a few things.

Think back to those Marines who were your mentors...the ones who made a difference in your years in the Corps. Most of them will never know they impacted other Marines and that’s okay because they didn’t do it for you personally, they made a difference because of our principles...honor, courage, respect. And of course, foremost, they did it to fulfill their mission. Mission always comes first.

Think back to what you were before you went to boot camp or officer training; and then to what you were a few short weeks later when you graduated. Boys became men, girls became women and we all became Marines...for life!

And think back to why you joined the League and the Devil Dogs. For me and I hope many of you it was twofold. I missed the brotherhood we share. And I wanted to continue being a service to others.

Our mission and our continued service to others as Dogs is our yearly donation to children’s hospitals. And so in 2025, remember where you came from, those whose shoulders you stood on and where we are all going. Let’s start with a fundraiser of some sort towards our gift for those little ones in need. Oorah!

Woof Woof!

Cathleen Wiggs, New York Pack Leader



Every Devil Dog should know this award

*Are you sending you Pounds passport fees up to national?
Did you know that any in country Korean war vet in your pound can be elevated by the
Pound Keeper to PDD?
Check the new Kennel Bylaws.*



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK



Fall Staff Meeting

This past October, a Department staff meeting was held in Binghamton, NY with a special guest speaker, Bob Borka, the league's Chief Operating Officer, who spoke about a number of things including Marine For Life, mail delivery at our headquarters and the issues National is such as national finances and provided us with an excellent Power Point presentation that included some very useful links, some of which you will find later in this edition.

Commandant Lawton spoke of a number of things one being the State Fair which is now priced out of our range, the department will look into county fairs instead.



Below and right, you see your Area Vice Commandants and staff who attended, learning and sharing information to take back to their detachments. Attending a staff meeting, even if you are not an officer of your detachment can be very beneficial.



Photo on lower right by Rich Buck



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Fall Staff Meeting



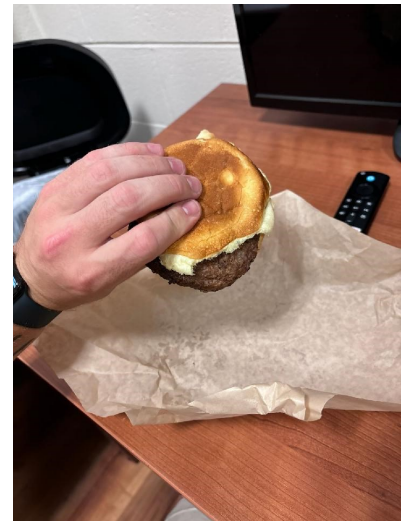
(above) At our Fall Staff meeting, Department Commandant Lawton presented Greater Newburg Detachment Commandant Steve Anderson with the National Junior Vice Commandants award for 100% membership renewal or above.

What our Marines are eating at Camp Lejeune today.

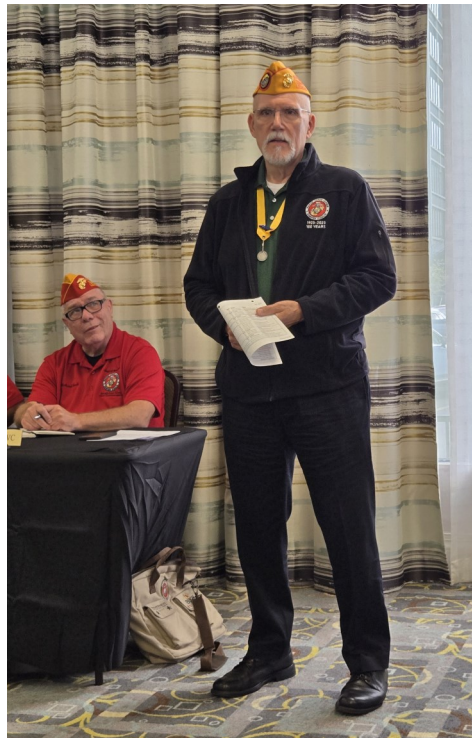
PDC Ransom has a grandson currently serving in our beloved Corps and this Marine sent his Grandfather some pictures of what they were served for lunch. Mind you, today our Marines pay a monthly fee for their meals in the mess hall.

This is what he received.

No cheese, no onions and just a handful of French fries. No seconds on anything. No wonder fast food is doing great on the base.



Our Division Vice Commandant



(right) NEDVC Bob Ziltz spoke about changes coming to National and areas we need to work on, such as, recruiting and retention. Detachments, NE division wide we all need to do better as our membership numbers are going down.

Has your detachment submitted their plan for recruitment and retention to the Department Junior Vice for 2025?



REST IN PEACE



The passing of Ovidio 'Bob' Neria



Past Aid de Camp, Robert Neria, member of the John W. Thurston Detachment, passed away peacefully on November 4th, at the age of 90. He held the office of Department Junior Vice Commandant and later becoming the Aid de Camp for Department Commandant Tobin. Proudly serving in the Army, Navy and U. S. Marine Corp. He continued with his service and commitment with the U.S. Marines over many years, serving and holding many positions both locally and nationally in the Marine Corp League. He was active in the Department and in the league everywhere he went. He belonged to a number of detachments over the years in other states as he moved around always looking to serve somewhere. His wake was held on November 15th at the Our Lady of Good Council Church in Endicott NY.

Service was attended by PNC Dennis Tobin, Kenny Tobin, NPR Victoria McCoy, DC Dean Lawton, DSV David Wiggs, DJA Cathleen Wiggs, Diana Henry, Commandant Dept. of PA, Ralph Luciano, Fred Kelley.



My thanks to Cathy Wiggs and Dennis Tobin for this information and Photos





MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

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Toys for Tots



A big shout out to the officers of **Town of Greenburgh Police Department NY**. Today they were conducting training in the building being utilized by **Toys for Tots - Westchester**. The campaign received 8 pallets of toys that will be distributed to children in need within the county. After a long day of extensive training, these officers noticed the Campaign Coordinator Steve Topilnycky breaking down the pallets and moving the toys inside the building. With no Toys for Tots volunteers available this task would take hours to complete. They jumped into action and in no time flat, all 8 pallets were broken down and the cases of toys moved down the ramp into the building gym. A big thank you.



(Right) Volker Heyde of the Sgt Angel Mendez Det. receives toys from the Italian American woman of Staten Island Diane Williamson, Michele Buccigrossi, Volker, Lisa Galo, Michele Filjean, Michelena Dibuono, and Roe Roberts.



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MARINES HONOR EAGLE SCOUTS

By Volker Heyde, Department Eagle Scout Coordinator

(Below) On August 24th, Eagle Scout Gabriel Morabito from Troop 500 in Depew was presented his certificate.

Commandant Patricia David from Niagara Frontier #239 and Paymaster Raymond David are in the picture with Gabe.



(right) Giuseppe K. Mendola of troop 323 from Merric Long Island, Fr. Cappadonna detachment received his certificate from Marine Volker Heyde (left) and Marine Thomas Maher of the detachment.



If your detachment awards a scout the Eagle Scout certificate, take a picture of the accomplishment and the picture and description to the newsletter.

Boy Scout Troop 27 from Castle hill section of Staten Island visited the Sgt Angel Mendez Detachment to speak with our Marines about life in the Corps.

Present were Marines Volker Heyde, Glen Rocle and Tom Wortmann





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Miscellaneous

VA News

The VA is making changes to the online sign-in process. In 2025, you'll need to use login.gov or ID.me to sign in to all VA websites and apps including My HealthVet. The My HealthVet sign-in option will be removed after January 31st, 2025. and the DS Login option after September 30th, 2025.

[Here is a link to more information.](#)



MCL LICENSE PLATES

MCL Department license plates are now available only to Regular and Associate LIFE MEMBERS. Current and renewal members are Grandfathered in. License plate application and forms (MCL License Plate Order Form & DMV Form CP30) are available on the Department web site at <https://www.mclnewyork.org/documents-and-forms/>



Upcoming Department Events

24-25 Jan 2024: Department Mid-Winter Meeting—via Zoom

28-29 March 2024: Department Spring Meeting, Beacon, NY

4-5 April 2024: Northeast Division Conference,

The tunnel to Towers, the Siller Foundation, held a fund raising dinner on Staten Island at the Hilton Hotel. Members of the Sgt. Angel Mendez Detachment were represented. Robert Germimo, Volker Heyde and Roy Graniela attended. Marine Heyde spoke about the league.

Volker Heyde, Department Area Vice Commandant and Past Detachment Commandant, was asked to get up and say a few words. He thanked the Siller foundation for the gracious invite, praised their good work in helping those who suffered because of their service and thanked all who served and are serving in uniform.





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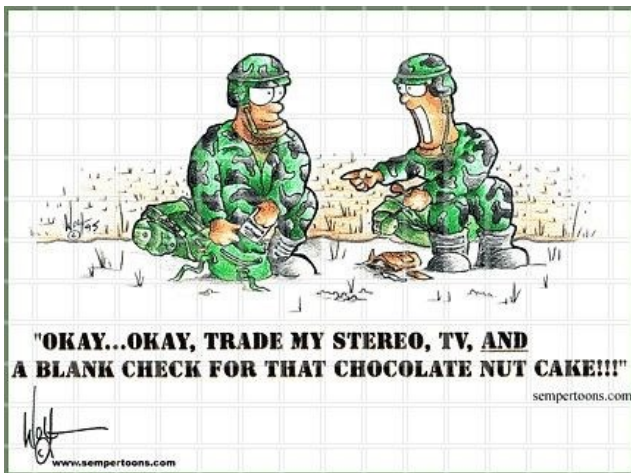


Miscellaneous

Passing the hat *from page 1*

Therefore it's content will mainly be what you, our membership, submits. Let me be clear, it does not have to be submitted by a detachment commandant, or any detachment or department officer. It can be, ANY member or associate can submit an event, a photograph or an article. If you are submitting a photograph, tell me something about it, even a few words would help. Others may want to know what your detachment is doing. We learn from each other, your ideas may very well work, or be the same in other detachments. We are all "Gung ho" We are all working together. Expect some changes in what you are use to, as I do my best to make this newsletter into a format I can work with, keeping as much of Donna's designs as I can.

So while I work on Donna's templets and designs, think about what I said. This newsletter has always been and will continue to be, by you and for you, the red hats of New York.



USEFULL LINKS

For requesting military records:

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>

Marine Corps League Website veteran

<https://www.mcleaguelibrary.org/veterans-service-officer/>

VA Burial & Memorial Benefits:

<https://www.hgmc.marines.mil/Agencies/Casualty-MFPC/Funeral-Honors/>

<https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/>

National Bylaws and a host of other information

[Library – Marine Corps League](#)

PLEASE NOTE

Any Detachment that sends me their newsletter, I will to assume you did it to supply me with articles for the Ground Pounder, if that is not the reason, please state so in your email.

Thank you
The Editor

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Semper Fi

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Interesting Information

Are you aware of the project 'THE TUN'?

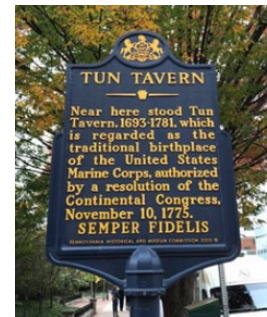
A group of investors have purchased property not far from the original location of Tun Tavern and plan on rebuilding the tavern in the likes of the original. Ground has already been broken and the Project is under way with a goal of completion by November 2025.



The Project to bring back Tun Tavern?



When completed it will be more than just a tavern, read all about it in the link below.



For more info Click here

[The Tun Legacy Foundation - Rebuilding The Tun™](#)



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Miscellaneous



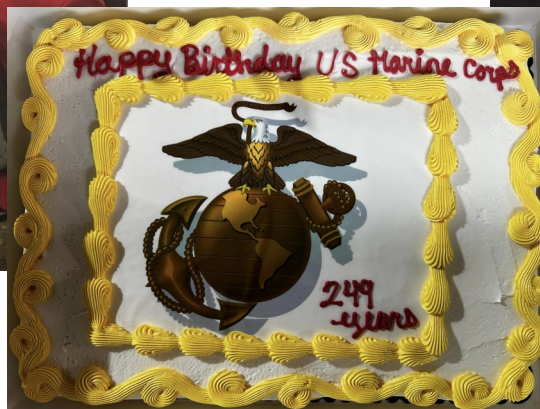
Members of the Sgt Angel Mendez Detachment pay respect to their first Commandant, John O'Brien at his gravesite every year on the anniversary of their charter.



Birthday Balls around the state



The Electric City Detachment sent some pictures of their ball which you can see here.





Miscellaneous

News from Long Island NY

Under the leadership of Area Vice Commandant Vinnie Annunziata, all the Long Island detachments now have their own newsletter. Here are some excerpts from it.

Vinnie also welcomed his new Deputy Vice Area Commandant, Carlos Garcia, who is also the Past Sunrise Detachment Commandant. Whom he says is eager to work on recruiting and Detachment comradery as priorities.

Sunrise Detachment Birthday Ball



Sunrise Detachment had the honor of presenting a piece of cake to WWII Marine Corps Corporal Cliff Doering, who is 99 years young!

Special thanks to Carlos Garcia for getting this info to me



Miscellaneous

End of life preparation

Not something we want to talk about but we should, but like it or not, we will all be there someday.

Make it easy on your loved ones by taking the time to do some preparation now. Here are some tips that Bob Borca suggested during his visit.

Every member should have paperwork squared away for "End of Life"

These are some of the suggested steps to take:

Ensure you have a files or folder in a safe place that contains your files and instructions

Ensure your executor (the person who will handle your arrangements) Know where that files is.

Ensure your DD-214 is in that file.

Make certain the DD-214 shows your character of service.

Consider Durable Power of Attorneys (POA) with your spouse.

Determine if you wish to be buried or cremated.

Decide whether the burial will be in a National Cemetery, state or tribal Veterans cemetery or private cemetery.

Determine desired memorial products

Obtain a number of copies of your birth certificate, ten would be a safe number. They are easy for you to obtain alive but not your family after you pass and it takes time, sometimes months or more. After you have passed is really too late. Insurance companies will want these along with death certificates. Be sure your family knows where your will is and if you don't have one, get one now. It not only will save you work, it could save you on taxes. It cannot hurt to have one. Consider a living trust, again it cannot hurt.

Scuttlebutt

Rumor has it that instead of a formal banquet next year, we will have a pig roast. No blazers but Hawaiian shirts or something similar instead. The hope is that by not being so formal, we would draw more people to the convention. Hey, it is certainly worth a try. Bring your spouse, or significant other. This should be fun. Stay turned for updates. Meanwhile,

For all you downstate folks, our Spring staff will take place in Beacon NY on the 28– 29th of March 2025.

Please join us. You DO NOT have to be a Detachment officer to attend, all meetings are open to ALL members, regular and associate. Stop by, meet new people, make friends and learn something you can take back to your detachment.



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Found in Donna's files

I came across some articles of Donna's that I believe were not published. I put them on this page and the next two because I could not find them in any of her archives. That means a whole bunch of nothing but to be fair to the contributors, I am publishing them here. If I missed yours, please, resubmit.

GENESEE VALLEY DETACHMENT CELEBRATES THEIR 60-YEAR CHARTER ANNIVERSARY

On Tuesday, April 30, 2024, Genesee Valley members gathered to celebrate their 60 year MCL Charter Anniversary.

Among the regular members of the detachment that attended there was also one of the two remaining original GVD-MCL charter members present, Marine James Sheridan.

As part of the celebration, GVD member Marine Scott VanGrol presented a MCL National 100-Year Anniversary challenge coin to Marine Sheridan.

The MCL Dept of NY Commandant Dean Lawton and NW Area Vice Commandant Dave Brisbane also attended the celebration and presented the detachment with a certificate and a plaque commemorating the event.

Vehicles for Veterans

1-888-585-5353

Main Office: 5775 Wayzata Boulevard, Suite 700, St. Louis Park, MN 55416. This 5013C Foundation donates Proceeds from its Vehicles sales for Veteran programs to other tax exempt charities. That help disabled veterans.

Vehicles are donated in exchange for a tax exempt write off.

Vehiclesforveterans.org

New Southeast Area Vice Commandant



My name is Richard Buck, I am a USMC Veteran with 43 years business experience. I have a passion for building highly effective teams. As a veteran advocate I have helped veterans and their spouses with military career transition mentoring, counseling and training. A life member of the Putnam County Detachment #242, Mentor in the Marine for Life Network and a Life member of American Legion Post 1542 and Presently a Board Member of the Putnam County Veterans Advisory Board Career Readiness Instructor Coach at FourBlock and a Mentor at American Corporate Partners (ACP)



Found in Donna's files

IRON MIKE

PUBLICATION FROM E.J. BREWER MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
DETACHMENT #458

2024 ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC – ELDRIDGE PARK





Found in Donna's files

GY6 Wing Night

E.J. Brewer Detachment #458
1st Monday of the Month

unless there is a Holiday

Elbow Room Elmira – Free Wings

E.J. BREWER
2024 SOFTBALL TEAM



FREE

ENTRANCE TO NYS PARKS

New York State is making state parks, campgrounds, and historic sites free for veterans and Gold Star Families. You will have privileges to

FREE:

- vehicle entry to state parks and campgrounds operated by the Department of Environmental Conservation
- State boat launch sites, historic sites, arboretums, and park preserves.
- Greens fees at state park-operated golf courses.
- Swimming pool entrance at state parks.

DISCOUNTED:

- campsite and cabin rentals at state parks campgrounds, applied at check-in.



Choosing a scholarship recipient is challenging in the E.J. Brewer Detachment #458. Ultimately, Anna R. Sheahan was selected . Anna was presented with the award at the Family Picnic on July 13, 2024.

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS



From all of us to all of you, have a great and wonderful holiday season.

Season Greetings, one and all!



To everyone who may be wondering why their detachment event was not in this newsletter.

The answer is simple, I didn't get it or if I did, I don't have information on it.

Remember when Donna passed, so did her email. No one has access to it.

Use my email address on the front page to submit or resubmit your photos and please do because,

Without you, there is no newsletter.

Thank you, the Editor