



# SITREP

## LEHIGH VALLEY DETACHMENT 296

[HTTP://WWW.LVMCL.COM](http://www.lvmcl.com)

### INCOMING COMMANDANT'S MESSAGE

Marines of Lehigh Valley Detachment 296,

I would like to take this opportunity to express how honored I am to be chosen as your next Commandant. The bond between Marines transcends all age, color, race, religion, and gender and is something that very few come to know in their lifetime. I am humbled by the faith and trust you have placed in me to lead our Detachment and will strive to fulfill the oath that I have sworn to each-and-every one of you to the utmost of my abilities.

For those of you who do not know me as well, please allow me to tell you a little more about myself. Before becoming a mother of two incredible daughters, I served eight and a half years in our beloved Corps as a 6336 KC-130 Avionics Electrician. Upon graduating boot camp at MCRD Parris Island on 3 July 1992, I reported to NAS Millington, TN for Avionics "A" school, not yet knowing if I would be selected for Intermediate Level or Organizational Level Maintenance, or which airframe I would be assigned to. In March of 1993 I received orders to report to MCAS El Toro in Irvine, California, where I would learn the ins and outs of Organizational Level KC-130 specific Avionics systems. It was a short stay in California and I soon found myself at VMGRT-253 Training Squadron in Cherry Point, NC in June 1993, where I would complete my hands-on training before hitting the Fleet in August. I spent the next four years in Newburgh, NY at VMGR-452. I reenlisted in November of 1996, five months before the end of my first contract. In July of 1997 I reported back to VMGRT-253, but this time as an instructor, where I would earn the rank of Staff Sergeant before returning to civilian life at the end of my second enlistment in November 2000.

Before joining our Detachment three and half years ago, I knew little to nothing at all about the Marine Corps League outside of the one experience I had while on active duty as a Rifleman for a Color Guard Detail at a local Marine Corps League Detachment Birthday Ball. Since being sworn in as a member that August evening in 2017, I have come to know and respect each of you and deeply appreciate being part of our Detachment. We are, in fact, more than just a Detachment of Marines. We are a family, one that the members and leadership who came before me worked hard to build, and one that I will strive to preserve. Please join me in thanking Jr Past Commandant Jason Smith and our outgoing Sr Vice Commandant Howard Schaeffer, along with all our previous officers, for their hard work and dedicated service to our Detachment. I look forward to serving alongside the other officers you have selected as we work together to accomplish the mission of the Detachment and the Marine Corps League. If at any time you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, my door is always open.

Semper Fidelis,  
Ria Mattix  
Commandant  
Lehigh Valley Detachment 296  
Marine Corps League

### DETACHMENT MEETINGS:

Every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday @ 1930  
EMAUS FIRE CO. No. 2  
1017 Pennsylvania Ave  
Emmaus PA 18049

## DETACHMENT OFFICERS

- *Commandant*

Marie "Ria" Mattix

- *SR Vice Commandant*

Bill Stoudt

- *JR Vice Commandant*

John Eyer

- *Judge Advocate*

Cory Shellhamer

- *Adjutant/Paymaster*

Dave Newcomer

- *Chaplain*

Joseph Malia

- *Sergeant at Arms*

Rondell Anderson

- *Web Sergeant*

Jason Smith

# THE MONTH IN REVIEW

## OUTGOING COMMANDANT'S MESSAGE

Marines,

I cannot truly express to you what an honor it has been for me to be your commandant. When I took over the position in December of 2012, we were a small unit of Marines that could maybe get single digit attendance to our monthly meetings. Outside of those meeting we didn't really do all that much. In the following years we not only formed a better functioning detachment, but we created a family. Together we became very prominent in our local community through nursing home visits, color guard and honor guard duties. We also participated in many Marine Corps League programs such by creating a newsletter, Facebook page, detachment website, and Eagle Scout program. I want to thank you all for your support and assistance in achieving these goals.

The thing that makes me proudest though is our sense of family. We gather every year for our detachment picnic and now our birthday ball. Outside of these activities we at times gather for dinners and other fun activities. I can't speak for you all, but I can say that my family has always felt welcome and loves to see you all. I have had numerous conversations with members and their families who feel the same way. We have done a lot of good things Marines and it wouldn't have happened without you. Just because I am no longer commandant does not mean that I am no longer going to be here for you all, and if you ever need anything do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to seeing what Commandant Mattix has in store for the detachment. I have every confidence in her abilities to lead us into the future. I know that she will have all of your support, the same way that I did. She, as well as the other newly elected and appointed officers, are going to do great things and will continue to grow our detachment.

Semper Fidelis,

Junior Past Commandant Jason M. Smith  
Lehigh Valley Marine Corps League Detachment 296



## CONGRATULATIONS...

to Ocie "OC" Tarver, the newest Marine to be sworn into the Marine Corps League and the newest member of Detachment 296. OC was sworn in during the monthly meeting on 24 February 2021. Welcome aboard Marine, and Semper Fidelis

## CHANGE OF COMMAND

Dave Newcomer was selected as the new Detachment Adjutant/Paymaster. Dave was installed during the monthly meeting on 24 February 2021

The Detachment would like to thank Ron Heckman, previous Adjutant/Paymaster, for all his hard work, dedication, and service

Please take time to thank Ron, and welcome Dave to the Detachment Board of Officers

## SEE BELOW FOR USEFUL INFORMATION REGARDING VETERAN HEALTHCARE/BENEFITS

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/02/26/adding-high-blood-pressure-to-list-of-presumptive-agent-orange-illnesses-a-key-focus-for-lawmakers-this-year/>

<https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2021/02/27/study-finds-possible-link-between-blast-exposure-and-alzheimers-disease/>

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>

If you have questions, here's how to get the information you need:

- For ongoing updates on our COVID-19 vaccine plan, [sign up for email updates](#).
- For more details on your local VA health facility's current plan, [find your facility's website](#). Once you're on the facility's website, go to **Health care services**, then **COVID-19** in the menu.
- For answers to general questions about getting a vaccine at VA, [read our FAQs below](#) or [use our coronavirus chatbot](#). If you don't find your answer there, call our MyVA411 main information line at [800-698-2411](tel:800-698-2411) (TTY: 711).
- For more information about how your personal risk for COVID-19 will determine when you can get a vaccine, [send a secure message to your VA health care provider](#). If you don't receive care at VA, contact your primary health care provider.

If you're not currently receiving health care through the VA, [find out if you're eligible and how to apply now](#).

## SCUTTLEBUTT FROM THE FLEET

Follow the link below to find out what is happening now in the FMF:

<https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2021/02/23/the-new-marine-corps-rifle-qualification-is-here/>

If you would like to submit something to *The SitRep*, please contact me via email or text. I welcome any input you, as a Detachment, may have. My apologies in advance if I have omitted any matters of importance for this month's edition and ask that you let me know if I have done so.

Semper Fi Marines!

Ria Mattix

[riamcl296@gmail.com](mailto:riamcl296@gmail.com)

484-788-2980

## MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Last month's meeting was held on 24 February 2021

Minutes are as follows:

Roll Call of Officers finds all PRESENT

Sergeant at Arms Rondell Anderson ABSENT, Robert Hoffman manning his Post

Applications for New Membership:

New member Ocie Tarver was considered and approved by voice vote for membership

DD214 was reviewed

For: 17 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Motion was requested to accept previous month's minutes. Motion was made and seconded

For: 18 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Report of the Paymaster:

Beginning Balance Checking \$14,916.72, Deposits \$198.00, Debits \$28.00

(Membership), \$15,114.72 minus previous. Debits, \$15,086.72. Balance on CD

\$3377.82, Brings forward a total \$18,464.54. Motion was requested to accept, made and seconded.

For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Commandant Mattix asked for confirmation of receipt of two emails, one regarding a rifle competition, and the other on Veteran benefits and care. Further information is available on both topics

Report of Family Members or Members Sick or in Distress:

Past Commandant Smith's Family and Friends are currently still with health issues. He requests we keep them in our prayers

Kim Fitzpatrick requests prayers for the Mother of her Bootcamp DI with health issues

Past Commandant Smith mentioned a Kutztown Marine who lost his Service Dog, and again we offer our prayers

Milton Solares's wife is still recovering from her broken ankle

Report of Officers:

Chaplain Malia reports magazines are coming in for Support the Troops. Secondly, a Thank You card was received from the Allentown Rescue Mission for the Detachment's donation. Note: Card was lost for a while, although our donation was acknowledged promptly.

Web Sergeant reports Web Site is being updated. Looking for photos for the Roster Page. Also looking to update Detachment roster when current Roster is available from State

Standing Committees:

Ball Committee

Marine of the Year

No Special Committees

## Unfinished Business:

Sr. Vice Commandant Stoudt discussed three items relative to the Detachment's rifles. First, the ammo and clips for the rifles are applied for. Second, the khaki slings that the Membership wanted will cost \$200.00, approximately \$20.00 per rifle. Third, the estimate on a safe will be approximately \$800.00. That item will be tabled until next meeting. Motion to purchase the slings was made and seconded

For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Chaplain Malia presented samples for embroidery on the jackets ordered. A&D has been somewhat hampered with their production, but it is hoped they will be available by next meeting

New laptop for the Detachment is being priced and will be discussed next meeting

## New Business:

Liability Insurance will be approximately \$395.00 for coming year. Motion was made and seconded to renew

For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Emmaus Fitness Teams' status seems in limbo, due to the COVID

Commandant Mattix will contact Vet Fest regarding our contribution for last year's event, which was cancelled

Rental with CFC#2 will remain at \$50.00/month with members contributing \$5.00/person per meeting

COVID vaccinations are available through VA Website or phone call to the Allentown Clinic

Motion was made and seconded to have Jr Past Commandant Smith order new Commandant and Detachment business cards

For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Commandant Mattix has appointed Dave Newcomer as Adjutant/Paymaster. The Oath of Office was administered so as to allow the transition

A new, smaller Bell was approved for use during normal meetings. Our large Ceremonial Bell will be used for special occasions

## Good of the League:

A Motion was made to form an Awards (Ribbons) Committee with Jr. Vice Commandant John Eyer as Chair. Motion was seconded. Milton Solares volunteered his assistance

For: 19 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

Announcements: NONE

Meeting was closed until 24 March 2021 at 1930 Hours

Respectfully Submitted

Fred R. Babcock

Life Member