

**Next Detachment
 Meeting:**
Emmaus VFW
#7088
316 Main St.
Emmaus, PA
Nov. 17th @ 1930

**Current
 Elected/Appointed
 Officers**

- Commandant-
Jason Smith
- Sr. Vice
Commandant-
Michael Donatucci
- Jr. Vice
Commandant-
Robert Hoffman
- Judge Advocate-
Howard Schaeffer
- Adjutant –
Terry Keiser
- Paymaster –
Terry Keiser
- Chaplain-
Joseph Malia
- Sgt. at Arms-
Anthony Reed
- Web Sgt. –
Jason Smith



Message from the CP

I don't normally like to get political, but after this election, and seeing how our country is reacting I feel the need to say something. Everybody has had his or her time to reflect on what has happened. The citizens that voted for President Elect Trump have had their time to celebrate and the citizens that voted for Secretary of State Clinton have had time to reflect on their loss. I used the word citizens on purpose in the previous statement. We are all citizens of this nation, and as such, we need to come together as one. Now that the campaigning and mudslinging, from both sides, is over, we need to mend the fences. This country has to get back to what made us great. The United States Constitution was written in such a way that we could form a country of multiple ideas and cultures. Just because a person believes in different ideals than you does not mean that, they are your enemy. It isn't going to be easy and people's feelings are going to get hurt, but we need to figure out how to compromise. It is impossible to make every person happy all the time and when you try to do that the inevitable result will be nobody's happiness.

Now on to League business. The past two weeks have been very busy for us with Veterans Day and the Marine Corps Birthday. I was able to attend multiple events and I have to say that it was a great time. I saw multiple marines and their families and it seemed to me that everybody was enjoying themselves. It just goes to show you how strong the Marine Corps bond is.

Before I go I would like to remind you all of a couple things. First, due to the upcoming holidays, our meeting will not be held on the 4th Wednesday of the month. November's meeting will be held on the 17th and December's will be held on the 15th. These are both very important meetings as we will have the second round of nominations during November's meeting and elections will be held in December. I hope to see you all there.

Meeting Minutes

- ❖ Sgt Bennett from the Marine Corps Reserve Center was a special guest to discuss Toys for Tots.
 - Donations are needed for every age group. If you have a box and it is full, you can take it to the warehouse in Bethlehem (South Commerce Street), otherwise, you can call and the box will be picked up.
 - He also asked if there were any suggestions on where to possibly hold their Marine Corps Ball next year
- ❖ A letter was read from both the outgoing and incoming Department of PA Commandants

This Month's Birthdays/Anniversaries

- Josh Brown joined the MCL in Nov. of '15

- John Murach joined the MCL in Nov. of '00

- Anthony Ross joined the MCL in Nov. of '15

- Charles Helfrich turns 88 on Nov. 10th

- Bob Jann turns 42 on Nov. 15th

- Joe Malia turns 68 on Nov. 16th

- Randy Schueck turns 64 on Nov. 17th

- Manny Wassum turns 70 on Nov. 9th

Meeting Minutes Cont...

- ❖ Commandant Smith went to the Fall Department Staff Meeting and he reported the following:
 - If your dues are due from 10/26 until the end of December, you pay the full dues and then they will be up again 8/31/17. National dues are \$20, \$3 for department, and \$2 for Detachment 296. From January 1-July 31, National dues will only be \$10 and total dues would only be \$15. If your dues are up in August, you don't pay dues for that year.
 - There were two raffles discussed in response to the Department being \$10,000 dollars above their budget
 - There is a margarita mixer that is up for grabs with a raffle. The detachment has 50 tickets and there are only 500 chances total. Tickets are \$5 each.
 - YPF tickets (100) need to be sold by the March staff meeting to be entered for the drawing.
- ❖ The color guard for the Whitehall Area Chamber of Commerce will be Jason, Bob, and Tony. The ceremony at the monument at Cedar Beach is at 16:00 on 11/11. There is another color guard for Mission BBQ, which is Howard, Josh, Mike, and Tony. If you show up to either of these events, please wear covers and polo shirts.
- ❖ Sr. Vice Commandant Donatacci reported that on 11/9, we have Heartland at Blough Home in Bethlehem if anyone would like to come. We will meet at the CWV at 1:00. So far, it is Howard, Mike, Fred, and Bob. On 11/11 at the CWV, from 1-5, Ron Heckman is paying for all drinks in honor of his father.
- ❖ During the September Meeting as a detachment, we decided to go forward with an online roster on the website. At the end of the meeting there will be pictures taken that will be added online. **UPDATE:** If you were not in attendance during the October meeting, we will have a camera at November's meeting to take pictures as well.
- ❖
- ❖ The computer that was donated to the detachment came with a 20GB 1 year subscription to Drop box. After that year is over either, you can take the free Drop box for 2GB or you pay \$99/year and get 1TB. Commandant Smith signed off on the \$99 for this year.
 - A motion was made to make this \$99 payment every year
 - The motion was passed: **23 For: 0 Against: 0 Abstentions**
- ❖ A letter was received from the Department Marine of the Year Committee thanking the detachment for our submission
- ❖ Judge Advocate Schaeffer had the following to report:
 - On the birthday, everyone will be leaving Howard's office at 08:00 to head to Cookies. There is also a function at the Philadelphia City Hall on 11/10.
 - There will be multiple nursing home visits on the 12th and 13th. An email will be sent out with all the times.
- ❖ There is an Americanism program that the Marine Corps league has and it is basically a yearbook. It would be made up of everything that is on the website already, but in book form. We need to figure out how to make up the book and potentially form a committee. The book runs from July-June.
 - A motion was made to form an Americanism Committee.
 - The motion passed: **23 For: 0 Against: 0 Abstentions**
 - The committee will be comprised of Commandant Smith, Senior Vice Commandant Donatacci, Kimberly Fitzpatrick, and David Guldin
- ❖ Anna Rodriguez shared that she was invited to TX last weekend from an organization called Mission 22. Mission 22 is an organization that directs their attention to military suicides. They wanted to do silhouettes of fallen soldiers. They picked 20 throughout the country and Anna's son was one of them. Anna would like to have an honor guard when the silhouette of her son arrives to be placed somewhere of her choosing.

- Monthly detachment meeting to be held Nov. 17th and is set to begin @ 1930

Meeting Minutes Cont..

- ❖ The first round of officer nominations was held
 - Jason Smith was nominated for Commandant
 - Michael Donatacci was nominated Senior Vice Commandant
 - Bob Hoffman was nominated Junior Vice Commandant
 - Howard Schaeffer was nominated Judge Advocate
 - Terry Keiser was nominated Paymaster
- ❖ The following awards were presented
 - Marine Corps League Certificate of Participation was presented for "The Sitrep"
 - The detachment was awarded a Membership Commendation for maintaining a 109% roster
 - William Stoudt was presented a Ceremonial Guard Ribbon
 - Chaplain Malia was presented a Meritorious Commendation for the period of (July 2016 - October 2016)
 - Senior Vice Commandant Donatacci was presented the Distinguished Citizen Bronze Award for all of his hard work this past year



Paymaster's Report

- ❖ As of 10/26/16 the money market account has a balance of \$3,373.78
- ❖ As of 10/26/16 the checking account has a balance of \$4,748.77
- ❖ The report was accepted: **23 For: 0 Against: 0 Abstentions**



Wounded or in Distress

Chaplain Malia reported that a mass card would be sent to John Reppert sharing our condolences on the passing of his wife. Commandant Smith's wife will be undergoing knee surgery on Nov. 16th and will be out of commission for 6-8 weeks. Kimberly Fitzpatrick's friend from boot camp, Marine Angela Haring, recently lost her mother. I ask that you keep these marines and their families in your prayers.

After Action Reports



MWSS-472 Birthday Ball

<http://www.lvmcl.com/mwss-472-birthday-ball/>

On November 5th, a group of members from Detachment 296 attended the Marine Corps Birthday Ball for MWSS 472. The event was fantastic and we got to share it with our spouses, close friend and family. For me it was the first Ball I have attended in 14 years and it was my wife's first. It was great to be back around enlisted marines and being able to share our stories and life experiences with them. It showed our spouses

why we do what we do for the league and proved the bond that we all share as marines. I look forward to attending many more in the future. - **Commandant Jason Smith**

After Action Reports Continued



BLOUGH NURSING HOME VISIT 11/9/16

<http://www.lvmcl.com/blough-nursing-home-visit-11916-1/>

On November 9th Heartland Hospice presented certificates to Veterans. The event took place at Blough nursing home in Bethlehem Pa. This event started out as a larger event but ended up as a very scaled down certificate presentation. Heartland brought along a new musical therapist, we sang a couple of songs that brightened up the occasion. After presenting the certificates, cake was distributed to all. After enjoying my piece of cake, my mission was complete. - Sr. Vice Commandant Michael Donatacci



COOKIE'S TAVERN BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

<http://www.lvmcl.com/cookies-tavern-birthday-celebration-111016/>

On November 10th a small group of LVMCL members consisting of Fred Babcock, Josh Brown, Mike Donatacci, Howard Schaeffer, and a friend of Howard's Hurley Spinks attended the Marine Corps 241st birthday at Cookie's Tavern in Philly. We ran into Howard Cooper there. It was a good time had by all and the Espirit De Corps was at a high level throughout the day. - Sr. Vice Commandant Michael Donatacci



WHITEHALL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

<http://www.lvmcl.com/whitehall-area-chamber-of-commerce-veterans-day-celebration-111016-1/>

Detachment 296 once again supported the Whitehall Area Chamber of Commerce Veterans Day Celebration. We provided the Color Guard for the opening ceremony. This year's theme focused on WWII veterans, which included the 48 star flag being used during by the Color Guard. This year there were two guest

speakers. Don Burdick whom served in the Army in the European Campaign, and Matt Guttman whom served in the Navy during the Pacific Campaign. It was a nice event including stories that covered everything from boot camp in the WWII Era, all the way to taking over Hitler's personal home. - Commandant Jason Smith



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT CEDAR BEACH

<http://www.lvmcl.com/birthday-celebration-at-cedar-beach-2016/>

The Lehigh Valley Detachment, once again, teamed up with the Bethlehem Detachment to put on the Birthday Celebration at the Cedar Beach Marine Corps Monument. The event went off without a hitch. In attendance were members from both detachments as well as; representatives from the local reserve unit, the Leathernecks, and many local marine veterans and families. After the monument service, we held a cake cutting ceremony at the Knights

of Columbus. Detachment 296 member Charlie Helfrich and I were the oldest and youngest marines present. - Commandant Jason Smith

After Action Reports Continued



MISSION BBQ VETERANS DAY COLOR GUARD

<http://www.lvmcl.com/mission-bbq-veterans-day-color-guard/>

On November 11, Veterans Day, an Honor guard was provided to Mission BBQ for their daily noontime patriotic display. Of course, this day is special and was shown by the attendance of special Veteran groups. In attendance for the honor guard were Fred Babcock, Howard Schaeffer, Josh Brown and Mike Donatacci. After our duties were performed, an outstanding free lunch was provided by Mission BBQ. - Sr. Vice Commandant Michael Donatacci



VETERANS DAY WEEKEND NURSING HOME VISITS

<http://www.lvmcl.com/veterans-day-weekend-nursing-home-visits-2016/>

On November 12th, LVMCL was on a mission to visit Veterans at three nursing homes in the local area. With our group to honor Veterans was Opha Mae and Reckless, Howard Schaeffer's service dogs. The day is chronicled in photos and tells the story of the day. - Sr. Vice Commandant Michael Donatacci



On November 12th Judge Advocate Schaeffer, Marine Hurley Spinks, my daughter Elena, and I visited Mosser Nursing Home. Unfortunately, with having such few people there we were not able to take photos. One benefit of having such a small group is that it allowed us the time to get more personal with the residents. We each spent a lot of time sharing stories and showing off Opha and Reckless. As always, the staff of Mosser were very supportive, of our mission, and allowed us to walk between both meeting rooms and to individual rooms as well. - Commandant Jason Smith



Sr. Vice Commandant Donatacci, Chaplain Malia, and Bill Stoudt were all presented awards during the October meeting



Marine Corps League Detachment 296

Official Website:
<http://www.lvmcl.com>

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Visit with Opha Mae and Reckless

Opha Mae and Reckless are English bulldogs, whom are available to visit veterans of all branches of the United States Armed Forces. The English bulldog is the United States Marine Corps mascot. It was only fitting that they both have names steeped in Marine Corps history. Opha Mae was named after the first woman who enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Opha Mae Johnson joined the Marine Corps Reserve in 1918. Reckless was named after Staff Sergeant Reckless, a Mongolian mare, whose heroic endeared her so much to the Marine Corps that there was a statue of her place at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico Virginia. She was also buried with full military honors at Camp Pendleton in California. Both Opha Mae and Reckless are

available to visit veterans in hospitals, nursing homes, or private residences. They will wear one of their four Marine Corps uniforms; Dress Blues Uniform, Service Charlie Uniform, Green Camouflage Uniform, or Desert Camouflage Uniform. The choice is yours. There is no cost for this service as these men and women have already given enough. Opha Mae's certifications are available upon request, Reckless is currently undergoing training for his, and their license and shot records are available upon request. Anyone interested in requesting Opha's services can either go to the following link (<http://www.lvmcl.com/visit-with-opha-mae-and-reckless/>) or e-mail Commandant Jason Smith.



Emmaus Veterans Committee

The Emmaus Veterans Committee is made up of veterans from the Catholic War Vets, the VFW, the American Legion, and the Marine Corps League. The purpose of this committee is for all Emmaus veterans organizations to gather and ensure the needs of local veterans and their families are being taken care of.

The committee's activities include, but are not limited to:

- replacing the flags at veterans gravesites, multiple times a year
 - organizing the Emmaus Memorial Day Activities
- Once a year a flag retirement ceremony is held, in which old and tattered flags collected from gravesites, veterans groups, and civilian contributors are properly retired. The ashes of those flags are later collected and spread around the veterans cemeteries.

The Emmaus Veterans Committee also has an Honor Guard. This is a group of local veterans, which volunteer their time to perform military funerals for fallen veterans at the gravesite, including the playing of taps and a gun salute. They will also perform services inside the funeral home per the request of the family. There is no payment requested but donations are accepted. If you would like a military service at a loved one's funeral, please let the funeral director know and contact the committee either at the following link, (<http://www.lvmcl.com/emmaus-veterans-committee-honor-guard/>) or email Commandant Jason Smith.