

Fellow Marine Corps League Members,

I am taking this opportunity to wish all of you the very best in the new year. Our Department continues to grow with the addition of the newest Detachment, the Lincoln County Marines, who will be receiving their Charter on 5 March 2013 in Troy, Missouri. We extend to this newest Detachment a hearty "Welcome Aboard" and I know that each of you will do your best to assist them in familiarizing themselves with the workings of the League if asked. Working together will insure the growth and vigor of the Department.

In this new year, the Department is going to strive to ensure that every Detachment is abiding by the Bylaws and Administrative Procedures of the League. It seems that some detachments have become somewhat lax about comporting their meetings in accordance with the prescribed rituals and standards. Perhaps this is in part due to the lack of knowledge of the proper procedures and a refresher course from the Professional Development Program would be in order. Every incoming Detachment Commandant should be aware that attendance at the quarterly Department conferences and the Department Convention is mandatory, even if it is inconvenient. I would welcome any suggestions that you might have to make the meetings more convenient for all of you but, until some alternative is designated, you, as the Detachment Commandant, must make the commitment to travel just four times per year to the meetings. If it has been a while since you attended a quarterly meeting or the Department Convention, rather than looking on these gatherings as a drudgery, you are likely to find that the exchange of ideas and the camaraderie found there are worthy of taking back to your Detachment to be shared with your members. Our next quarterly meeting is on 2 March 2013 in Jefferson City and will start promptly at 0900. There are important issues to discuss and information to be shared. The location of our meetings is the Samuel F. Gearhart Detachment headquarters and for those of you who have not yet been there, from Jefferson City you will drive West on Highway 50 and take the Apache Flats exit North for approximately one block where the building can be found on your right. Remember that you can bring as many members of your Detachment staff as you like since it is a good experience for your future officers and an opportunity to meet with and share ideas with the Officers of other detachments.

I will also take this opportunity to remind each and every one of you of the importance of the individual members in each Detachment. I urge those of you in positions of leadership to remember that the true value of the League as well as the true power in this League are vested in the members themselves. It is vital that we look around to see who in the Detachment is contributing of their time, talent and possibly finances to support the important work of the League and treat that member with the respect and consideration that is due to them. Just think about it. There are times when it seems that the members who put themselves out there the most and are active and involved in all of the activities of the Detachment are treated worse than a complete stranger on the street. In our civilized society, one would never think of loudly berating or belittling an unfortunate stranger that you encounter in the local supermarket yet the same cannot always be said for your associates in the League. I have personally witnessed a member blatantly impugn the integrity of another member before an assembled meeting for being less qualified to be a member of the League than the bully himself. It is important to recognize that the League does not recognize the rank one held in the Corps or the Navy as a basis for standing in the League itself. Once a DD214 has been examined and the member found to be qualified to join the League, then all other issues of suitability for membership in the League

should be put aside. Each and every member should be encouraged to participate in all activities of the League and to rise to the office in the League that best suits that individual. When a Detachment has an active and involved member expressing an interest in possibly joining the leadership ranks of the League, that member should be embraced and encouraged in that endeavor and treasured for their contribution. Each member is an important part of the whole that is the Detachment just as every Detachment is an important part of the whole that is the Department and the entire League.

In closing, I want to emphasize that nothing I have written should be understood as being directed at any one individual or Detachment but my thoughts are being shared with you in an effort to facilitate the growth and development of the League and its members. Working together, our goal of Membership growth and retention can be met!

Semper Fi!

Teresa M. Terry

Commandant, Department of Missouri