



Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Chartered 2 March 2016

## **NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION GUIDE**

**WELCOME ABOARD!**

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4 September 2025

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome Aboard to Marine Corps League Pride and Purpose Detachment #1435 of Fort Wayne, Indiana! We were chartered on 2 March 2016 to continue the mission of the Marine Corps League in the Greater Fort Wayne Area after the former Fort Miami Detachment dissolved and forfeited their charter. The Board of VFW Post 857 invited us to use their home for our meetings and such even providing us an office for our property and records.

## MISSION

To join together as Marine Corps League members to preserve the traditions and history of the United States Marine Corps banding together as Marines who are now actively serving and who have been honorably discharged as a United States Marine, Fleet Marine Force Corpsman or Fleet Marine Force Chaplain promoting the ideals of freedom, American democracy, and the Constitution of the United States of America.

To support the mission of the National Marine Corps League and the Department of Indiana Marine Corps League. To voluntarily assist Marines, FMF Corpsmen and FMF Chaplains who are now serving; honorably discharged Marines, FMF Corpsmen, FMF Chaplains, their spouses and orphans.

To support local charities, organizations, other community assistance, events in the County of Allen, Indiana and its' adjacent counties as determined by the Board and the Membership of Marine Corps League Detachment #1435 Pride and Purpose.

## OFFICERS

### A. 2025 OFFICERS

|                        |                |              |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Commandant             | TJ Taylor      | 260-579-8898 |
| Senior Vice Commandant | Amy Dohner     | 260-357-9121 |
| Junior Vice Commandant | Chuck Stewart  | 260-466-1191 |
| Judge Advocate         | Joe Hoyos      | 260-413-9144 |
| Junior Past Commandant | TJ Taylor      | 260-579-8898 |
| Adjutant               | Sharon Eichman | 260-446-6107 |
| Chaplain               | Bill Meinert   | 574-253-3878 |
| Paymaster              | Judy Vickers   | 260-341-7945 |
| Sergeant-at-Arms       | Alena Gillum   | 260-435-0184 |

Previous Detachment Commandants were:

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Dale Wilkinson | 2016      |
| Ron Moser      | 2017-2018 |
| Troy Gillum    | 2019-2021 |
| Amy Dohner     | 2022      |
| TJ Taylor      | 2023-2024 |
| Matt Careins   | 2025      |

### B. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS COMMANDANT

Serves at the senior executive officer of the Detachment, and

presides over all meetings of the Detachment and the Board. Serves as an advisor to all committees, and directs and supervises the elected and appointed officers. Together with the Paymaster is responsible for the integrity of Detachment finances, and ensures that the Detachment is represented at civic, memorial and community functions where it is customary that Veterans' organizations be represented.

#### **SENIOR VICE COMMANDANT**

Assists the Detachment Commandant in every way to further the movement and activities of the Detachment, assists all committees, and implements dynamic programs that increase the effectiveness and visibility of the Detachment. In the absence or illness of the Commandant performs the duties of that office.

#### **JUNIOR VICE COMMANDANT**

Creates and promotes Detachment membership and retention activities, and performs the duties of the Detachment Commandant and/or Senior Vice Commandant in the event of absence or illness.

#### **JUDGE ADVOCATE**

Shall be familiar with and interpret Detachment Bylaws, and advise, counsel and render opinions of law and procedure to the Commandant during meetings. Revise and make recommendations of Bylaws changes to keep in line with National and Department of Indiana when they make changes.

### **C. DUTIES OF APPOINTED OFFICERS BY THE COMMANDANT**

#### **ADJUTANT**

Keeps and maintains minutes and records of Detachment and Board meetings, and handles all Detachment written communications (e-mail, mail, etc.) to all members of the Detachment. Maintains with the assistance of the Paymaster a current roster of all Detachment membership, and conducts the annual Life members audit every June.

#### **CHAPLAIN**

Takes an active part in all memorial and funeral services in which the Detachment participates, completes, and submits the TAPS form to the Department of Indiana Chaplain when a member passes, and sends sympathy cards to families. Visits the sick and sends get well cards as appropriate.

## **PAYMASTER**

Maintains true and current records of funds received and expended by the Detachment, and disburses funds approved by the board and membership and/or Commandant. Deposit funds, and notify members of annual dues renewal by July 1. Maintains accurate records of all Detachment committees, events, and fundraisers. Orders and disburses Detachment awards, plaques, ribbons, covers, and uniforms.

## **SERGEANT-AT-ARMS**

Arranges the meeting room at least one hour prior to the meeting, and cleans up the room after the meeting. Verify the membership of all persons attending the membership meeting, and reminds them to silence their wireless devices, wear only the MCL cover in the meeting room, and makes certain no food or alcohol is in the room when the meeting is called to order. Preserves order at all meetings.

## **D. JUNIOR PAST COMMANDANT**

This officer is the most immediate past Commandant, and holds this post until the current Commandant is replaced. Serves on the Board, and provides counsel and assistance in providing continuity of Detachment programs and work.

## **MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

All personnel applying for membership must have filled out the membership application and present first year's due payment of \$40 to the Detachment Paymaster. Those individuals must also present their DD-214 or 2 other proofs of military service and identification to at least 2 members of the Board of Trustees for verification to see if they qualify for regular membership.

Membership Categories:

- a. Regular Member (Honorably Discharged Marine and FMF Corpsman)
- b. Associate Member
- c. Life Membership (never pay annual dues)

Annual Dues of \$35 are due by 31 August annually to the Paymaster.

Life Membership one-time dues are:

|             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| Age 18-35   | \$1,000 |
| Age 36-50   | \$800   |
| Age 51-64   | \$600   |
| Age 65-Over | \$400   |
| Age 85-Over | \$100   |

For more details or to become a Life Member see our Paymaster. Must be a member at least one year (12 months) before becoming a Life Member.

## **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

The general membership shall nominate the elected officers during the October and November monthly membership meeting for the following year. The nominee must accept the nomination. Associate members are not eligible for an elected office.

The elected officers are Commandant, Senior Vice Commandant, Junior Vice Commandant and Judge Advocate.

The election of officers shall be held during the December monthly membership meeting.

The incoming Commandant-Elect appoints the Adjutant, Chaplain, Paymaster and Sergeant-at-Arms.

The installation of officers shall be held during the January monthly membership meeting.

## **MEETINGS**

### **A. DATE, TIME, and PLACE**

The Detachment holds a monthly membership meeting on the third Monday of every month at 1900 (7:00 p.m.) in the middle meeting room of VFW Post 857 located at 2202 West Main Street in Fort Wayne. Entrance drive is on Leesburg Road. The meetings generally last one hour allowing for a social hour after the meeting.

### **B. PROTOCOL**

- No alcohol or food is permitted during the meeting.
- Wireless devices are to be silenced or turned off when entering the meeting room.
- The only approved cover is the Marine Corps League cover which is the minimum uniform of the Marine Corps League.
- Yes, we wear our covers indoors and salute indoors.
- The Marine Corps League operates under Roberts Rules of Order.
- We are not to discuss politics or religious matters especially during meetings.
- During the meeting if a member wishes to address the floor on any topic the member is to rise, salute, address the Commandant as "Sir Commandant" or "Madam Commandant," and be recognized for beginning to speak to the topic.
- No member should speak over another member who has the floor.
- Members are encouraged to attend the monthly membership meeting.
- If you leave and/or return to the room during a meeting, you must stop, stand at attention, and salute the American flag, and then the Sergeant-at-Arms.

## **EVENTS**

### **A. MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY BALL**

The Detachment hosts the Marine Corps Birthday Ball every November on a Saturday evening. Doors open at 5pm and ceremony at 6pm. Dinner, awards, check presentations to our outreach programs and dancing follow. Tickets are sold until one week before the event or when sold out whichever is first. The

birthday ball is open to the public, and we generally have 200 attend each year. Every member should plan to attend.

## **B. FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY**

The Detachment purchase a special made burner for flag retirement ceremonies, and it is stored at the VFW Post 857. The volunteer caretaker prepares the burner for ceremonies, and personally salutes each flag before retiring it. We host a spring and fall flag retirement ceremony that is open to the public.

The public can drop off flags for retirement anytime at VFW Post 857 canteen.

## **C. FORT WAYNE HOME AND GARDEN SHOW**

Our Detachment has a booth during the four-day Fort Wayne Home and Garden Show in the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. The booth is manned by 3 volunteers per shift (sign up in advance), and this is a good opportunity to introduce our Detachment to prospective members, invite visitors to us monthly pancake breakfast, invite them to other known events, and encourage them to like our Facebook page and check out our website.

## **D. HONOR FLIGHT NORTHEAST INDIANA**

Our Detachment has funds reserved to pay for the Guardian of Marines going on an upcoming Honor Flight. We also have a Welcome Home detail open to all members at the Fort Wayne International Airport to welcome them home.

## **E. PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

Our Detachment hosts a monthly pancake breakfast on the third Saturday of every month in VFW Post 857 located at 2202 West Main Street in Fort Wayne. The breakfast is 8-11am, and is open to the public. We always need volunteers to help set up for the breakfast at 7:00 a.m., serve and clean tables 8-11am, and help clean up and do dishes 11-11:30am. We need help in the kitchen mixing the pancake batter and 2 omelet chefs.

## **F. PARADES**

Our Detachment participates in the annual Memorial Day parade and Veterans Day parade hosted by the Allen County Council of Veterans Organizations. We invite all members to join us in the 1.3 mile parade up Parnell Avenue from Nettie Avenue by North Side High School to the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. Members can walk or ride, and are encouraged to stay for the brief ceremony in Veterans Plaza immediately after the parade.

## **G. TOYS FOR TOTS**

Our Detachment proudly supports the Toys for Tots campaign of Allen County and Whitley County. We provide manpower for toy collection, sorting and shopping as requested.

## **FUNDRAISERS**

### **A. ANNUAL CHARITY CAR, TRUCK & BIKE SHOW**

Our Detachment hosts a car, truck & bike show every summer to raise funds

for a local non-profit charity. The show includes food trucks, music, door prizes and amazing cars, trucks, and bikes. Numerous unique prizes are awarded in early afternoon. The show is open to the public, and we need the membership to help promote, collect door prizes and volunteer to work the show.

## **B. ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Our Detachment hosts a golf tournament every summer to raise funds for a local non-profit charity. The tournament has a shotgun start followed by a delicious meal and prizes. The number of teams is limited for the best ball scramble. If you golf, get a team entered when registration opens. Otherwise, volunteer to help us serve food and clean up.

## **RECOGNITION**

### **A. MARINE OF THE YEAR**

Previous recipients review nominations and vote by secret ballot with the Paymaster ordering the plaques and keeping confidential until the presentation after dinner during the Birthday Ball our Marine of the Year.

Criteria considered by the committee includes:

- Who has the most outstanding service to the Detachment and Community for the period of 1 September to 31 August?
- Period of performance for consideration is September 1 to August 31 (membership year).
- Detachment Marine (life or regular member) in good standing, including current dues paid, who during the period of consideration has demonstrated by leadership and performance an extraordinary contribution to the Detachment, Marine Corps League, and Community.
- Whose personal conduct has reflected favorably on and has brought credit to the Detachment, Marine Corps League, and the United States Marine Corps.
- Whose commitment with the Detachment has included regular monthly meeting attendance and contributions, Detachment event participation, perpetuating membership through recruiting efforts, and/or committee membership.
- Whose service in the community including patriotic programs, parades, homecomings, volunteer work, and service to church and other similar activities.
- Lifetime achievements are not considered.

Our Marines of the Year are:

|      |                               |
|------|-------------------------------|
| 2016 | Alena Gillum                  |
| 2017 | Amy Dohner                    |
| 2018 | Troy Gillum and Joe Hoyos     |
| 2019 | Lowell Bowker and Rick Dawson |
| 2020 | Terrence L. Taylor, Jr. (TJ)  |
| 2021 | Ron Ryan                      |
| 2022 | Christopher J. Taylor         |
| 2023 | Matthew R. Careins            |
| 2024 | Kevin Cornish                 |
| 2025 | TBA                           |

## **B. ASSOCIATE OF THE YEAR**

Previous recipients review nominations and vote by secret ballot with the Paymaster ordering the plaques and keeping confidential until the presentation after dinner during the Birthday Ball our Associate of the Year.

Criteria considered by the committee includes:

- Who has the most outstanding service to the Detachment and Community for the period of 1 September to 31 August?
- Period of performance for consideration is September 1 to August 31 (membership year).
- Detachment Associate members (life or associate) in good standing, including current dues paid, who during the period of consideration has demonstrated by leadership and performance an extraordinary contribution to the Detachment, Marine Corps League, and Community.
- Whose personal conduct has reflected favorably on and has brought credit to the Detachment, Marine Corps League, and the United States Marine Corps.
- Whose commitment with the Detachment has included regular monthly meeting attendance and contributions, Detachment event participation, perpetuating membership through recruiting efforts, and/or committee membership.
- Whose service in the community including patriotic programs, parades, homecomings, volunteer work, and service to church and other similar activities.
- Lifetime achievements are not considered.

Our Associates of the Year are:

|      |                                     |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| 2016 | No Recipient                        |
| 2017 | James Beetham                       |
| 2018 | Terrence L. Taylor, Sr.             |
| 2018 | Barbara Cantwell and Sharon Eichman |
| 2020 | Victor Alvarez                      |
| 2021 | Terrence L. Taylor, Sr.             |
| 2022 | Barbara Renner                      |
| 2023 | Terrence L. Taylor, Sr.             |
| 2024 | Tiffany K. Careins                  |
| 2025 | TBA                                 |

## **C. CHURCH, COMMUNITY and VOLUNTEER SERVICE**

- Let the Adjutant know what church and community organizations you belong to, and any offices held.
- Let the Adjutant know what organizations you volunteer with and how many hours per week – do this at the end of every month.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **A. FACEBOOK PAGE**

We invite everyone to **LIKE** and **FOLLOW** our Detachment's Facebook Page.

[MarineCorpsLeagueDetachment#1435PrideandPurpose](#)

### **B. WEBSITE**

We invite everyone to check out regularly our NEW Detachment's website.

<https://mclprideandpurpose.com>

The new and free QR Code also takes you to our Detachment's website.



## NEWSLETTER

Our Detachment produces a monthly newsletter "**the FEW, the PROUD**," and it is e-mailed to all members on the last Sunday morning of the month around 5:30am. Members are encouraged to submit articles to the Adjutant by the monthly meeting for the following month.

Our Detachment's newsletter earned 1<sup>st</sup> place in the 2022 and 2023 National Newsletter Competition in the Company Division (51-100 members) and the most competitive division after placing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 2019, 2021, and 2024 National Newsletter Competition in the Company Division (51-100 members) competitions. No competition was held in 2020 due to COVID. The 2025 newsletter received a certificate of appreciation.

## UNIFORMS

The Marine Corps League cover is the only required basic uniform. No pins or patches are allowed on the cover other than the EGA or Associate ornament, Devil Dog, LIFE member embroidery, officer embroidery, and Detachment embroidery. It is to be worn during all monthly membership meetings.

Many members purchase from our Paymaster a red polo shirt and/or t-shirt to wear during monthly meetings, pancake breakfasts, parades, and other events.

The undress uniform is optional, but our officers wear it. It consists of a short-sleeve white aviator shirt for summer or long-sleeve white aviator shirt for winter with proper patches centered on the shoulders and the DOD or MCL ribbon bar above the right pocket. A black tie with USMC or MCL tie clasp is worn with the long-sleeve shirt. Highly polished black shoes, socks, trousers, and belt are worn with this uniform.

The dress uniform is generally worn for funerals and during the Birthday Ball (unless dress blues are worn). The uniform is:

## RED BLAZER LINKS

The following links are provided as a courtesy. The Marine Corps League does not endorse one company over another.

[JCPenney's – Stafford Men's Hopsack](#)

[Uniforms In Stock](#)

[Uniforms In Stock – Women's Blazer](#)

[Ashby's Menswear](#)

[Buy a Blazer – Men's and Women's Blazers](#)

[Amazon – Neil Allyn](#)

[Amazon – Vittorio St Angelo](#)

[Ferrecci – Slim Fit](#)

[UniformalWearhouse – Neil Allyn](#)

[Menz Fashion](#)

CASUAL - RED BLAZER - MALE - Standard Cover (Paragraph V)

The Marine of the Year (National, Division, Department or Detachment) Medallion and Ribbon; the Chapel of Four Chaplains (Legion of Merit, Humanitarian Award, and Bronze Medallion Award); or the Military Order of Devil Dogs collar, if authorized, may be worn with the Casual – Red Blazer Uniform. Only one of these devices, medallions, or collars, may be worn at a time at the option of the wearer.

**NOTE** – MEDALLIONS AND RIBBONS MAY NOT BE WORN WITH ANY OTHER STYLE SHIRT (I.E., POLO, T-SHIRT, OR CIVILIAN DRESS SHIRTS.)

White shirt, plain collar (no button-down collars, NO SUNBURST INSIGNIAS on the collar).

TIE. PLAIN BLACK with Marine Corps or Marine Corps League (ENLISTED STYLE) gold tie bar.

Blazer, Red with two (2) Marine Corps League buttons on front and three (3) or four (4) Marine Corps League buttons on each sleeve cuff. – These can be purchased from the Store at National, or our Paymaster can order for you. You will need to find a sewing store to replace the Red Blazer buttons with the MCL buttons.

Marine Corps League Crest (Paragraph VII) for Marines only.

Lapel Pin(s) (optional) (Paragraph VIII).

Trousers, black, dress.

Belt, black leather, with Marine Corps emblem (EGA) on square gold buckle **ONLY** if a Marine. Associates wear black belt.

Shoes, black plain toe (military style, highly glossed).

Socks, black.

**OPTIONAL:** A black leather dress belt may be worn as a substitute to the black leather belt with Marine Corps emblem (EGA) on square gold buckle. Also optional is a ratcheting black leather belt with a gold Marine Corps emblem buckle (EGA) or a ratcheting black leather belt with a gold buckle with Marine Corps League logo.

One, two or three Large (Standard) Marine Corps League medals or Department of Defense medals may be worn centered over the left breast pocket of the Marine Corps League Casual Uniform for formal events - Red Blazer. Medals must be mounted on a single ribbon bar (PARAGRAPH III a.)

Sunburst insignias are NOT worn on the shirt collar and the Marine Corps Dress Blue trousers are NOT WORN with the CASUAL RED BLAZER UNIFORM.



NOTE: This will be updated later in 2025 by the National Board.

## DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA

Our Detachment is part of the Department of Indiana, and we are in District 2 along with the Elkhart Area Marines and South Bend Valley Detachments.

The Department hosts a Spring Conference (generally a Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning in March), a Summer Convention (generally a Friday night through Sunday morning in early June), and a Fall Conference (generally a Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning in early October) in Plainfield, Indiana. All members are encouraged to attend. Members are responsible for their travel, lodging, registration fee, and meals. These 3 events are outstanding opportunities to meet members from other Detachments and share ideas.

The Department has several committees including a college scholarship committee that awards annual college scholarships to members and members families who qualify and submit the necessary application materials.

#### **CONTACT DETACHMENT**

##### **MAILING ADDRESS:**

Marine Corps League  
Pride and Purpose  
Detachment #1435  
P. O. Box 10164  
Fort Wayne, IN 46850-1064

##### **E-MAIL:**

[mclprideandpurpose.com](mailto:mclprideandpurpose.com)

## **Once a Marine, Always a Marine**

Long after the uniform has been laid aside, the last order has been given,  
the final salute returned, the last handshake shared, and the  
occasional tear brushed away by a determined hand.

Long after that, it still runs in your veins,  
lives in your mind, and dominates your will.

Long after that you feel the call, the esprit that can only be shared  
among brothers and sisters. Among individuals bonded together by  
the truest of ideals.

## **Semper Fi!**

Created and updated by the Adjutant.  
4 September 2025