



**The Pikes Peak Scuttlebutt**  
**January 2026 Newsletter**  
**Pikes Peak Detachment 29**  
**Marine Corps League**

P.O. Box 10536 Colorado Springs, CO 80932-1536  
Newsletter Editor Terry Crum  
<https://www.pikespeakmcl.org>



**2026 Pikes Peak Detachment Officers**

**Commandant / Quartermaster**  
Senior Vice Commandant  
Junior Vice Commandant  
Judge Advocate  
Junior Past Commandant  
Adjutant

**Osa Tuck**  
Paul Reifke  
John Alban  
Brandy Bejarano  
Jennifer Luckett  
Mark Shuster

**Paymaster**  
Chaplain/Web Sgt  
Sgt-at-Arms  
MCL Aux Pikes Peak Unit  
MODD Pound Keeper

Dan Wood  
Terry Crum  
Scott Douglass  
Donna Rae Smith  
PDD Russ Miller

**Pikes Peaks Detachment**  
**Monthly Meeting**  
**Saturday, 17 January 2026**  
**Breakfast \$10**

 

Breakfast starts at 0800 Meeting Starts 0900

DAV Chapter 26 6800 Palmer Park Blvd  
We meet the third Saturday of every month

**Pound Growl shortly after the meeting**

**Department of Colorado Quarterly Staff Meeting**  
Saturday, 24 January 2026



Hosted by Pikes Peak Detachment

**DAV Chapter 26**  
6880 Palmer Park Blvd Colorado Springs

Social 1100 – Lunch 1200 – Meeting 1300

**Pack Growl shortly after the meeting**

Swearing in the 2026 detachment officers during the December detachment meeting



Members of the Pikes Peak Det. were very busy during the month of December getting toys for Toys for Tots.



## **Commandant Osa Tuck**

Happy New Year all!!!

CONGRATULATIONS to all of the officers, sworn in at the Dec meeting.

The holidays are over and we are beginning a new year. 2025 was a busy year for the Pikes Peak Detachment. Parades, family nights, festivals and rallies. We celebrated the Marine Corps 250<sup>th</sup> birthday with a huge bash. We worked Toys for Tots to give children a special Christmas. However, with all the activities and celebrations, let's take time to remember the wonderful Marines we lost this year. Please continue to pray for and support their families however we can.

2026 looks to be just as busy, fun and exciting for the Pikes Peak Detachment. Let's work together to make 2026 a fantastic year. Just a reminder:

The Department Staff meeting is coming up:

1/24/2026 @ the DAV

1100 Social hour

1200 Lunch

1300 Meeting

MODD Growl to follow the meeting

I hope to see you all there!

Osa

## **Junior Vice Commandant John Alban**

Happy New Year Marines! Standby by for more upcoming information for the St. Patrick's day parade. Continue to support the League and make it a goal to bring a new Marine to join our League. Thank you.

John

## **Judge Advocate Brandy Bejarano**

Happy New Year everyone! I'm Brandy Bejarano and it is an honor to be your Judge Advocate for the Marine Corps League Pikes Peak Detachment 29. I look forward in my new role in ensuring our detachment operates within the League's rules and regulations, providing guidance on by-laws, parliamentary procedure during meetings, and upholding the League's rituals and principles, all while supporting our mission and fellow Marines. Thank you for the opportunity!!

Semper Fi,

Brandy

## **Paymaster Dan Wood**

HAPPY NEW YEAR MARINES AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS!!

Here we are starting off the new year with only 14 members being delinquent with their dues. The National MCL offices were closed over the holidays so we've still got a shot at having ZERO members delinquent.

This would be a first for the Detachment, as far as I know, so by this newsletter you should have received a phone call or email from me informing you that you are in danger of being dropped from the membership roster. Which means, NO privileges until they are paid and the cost will be \$72 for two years compared to \$36 for this past year.

Please, please let's get those dues caught up.

Semper Fi

Dan

## Quartermaster Osa Tuck

I will be setting up cash sales for the Department Staff meeting. The next major event is Territory Days. I will be signing up for it in the next couple of days.

Semper Fi,  
Osa

## Chaplain Terry Crum

Marine Corps League family.

The 2025 is now in the review mirror. We said farewell to those close to us in the detachment. Pat Carty, Melvin Postlewait, and Gary George all reported to their final duty station guarding the streets of heaven. A final duty station for us all at our appointed time. We miss for now but the reunion will happen at the proper time.

Recently John Huntz spent a number of days in the hospital. He gave us quite a fright. John became very ill shortly after he and Suzi came home recently from Arkansas. John had been in a wheelchair most of the time on the trip. He was very unstable. He was admitted to St Francis Medical Center. His blood pressure was 230 (very high). He stayed at the hospital for additional tests but they are still looking for the actual issue. John is home now and has plenty of support from family. John and Suzi do not expect to be at the next meeting. Your prayers are welcome.

Paul Reifke has been in the hospital recently. He has been battling a couple of medical issues and appears to be on the mend. Please pray that he returns home soon to Nancy soon.

Now for some good news, Mary Shuster is recovering from her recent surgery. Thank God.

The Bereavement Team is in need additional members. As you are able please consider joining. Attendance at funerals of Marines and FMF Naval personal demonstrates our respect and honor for our deceased fellow Marines and support to their families. We had an outstanding turnout for deceased detachment members as we should. However, our support is for all Marines whether we know them or not. The detachment bereavement team attended the funerals of eighteen Marines/FMF Corpsmen that reported to their final duty station guarding the pearly gates. Members of the detachment honor guard, are for all practical purposes, are members of the bereavement team when they are at a funeral. The Bereavement Team members can attend the funeral ceremony for Marine Vietnam Veteran Thomas Binkle Friday, January 16 at 2PM at Pikes Peak National Cemetery. Red blazer uniform of proper attire for a funeral requested.

I will try my best to keep everyone informed about members of our Pike Peak Detachment family in need of our thoughts and prayers. I must inform you that my ESP abilities are not very powerful and if you or someone you know is in need of assistance, you need to let me know. You can reach me anytime on my cell phone: (719) 432-7340. Ladies if you feel more comfortable talking to Theresa, she can be reached at (719) 237-3034. We work together in all these things.

Lord, Please help me learn from my mistakes this past year, but not dwell on them. Please help me not rest on my accomplishments in this past year, but use them to further your work in and through me. Please help me not quarrel with those who injured me this past year. Instead, O Father, lead me in your path and help me see your mighty works this next year. I ask this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (Author unknown)

May the Lord continue to bless you and your family,  
Terry



Chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) • Text 838255

Confidential support is available 24/7.

## VSO Update by MCL VSO Dan Wood

HAPPY NEW YEAR MARINES! As we start this year I thought I would share some highlights and 2026 plans for all MCL VSO's that you, as MCL Members/Associates and all Vets might be interested in. Terry has offered to include any VSO articles to the MCL Newsletter as a way to help keep our members, and associates informed with all things VA Health care.

Here are some excerpts from the MCL National Director of Veteran Service Officers Phillip Du:

1. In 2026 the Marine Corps League National Veterans Advocacy Academy (VAA) Veterans Service Officer (VSO) Accreditation Training Course schedule, administrated by our training partner, Bergmann & Moore, LLC. This course is the official VSO accreditation training offered as a pathway for MCL members (regular & associate) who aspire to receive VA accreditation and become a MCL National VSO. It also supports our ongoing effort to build a highly trained and professional VSO corps.
2. Some of these efforts have already paid off. For example, from July to November 2025, our VSOs have now helped secure **over \$75 million in benefits** for veterans and their families. That figure represents real outcomes providing stability, care, and dignity for the veterans who place their trust in YOU.
3. We are pleased to announce the **2026 Marine Corps League National Veterans Advocacy Academy (VAA) Veterans Service Officer (VSO) Accreditation Training Course** schedule, administered by our training partner, Bergmann & Moore, LLC.

Should you be interested in knowing more about the accreditation processes you can go to the National MCL website, scroll down to find the VSO contact information and updates. While there please check out our **Statement of Representation** that we provide to each vet prior to accepting their request for representation. I fully believe that it clearly represents who we are as MCL VSO's.

Several weeks after the government shutdown, and subsequent re-opening, I was finally able to get my PIV card that gives me access to all VA Medical Records in the VBMS system. After a few more weeks working with the IT department, I had complete access to the system. Since then, on top of my already existing VSO workload, I am averaging 3-5 phone calls/emails a week from vets needing assistance with their health care needs and filing a claim.

I hope to bring you periodic updates, as time allows, to help keep you Detachment #29 members informed.

Semper Fi  
Dan

## Web Sergeant Terry Crum

The Pikes Peak Detachment website is back online with a new look. The website domain is the same: <https://pikespeakmcl.org/>. If you had a link to the detachment website or had place the site in your web browser favorites, those links still work. The website is hosted by GoDaddy now. This new website will have a number of advantages to the old site as discussed during the November meeting. They are, but not limited to:

1. A better price.
2. More in line with style, format and look with the National website. National has been encouraging this.
3. This website site should be a lot more reliable than the old. The old site had a host of problems that were not getting better with time. This new site is the same format as the new Rocky Mtn Div site that I started earlier this year. That site works great.
4. The old site did not work great over a variety of devices, most notably smartphones. The new site looks great on Smartphones.

The old site was built up over a ten year period. This is only a few days old. It is still a work in progress. MCL National Executive Director/COO Bob Borka has seen the new website and likes what he has seen. I have received input from Bob with additional information that he feel should be on a MCL website. I was pleasantly surprised by what Bob sent. Feel free to visit the new and improved website. Your constructive feedback is welcome. I hope you will be pleasantly surprised by what you find there also.

Semper Fi,  
Terry

## Honor Guard Commander Terry Crum

Greetings motivated Marines, dedicated FMF Corpsmen, outstanding associate members, and excellent auxiliary members. Last year was an incredible year for the Pikes Peak Detachment Honor Guard. Every year the guard performs more ceremonies than the year before. During 2025 the honor guard preformed the rifle salute for 27 Veterans. The year is very young and the Guard already has its first two request for a ceremonies.

Without the dedication of the honor guard members this endeavor would be impossible. I cannot thank the motivators that make themselves available, sometimes with minimum notice, for the various ceremonies. These ceremonies mean the world to the families of Veterans and in my opinion exemplifies what we mean by "Semper Fidelis"; we are always faithful. We can always use new blood in the honor guard. If you retained basic rifle manual from boot camp, then you could join our ranks. The honor guard is busy now and I predict that this trend will continue.

Semper Fi,  
Terry

## Marine Corps History for the Month of January

### Second Battle of Khe Sanh

On January 20, 1968, the second battle for Khe Sanh began outside the village of the same name in the Quang Tri Province, Vietnam, 14 miles south of the DMZ and six miles east of the Laotian border, when the People's Army of North Vietnam (PAVN) launched a massive artillery bombardment on the U.S. Marine garrison. For the next 77 days, until April 6, the Marines and their South Vietnamese allies, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), fought off the siege in what was the longest, and one of the bloodiest, battles in the war.

### Operation Dewey Cannon

On January 22, 1969, Operation Dewey Canyon, arguably the most successful high-mobility regimental-size action of the Vietnam War, began in the A Shau/Da Krong Valleys when the 9th Marines, commanded by Colonel Robert H. Barrow, and supporting artillery were lifted from Quang Tri. By mid-March, the enemy's base area had been cleared out, 1617 enemy combatants had been killed, and more than 500 tons of weapons and ammunition were recovered. Barrow later went on to become the 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps.



## Annual Wreath Retirement for Wreaths Across America

The annual Wreath Retirement for Wreaths Across America will take place at Pikes Peak National Cemetery on Saturday January 24<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM. This event is held rain, shine, snow, or cold and will conclude once all wreaths and winter decorations have been cleared from every section of the cemetery.

Volunteers are needed to help remove wreaths from headstones and columbarium, transport them to central pickup points along the cemetery roads, and assist with loading them into trucks or trailers for disposal in designated dumpsters. This is a meaningful community service project that helps maintain the cemetery's dignity and appearance. Dress for the weather and expect possible mud. Wear old clothes and gloves; pine sap is common when handling greenery.

## Pikes Peak MCL Auxiliary President Donna Rae Smith



Happy & Blessed New Year Everyone!!

The Christmas rush is over, and I pray everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas.

It is hard to believe that we are almost a whole week into 2026, and we are already in the process of planning events to support Pikes Peak Detachment as well as Marines, Veterans, their families, and the community we live in. I look forward to working with an amazing group of ladies and great team!

During our November meeting, it was voted to serve a chili/soup lunch at the Department staff meeting on January 24, 2026. The list of soups and chili so far is ...

Mild chili x 2 – Kittrie Adams and Nancy Reifke  
White chicken chili – Katrina Padilla-Fullington  
No bean chili – Mary Shuster  
Traditional chicken soup – Mary Shuster  
Turkey Poblano soup – Carmella Miller  
Vegetable soup – Donna Rae Smith  
Salad & dressings – Suzi Huntz

Anyone else who is interested in making a soup or chili to be served for lunch that day, please call Donna Rae Smith at 815-973-0073 to be put on the list. ANYONE can help out – Marines and Associate members as well – can make their favorite soup or chili. Please note that there is not any medium or spicy chili listed ..... please feel free to make your favorite medium or spicy chili to add to the menu!!

Calendar -

- \* January 17, 2026 – Monthly Unit meeting, immediately following the Pikes Peak Detachment meeting.
- \* January 24, 2026 – MCLA Dept of Colorado quarterly staff meeting at DAV Bingo Hall – 6880 Palmer Park Blvd, Colorado Springs
  - ◆ 11:00 am – Social hour
  - ◆ Noon – Lunch
  - ◆ 1:00 pm – Meeting
  - ◆ MODD Flea meeting following MCLA meeting
- \* February 25 through March 1, 2026 – National MCL/MCLA Midwinter Conference
  - ◆ Sheraton Pentagon City – 900 South Orme Street, Arlington, VA

Thank you,

Donna Rae Smith

President



Many detachment members received awards during the December meeting. Only a few shown.

## WWII/Korean War/Vietnam Luncheon



**Monday, January 12, 2026**  
(the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month)

Veterans start arriving at 1030  
Guest speaker starts at 1115



Guest Speaker: Virginia Dunn USN (Retired)

**Stetson Hills I-HOP**

Private dining room; 5749 Stetson Hills Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80917



## Pikes Peak Det. Ladies Luncheon

**Monday January 19<sup>th</sup> at noon**



The Marine Corps League Ladies Luncheon will be held on Monday January 19<sup>th</sup> at noon at Longhorn Steakhouse, 5707 Barnes Road at noon. If you are planning on attending, please give Theresa a call or text at 719.237.3034 or email at [cscgirl88@gmail.com](mailto:cscgirl88@gmail.com), no later than Saturday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Here is a link to their lunch menu. If you don't want a steak, their sandwiches and salad prices are comparable to other restaurants.

<https://media.longhornsteakhouse.com/images/site/ext/pages/menus/pdf/lh-lunch-menu-5453.pdf>

We will brainstorm when and where we might want to meet in the coming year. I look forward to seeing you! Thank you!

Theresa Crum

## Pikes Peak Detachment Monthly Meeting Minutes



### Adjutant's Report

**TOPIC:** Regular Meeting Minutes  
**LOCATION:** DAV 26  
**Date:** 20 Dec 2025



**Mark Shuster**  
Retired US Marine  
Detachment Adjutant  
Life Member 59784 / MODD 04-351

Sgt At Arms Scott Douglas secured the room ensuring all present were qualified to be at the regular meeting.

Sgt At Arms Scott Douglas posted the Colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chaplain Terry Crum led the opening prayer.

Commandant Osa Tuck opened the meeting at 0900.

**Roll Call of Officers:**

Pikes Peak MCL Det 29 Officers		
Commandant	Osa Tuck	Present
Sr. Vice Commandant	Paul Reifke	Present
Jr. Vice Commandant	John Alban	Present
Judge Advocate	Vince Espinosa	Excused
Adjutant	Mark Shuster	Present
Paymaster	Dan Wood	Present
Chaplain	Terry Crum	Present
Sgt At Arms	Scott Douglas	Present
Jr. Past Commandant	Jennifer Luckett	Present
Quartermaster	Osa Tuck	Present
Web Sergeant	Terry Crum	Present

**Recognition of Dignitaries:**

- National Sr. Vice Commandant Russ Miller – Present
- MCL Rocky Mt. Division/Department of Colorado Chaplain Milt “Doc” Whitaker – Present
- MCL Department of Colorado Sr. Vice Commandant Terry Crum – Present

**Guests:**

- Austin Springs’ wife, Nadine Springs
- Kittrie Adams’ daughter, Kylie Glenn

**Applications for membership:**

- None

**Previous meeting minutes:**

- Skipped for holiday schedule, awards and swearing in of Detachment officers.

**Correspondence:**

- NSTR for correspondence.

**Report of the Paymaster:**

- Copies of the Detachment financial accounts, membership roster and monthly newsletter were available.
- Membership cards are available for pickup at the meetings. These will not be mailed out due to costs of postage.
- The Commandant entertained a motion to accept the Paymaster report pending audit. A motion to accept was made by Russ Miller and the motion was seconded by Scott Douglas. The motion carried and was passed.

**Report of the Chaplain:**

- Sick and in distress: Mary Shuster underwent surgery on 10 Dec 2025 for cancer. Her surgery went very well and she is recovering well. She and Shu want to thank everyone for your thoughts, support and prayers!
- Please be sure to send all of your thoughts, prayers and positive energy to everyone who needs our support!!

**Holiday Events**

- The Commandant entertained a motion to dispense with the normal meeting procedures for the holiday schedule, awards and swearing in of the Detachment officers. A motion to accept was made by Russ Miller and the motion was seconded by Paul Reifke. The motion carried and was passed.

### **Report of Officers**

All reports were skipped for the holiday schedule, awards and swearing in of Detachment officers.

### **Toys for Tots Russ Miller:**

- Russ Miller mentioned needing volunteers to count, sort or pick up toys for the weekend and the rest of the upcoming week.

### **MODD Russ Miller:**

- There will be a growl immediately following the January 2026 meeting. We have a Mongrel who is asking to become a Pup in our Pound. The Pack growl will take place the following weekend.

### **Report of Standing Committees**

All reports were skipped for the holiday schedule, awards and swearing in of Detachment officers.

### **Special Business:**

- Former Pikes Peak Commandant Joe V. Martinez conducted our time-honored tradition of installing our newly elected & appointed Detachment officers.
- The Pikes Peak Detachment 29 elected & appointed officers for 2026:
  - Commandant – Osa Tuck
  - Sr. Vice Commandant – Paul Reifke
  - Jr. Vice Commandant – John Alban
  - Judge Advocate – Brandy Bejarano
  - Adjutant – Mark Shuster
  - Paymaster – Dan Wood
  - Sgt-At-Arms – Scott Douglas
- Congratulations to all of the newly installed Officers, we appreciate your willingness to serve.

### **Good of the League:**

- Mark Shuster let everyone know General Stephen Whiting, USAF, Commanding General, US Space Command will be our guest speaker on 21 Feb 2026. Please plan on coming early so we can support Gen Whiting and his team at our meeting. He will be speaking about his Combatant Command in CO Springs and take questions. He will begin his discussion at 0830.
- Donna discussed that our detachment is hosting the Department of Colorado quarterly staff meeting on Saturday, 24 January 2026. The meeting will take place at our regular meeting location at DAV Chapter 26, 6880 Palmer Park Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80915. The social will begin at 1100 followed by lunch at 1200 and the meeting will start at 1300.
  - We need Marines to help make chili and soup. Please email Donna ([donnarae.mcl29@gmail.com](mailto:donnarae.mcl29@gmail.com)) if you are making anything for the meeting.
- 50/50 – a total of \$238 was collected and \$119 was won by Heike Carr! Congratulations Heike and thank you to everyone who supported the 50/50 raffle this month.

### **Closing Ceremony:**

- Sgt At Arms Scott Douglas retired the Colors.
- Chaplain Terry Crum said the closing prayer.
- Sr. Vice Commandant Paul Reifke executed his closing actions.
- Commandant Osa Tuck closed the Pikes Peak Detachment 29 meeting at 1003.
- The next meeting will be held on Saturday, 17 January 2026, at 0900.

Another successful Detachment meeting.

Very Respectfully Submitted and Semper Fi,

***Mark Shuster***

Detachment Adjutant