



# The SUNFLOWER "SCUTTLEBUTT"

Official "Mouthpiece" of the Department of Kansas, Marine Corps League  
Winter Edition 2025

Editor: Wes Topel, 3331 N. Flat Creek Cir, Wichita Kansas 67205-8703  
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## DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS OFFICERS 2024-2025

**COMMANDANT:** Wes Topel

e-mail: [wes.topel@gmail.com](mailto:wes.topel@gmail.com)

**SR. VICE COMMANDANT:** Bill Koonce

e-mail: [billkoonce@gmail.com](mailto:billkoonce@gmail.com)

**JR. VICE COMMANDANT:** Joel Wilson

e-mail: [wilsonjoel.1@gmail.com](mailto:wilsonjoel.1@gmail.com)

**SGT. AT ARMS:** Eldon "Doc" Holsey

email: [docmf.70@gmail.com](mailto:docmf.70@gmail.com)

**JUDGE ADVOCATE:** Kimberley Mancuso

e-mail: [Kimberleymancuso@gmail.com](mailto:Kimberleymancuso@gmail.com)

**ADJUTANT / PAYMASTER:** Harvey Harris

e-mail: [hharris@MCLLeague.org](mailto:hharris@MCLLeague.org)

**CHAPLAIN:** Bryson Allen

e-mail: [OldDD59.69@gmail.com](mailto:OldDD59.69@gmail.com)

**JR. PAST COMMANDANT:** George Waugh

e-mail: [gw10502@gmail.com](mailto:gw10502@gmail.com)



## Commandant Wes Topel

Greeting Kansas MCL and MODD Kansas Pack members,

A phishing email is a fake email that appears to be from a trusted source, but is actually an attempt to trick the recipient into giving away sensitive information. We are currently dealing with criminals creating emails like [marinecorpsleaguecommandant4@gmail.com](mailto:marinecorpsleaguecommandant4@gmail.com) and sending messages to our detachment membership saying they are the Department Commandant and asking for gift cards. As the email looks so official, one member actually went as far as to purchase gift cards but luckily texted me before sending the gift cards. BE ADVISED, NO DEPARTMENT STAFF MEMBER WILL EVER SOLICIT FUNDING DIRECTLY FROM THE MEMBERSHIP, LET ALONE ASK FOR THE FUNDS IN THE FORM OF GIFT CARDS.

I just reported our 2024 activities to the Midwest Division National Vice Commandant. During 2024 our 7 detachments conducted 21 funeral honors, logged 6,359 community service hours and assisted 7 transitioning Marines and families. In regards to Toys for Tots, individual detachment efforts and collective efforts with local USMCR units resulted in 60,898 children helped, 78,382 toys collected and \$11,318 in donations collected. Also you will see below in the Adjutant/Paymaster's Report all detachments are 100% with all compliance monitoring areas. Let's keep up the good work in 2025.

Semper Fi, Wes



## **Sr Vice Bill Koonce**

Woof Woof

Happy New Year League and Dogs

With a new year comes new starts with what we want to accomplish. This year is the year that the Dept of Kansas and Pack of Kansas gets highly motivated and we work on growing our numbers in membership and activities. Your Detachment and Pound is better when the members are active and productive.

The Sgt Max DeWeese (Lenexa) Detachment are in the process of getting a Young Marines Detachment up and running and they are very excited and motivated in getting this accomplished. Air Capital Detachment Continues to serve a meal to the SAL and Legion Riders of Post 4 every 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month at Post 4. Please let us know what your Detachment/Pound is doing in your area.

We have a few things coming up, The Midwest Division Conference is set for April 11th-13<sup>th</sup> in Sioux Falls SD. The National Convention is Mid August in Grapevine, KS. Get registered soon. KS Pack was asked to host this year's Gathering of the Dogs but logistics to get this done was proving very difficult. We are looking at hosting the event in 2 years giving us more time to lock things in. Remember the Gathering of the Dogs is open to all current Detachment members. The only thing Detachment members can't attend is the Growl, all other events you are more than welcomed to be involved in. It looks like the Gathering of the Dogs might be Minnesota, more info to follow.

I wish you all a Happy New Year.

Bill Koonce

Pack Leader/Sr. Vice



## **Judge Advocate Kimberley Mancuso**

I have nothing to report as the Department of Kansas Judge Advocate. However, I recognize that some Detachments within the Department of Kansas have faced some challenges this past year. But as General James Mattis once said "Marines don't know how to spell the word defeat." Thus our Detachments will persevere and overcome. So here's to a prosperous 2025.



Semper Fi!

Kimberley Mancuso

Dept. of Kansas Judge Advocate

MCL Detachment #1025- Commandant

(913) 215-8977

Kimberleymancuso@gmail.com



## Paymaster Harvey Harris

Greetings Members of the Department of Kansas, Marine Corps League.

Greetings from the New Year. The Department is in very good shape, report-wise. All Detachments have their Life Member Audit report submitted on time and will receive their refund around April or May.

Department Membership update as of 01-01-2025:

<b>Detachment:</b>	<b>Life Members</b>	<b>Paid Members:</b>	<b>Not Paid:</b>	<b>Total Members In Good Standing:</b>
Mt. Suribachi (105)	15	4	0	19
SEK (612)	19	15	1	34
Gen Walt (682)	52	4	0	56
Tri-Rivers (730)	14	18	0	32
Edwin Schumacher (740)	6	0	15	6
Air Capital (773)	50	14	2	64
Gen Oppenheimer (1025)	56	22	22	78
Department:	212	77	40	289

Department growth is at a standstill, very few new members joining the League, Department has more Notices of Death than new members joining the League. Now is the time to be on the lookout for new members and remember all non-life members are due for renewal by August 31 of each year, Bylaws state that a member not in "Good Standing" (CURRENT) cannot be an Officer In the Detachment or have a vote on detachment items until he/she is back in Good Standing.

Department Paymaster  
Harvey Harris

<b>Report of Officer Installation</b>
105
612
682
730
740
773
1025
Department

<b>Secretary of State Report</b>	<b>Next Report Due</b>
105	6/15/26
612	6/15/26
682	6/15/25
730	6/15/26
740	6/15/26
773	6/15/25
1025	6/15/25
Department	6/15/26

Life Member Audit
105
612
682
730
740
773
1025

IRS 990
105
612
682
730
740
773
1025

	Completed - in good standing
	Not Completed - Not Yet Due
	Not Completed - Overdue



## Chaplain Bryson Allen

### Detachment Chaplains

Report all membership deaths utilizing the [Notice of Death](#) form. Complete the form and email to:

**Department Chaplain Bryson Allen**  
OldDD59.69@gmail.com

**OR**

Complete the Notice of Death paper form; keep one (1) copy and mail the balance to:  
Department Chaplain Bryson Allen  
11910 West Carr Ave  
Wichita, KS 67209

The Department Chaplain will forward the forms to Department Paymaster and National HQ. Following this procedure ensures that the Department, National and Semper Fi magazine are correctly informed of your member's death. **Detachment Paymasters:** Complete a [transmittal](#) listing the deceased member with the Code **NOD** and date of death. If the NOD is the only item on the transmittal and there is not a check involved, email the transmittal to the Paymaster at [hharris@MCLeague.org](mailto:hharris@MCLeague.org)





## Department of Kansas Detachments

### Mount Suribachi Detachment #105

Chartered 9 February 1955

Commandant: Larry Thompson

[msglarry1@gmail.com](mailto:msglarry1@gmail.com)

Adjutant Paymaster Howard King

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

Mount Suribachi celebrated the 249<sup>th</sup> Marine Corps Birthday following the Kensington Parade. The Detachment was represented with a color guard in the parade. We also had a Christmas Dinner together held at Poochs in Smith Center. Detachment #105 also participated in the Old Settlers Day Parade in Smith Center and the Lebanon Bash Parade in which Commandant Larry rode his motorcycle with Marine Corps League Cover and Flag. Joe Osthoff also marched in the Flag Line in Marine Corps League Uniform.

We still have a couple of members who are under medical care and we pray for their speedy recovery.





**B. Gen. William A. Kurtis / SEK Detachment #612**

Chartered 6 January 1986

Commandant: Doug Harlin

[jtdug@att.net](mailto:jtdug@att.net)

Adjutant/Paymaster: Darla Fullerton

[Fullerton2111@gmail.com](mailto:Fullerton2111@gmail.com)

Meets 3rd Sunday at 1700 hours

VFW Post 1186 113 E Myrtle

Independence, KS 67301

Detachment Contact 620.331.6951

B. Gen William A. Kurtis detachment Marines stayed business this Fall with many activities in support of their local VFW and community. Pictured below are members at a monthly meeting, toys for the local toy drive with the VFW and honoring a fallen Marine by replacing the USMC flag at his grave.



### **Gen. Lewis W. Walt Detachment #682**

Chartered 18 January 1989

Commandant: Paul McGuire

[paulmcguire574@yahoo.com](mailto:paulmcguire574@yahoo.com)

Adjutant/Paymaster: Harvey Harris

[hharris@MCLLeague.org](mailto:hharris@MCLLeague.org)

Meets 4th Thursday at 1900 hours

VFW Post 1650

3110 SW Huntoon

Topeka, KS 66604

Detachment Contact 785.640.6077

The General Lewis W. Walt Detachment remains in an INACTIVE Status due to lack of required Elected Officers. Attempting to regain membership will allow monthly meetings so we can get back in the action. The Detachment has increased in size by two new members, Sgt. Brittain Abeln, and GySgt David Quintero, members of the Topeka Marine Corps Reserve Unit. WELCOME ABOARD MARINES.

Looking forward to a back-in-action report soon.

Semper Fi,

Paul McGuire

### **Tri Rivers Detachment #730**

Chartered 10 November 1990

Commandant: John Voisine

[jvoisine1@cox.net](mailto:jvoisine1@cox.net)

Adjutant/Paymaster: Cindy Klingaman

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

Meets 3rd Tuesday at 1900 hours

VFW, 1108 W. Crawford

Salina, KS 67401

Detachment Contact 785.826.5087

The Tri Rivers Detachment recently lost James Lester DeCarlo who was born on 6 April 1949 in Kansas City and died on 9 October 2024. He served in the Vietnam War and was buried at Leavenworth National Cemetery with full military honors.

A new member recently joined the detachment. Joshua McCario served in the USMC as a tank repairman from 2013 to 2020. He currently serves in the U.S. Army, stationed at Fort Riley, KS.

The Tr-Rivers held the 249th Marine Corps Ball on 10 November 2024 at the VFW. We had a very good turnout. The oldest Marine was Gerald McAtee, age 93, and the youngest Marine was Alfred Reif. On 14 December 2024, detachment members and friends joined forces and purchased toys for the children of Salina, KS. The detachment also held a Christmas party. There was a very good turnout. Gifts were exchanged and everyone had fun.

Semper Fidelis,

John P. Voisine

Commandant



### **Edwin A Schumacher Detachment #740**

Chartered 11 November 1990

Commandant: Bob Munsch

[bmunsch@ruraltel.net](mailto:bmunsch@ruraltel.net)

Adjutant Paymaster: Lance Koerner

[lmkoerner3@gmail.com](mailto:lmkoerner3@gmail.com)

Meets 1st Tuesday at 1930 hours

VFW Post

22<sup>nd</sup> & Vine

Hays, KS. 67601

Detachment Contact 785.261.0779

**NO REPORT THIS QTR**

### **Air Capital Detachment #773**

Chartered 30 June 1994

Commandant: Nathan Bogard

[oldcorps0341@gmail.com](mailto:oldcorps0341@gmail.com)

Paymaster: Andy Babb

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

Meets 3rd Tuesday

Social Time 1830

Meeting 1900 hours

American Legion Post 4

816 North Water St

Wichita, KS 67203

Detachment Contact 316.342.6209

The Air Capital Detachment #773 participated in several activities over the last few months. On November 3rd, detachment members and Young Marines supported the annual Toys for Tots Bicycle Toy Run. On November 9th, we participated in the Veteran's Day Parade with the Tornado Alley Young Marines marching in our lead. On November 10th, the detachment hosted numerous area Marines and FMF Corpsmen at the Wichita Veterans Park for the 249th USMC cake cutting ceremony. After brief remarks from the Detachment Commandant, Nathan Bogart, guests were served birthday cake and hot apple cider. The next day, November 11th, the Detachment's firing detail rendered honors for the annual Veterans' Day ceremony. On November 16th, several members of the detachment attended the Marine Corps Birthday Ball hosted by the local USMCR unit. On December 14th we gathered to share our annual Christmas meal together. At this event, the detachment recognized Wes Topel as the Detachment's Marine of the Year.



## Gen. Larry Oppenheimer Detachment #1025

Chartered 13 December 1999

Commandant: Kimberley Mancuso

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

(913) 215-8977

Adjutant/Paymaster: Mark Murphy

[mamurphy003@gmail.com](mailto:mamurphy003@gmail.com)

Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 1830 hours

VFW Post 7397

9550 Pflumm Road

Lenexa, KS 66215

Semper Fi Marines. The General Larry Oppenheimer Marine Corps League Detachment #1025 has been very active these past few months despite the cold temperatures.

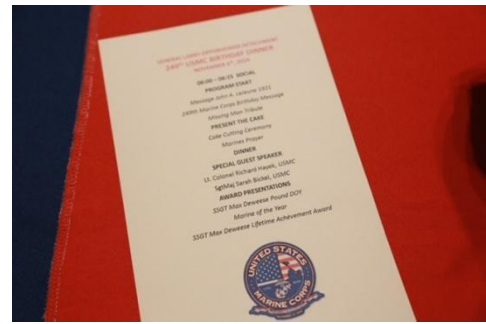
Detachment members Kevin Elmer and Stephen Sullins have continued presenting Eagle Scout certificates and coins to deserving Eagle Scouts. This recognition program has been well received by Boy Scout Packs throughout the metro area.



Members of our Detachment recently chartered a Young Marines of the Marine Corps League Unit. The Kansas Santa Fe Trail Young Marines Unit was officially chartered on September 6, 2024 and all adult volunteers are members of our Detachment. The Young Marines Unit is honoring the Life of Lance Corporal Gabriel Puchalla with its Unit Logo.



League Members and their guests celebrated the Marine Corps Birthday in style with an enjoyable evening at Stone Pillar Winery. Lt. Colonel Richard Hayek and Sgt. Major Bickel were our honored guest speakers.



Members of our Detachment also participated in an event with the Kansas City Chiefs Ambassadors and members of the Ruskin High School Football Team. The event was held at the World War I Museum in honor of Veteran's Day. It was a great event for all.



As always, our Detachment members spent hundreds of hours assisting CLR4 with Toys for Tots. Detachment members and their families helped collect toys at Walmart and various businesses in Johnson and Wyandotte Counties. All our efforts paid off as we had a very successful season. We were able to spread lots of Christmas Joy to children throughout the metro area.





As always, we would welcome participation/attendance from both League members and any FMF Corpsmen and Chaplains that are interested at any of our monthly events.

Date	Time	Location	Event
2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed of the month	1830	VFW (9550 Pflumm Rd Lenexa, KS)	Officer's Meeting
3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed. of the month	0900	Santa Fe Café ( 9946 W. 87 <sup>th</sup> St Overland Park, KS)	Breakfast with the Best
4 <sup>th</sup> Wed of the month	1830	VFW (9550 Pflumm Rd Lenexa, KS)	General Larry Oppenheimer Detachment Meeting

If you have any questions about these events feel free to reach out to me.

Semper Fi!

Kimberley Mancuso

MCL Detachment #1025- Commandant

(913) 215-8977

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



**7th grade students of the Curé of Ars Catholic School in Leawood, KS, participated in a Toys for Tots challenge and donated over 500 toys.**





# Department of Kansas

## Marine of the Year

### Nomination and Award Instructions

The Department of Kansas, Marine Corps League, in June 2013 at the Department Annual Conference, sanctioned the selection of an active member from various Detachments within the Department to the high honor of Marine of the Year. The following comprises the administrative procedures as revised on June 2024 and established "The Society of Marine of the Year, Department of Kansas" hereinafter referred as "The Society".

**Membership:** "The Society" will be composed of all Marine Corps League members who have been awarded the Department of Kansas Marine of the Year. Only those members who are active or life members in good standing shall be voting members. The Department Commandant shall be an "Ex-Officio" member without a vote. The Department Commandant shall have a vote only if the Society fails to maintain a minimum of 4 active members.

**Leadership:** "The Society" shall elect/appoint one of its members to the office of Chair of "The Society". In the event the Chair cannot be present at any meeting of "The Society" the senior member of "The Society" present shall be chair at the meeting.

**Quorum:** "The Society" shall meet once a year before the Department Conference on call of the chair to determine selection, if any, of that year's Marine of the Year. There shall be at least three (3) members present to constitute a quorum of "The Society". This meeting may be in person or electronically at the call of the chair.

**Nominations:** Nominations for the Marine of the Year shall originate from the Detachment level. The nominee must be an annual or life member in good standing of the Marine Corps League and by extension the Department of Kansas. The award shall be presented to the Marine Corps League member who in the opinion of their Detachment has rendered service and performed deeds above and beyond that expected of a member of the League. Nominations shall contain information that is immediately evident to the reader that the individual enhanced the concepts of citizenship, furthered the aims, ideals of the League or acted in a heroic manner without regard to his or her personal safety. Written affidavits, newspaper articles of personal statements are not required but may be submitted.

**Application:** No individual member or officer of the Marine Corps League other than the detachment leadership may make a nomination. All nominations must be submitted by the Detachment and signed by the Commandant or Adjutant-Paymaster (or Adjutant if split). Detachments will not be limited as to the number of nominations they may make in any one year. **All nominations will be in writing and shall be forwarded by cover letter to the Department Commandant no later than the 1st of May of the year in question.** Nominations not in good order or received after the deadline shall be returned to the Detachment with a note from "The Society" Chair. Nominations may be sent by USPS Mail or E-Mail to:

**Wes Topel, 3331 N. Flat Creek Cir, Wichita KS 67205 or email [wes.topel@gmail.com](mailto:wes.topel@gmail.com)**

# The Military Order of the Devil Dogs



**Kennel Website:** [www.moddkennel.org](http://www.moddkennel.org)

**Kansas Pack Website:** <http://www.mcleaguekansas.com/modd.html>

## Kansas Pack Officers 2024-2025

**Pack Leader:** PDD Bill Koonce

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

316.435.2086

**Pack Dog Robber:** PDD Harvey Harris

[hharris@MCLeague.org](mailto:hharris@MCLeague.org)

785.640.6077

**Sr. Vice:** PDD Wes Topel

**Smart Dog:** DD Kimberly Mancuso

**Mad Dog:** PDD Eldon "Doc" Holsey

**Barking Dog:** PDD Joe Hughes

**Jr. Vice:** PDD Joel Wilson

**Dog Trainer:** PDD Al Sanchez

**Police Dog:** DD Roy Villarreal

## KANSAS PACK DOG ROBBER UPDATE REPORT

Woof, woof dogs of the Pack, tired of being confined to the doghouse. Sick of the cold? Join the club. Pound activities should be on the rise, time to get ready for this year's growls. It's time to look within our parent detachments and find members that would be a benefit to your Pound, get them to join one of our four Pounds and start to have a little fun.

The Kansas Pack is in great shape, with all dogs current except one Pound, where all dogs are overdue, membership dues are due Sept. 1, of each year. The Kennel Roster of 01-01-2025 shows all dogs in that Pound expired in 2024. Dog Robber needs to get all dogs renewed ASAP.

Dog Robbers can now join the Kennel online and learn how to complete all Kennel forms and reports. For information on how to join the MODD Pack and Pound Dog Robbers group please contact PDD Helen Breen, Kennel Dog Robber [kenneldogrobber@gmail.com](mailto:kenneldogrobber@gmail.com).

Woof, woof

Pack Dog Robber

PDD Harvey Harris

KS PK Dog Robber



## **TAPS**

**James L. DeCarlo**

Tri-Rivers Detachment #730

April 6, 1949 - October 9, 2024

.....TAPS information is from Death Notices received by the Department Chaplain as submitted from each Detachment.....

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**



### **2025 National Mid-Winter Conference**

**2/27/2025 – 3/1/2025 (check-in 2/26, check out 3/2)**

#### **Sheraton Pentagon City**

900 South Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204

The hotel overlooks Arlington National Cemetery

- Parking: On-site garage parking is \$10 per day
- Any cancellations after February 10, 2025, will forfeit the one-night deposit
- Free shuttle to/from Reagan Airport (DCA)
- Go to <https://www.mcleaguelibrary.org/conference/> for more details and schedule.



**The 2025 Midwest Division Conference will be held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota**

**April 11-12, 2025**

**Sheraton Sioux Falls & Convention Center**

**1211 N W Ave, Sioux Falls SD 57104**

**Phone: 605-331-0100**

**Conference Registration Link:**

**<https://www.trailblz.info/southdakotamilitaryheritagealliance/eventcomplete.aspx?eventid=39>**

**Hotel Reservation Link:**

**<https://www.marriott.com/events/start.mi?id=1715282331174&key=G>**

**Room rate: \$149 Room per night - includes all taxes**

**Breakfast Buffet voucher included 2 per room each night.**

**Complimentary parking**

**Airport Shuttle (complimentary)**

**Bar & Restaurant on premise**

**Service Dog friendly – Pet Fee \$75, Waived for verified service animals. Must register all animals when checking in.**

**Hospitality: \$20 includes snacks, soda, beer and water**

**Banquet: \$50 plated meal 2 entrees Beef Pot Roast with Chef's Choice Sauce or**

**Grilled Chicken with Creamy Spinach Parmesan Sauce**

**Vegan/vegetarian/gluten free menu will be available.**

**Salad Rolls, & Dessert**

**Water/Tea/Coffee**

**Cash bar**



**Save the Date**

**The 2025 Department of Kansas Conference will be held on June 6-7, 2025 in Wichita, Kansas. More details, agenda, and registration coming soon to the Department website at:**

**<http://www.midwestdivisionmarinecorpsleague.org/kansas.html>**



**2025 MCL National Convention and MODD Supreme Growl**

**HYATT REGENCY DFW AIRPORT**

**2334 N. International Pkwy, DFW Airport, TX 75261**

**<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/DFWAP/G-MCL5>**

**Phone # for reservations – 1-800-233-1234**

**Group code = G-MCL5**

**Dates: Monday August 11, 2025 to Friday, August 15, 2025**

**Rates are \$159 inclusive of taxes. Parking is free.**



**Schedule**



**Resources**

MCL National Website

<http://www.mclnational.org/>

Mailing Address:

Marine Corps League National Headquarters

3619 Jefferson Davis Highway Suite 115

Stafford, VA 22554

MCL Library – Documents and Forms that are available to download.

<https://www.mcleaguelibrary.org/>

Department of Kansas Website

<http://www.mcleaguekansas.com/home.html>

Midwest Division Website

<http://www.midwestdivisionmarinecorpsleague.org/>

***Military Order of the Devil Dogs***

<http://www.moddkennel.org>