

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year / 2017 Midwest Division Fall Conference location.

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone. Another year has escaped us and I am sure the next year will pass even faster than this one has.

I received information from the Department of Minnesota that they have been unable to come up with a detachment which would be willing to host the 2017 Fall Midwest Division (MWD) Conference. Commandant Walters indicated they may have a taker for the following year, 2018. The Homestead Leatherneck Detachment in Beatrice, NE will host the 2017 MWD Spring Convention, April 21 through 23. ADVC David Ossian stated in Jefferson City that if no Minnesota detachment voted to host the 2017 MWD Conference, the Cornhusker Detachment in Lincoln would volunteer. Although I appreciate their offer, I would like to have the opportunity for each Department in the Division to consider the possibility of hosting a Division Convention. This will be a topic of discussion and a vote for Beatrice in April. The Departments of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska have, in recent years, hosted the conferences. I do not want it to seem like we are forcing a detachment to be a host when not prepared or comfortable with doing so, but I'd like to have other detachments involved. It takes a lot of planning and work to pull off a successful meeting. Please advise by the first of the year if you might have a detachment in your department which would be willing to host the 2017 MWD Conference, otherwise we will vote on the Cornhusker Detachment in Lincoln hosting it.

ADVC Ossian inquired of the possibility of keeping the MWD Spring Conference a full membership meeting, as it is today, but changing the MWD Fall Conference to a Department Commandants and Division Staff only meeting. As far as I know, the Midwest Division is the only Division that conducts two conferences a year. Other Divisions utilize the Midwinter and National Convention for a required Division meeting, but this method does not allow the members of the division much involvement in the activities within their division. Think about this suggestion and we'll discuss it at the MWD Spring Conference in Beatrice.

The Midwest Division is in the process of gaining new detachments in the near future due to Commandant Ray Morrell, North Dakota Leathernecks Detachment being a driving force. North Dakota will soon submit an application for the John M. Joyce Detachment in Minot consisting of 26 regular members and 2 associate members, and soon the rebirth of the Fargo detachment. Ray continues to discuss the possibility of, at the very least, a Fire Team concept in Dickinson.

ADVC David Ossian advised he had a good turn out in the Grand Island area and in January will, depending on old man winter, return to Grand Island and the Kearney areas for discussion of forming a detachment.

Due to the possibility of new detachments, I have requested training at the April conference to include a short review of Officer Duties and, for Paymasters, a review of the never-ending paper trail that is required by National. Due to the high volume of suicides in our military families, a portion of training should also focus on Suicide Prevention.

Department roster information was requested from Department Paymasters or Commandant's and, to date, I have received partial information from three Departments and individually from

four Detachment Paymasters. Please have your Department Paymasters send a copy of your Detachment Transmittals when they are received by Department Paymasters. National's roster shows several detachments that have up to 35 overdue members on the 7 December roster. I know this can not be correct as some rosters do not list Life members.

National Update: National reported the sale of the old MCL National Headquarters is final. An account will be set up with Morgan Stanley, separate from the General Fund, called the Future Building Fund. The approximately 1.3 million dollars will be placed in that account and not used for anything else. Interest from that account will be use to offset part of the lease cost of the new headquarters bldg. in Stafford, VA. The approximately \$80,000 remaining from the Life Member Fund that National borrowed will be paid back from membership funds and not paid off with the proceeds from the sale of headquarters. Additional information forthcoming after Midwinter in March.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me by e-mail at harvey.harris@att.net or call me at 785-640-6077.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Semper Fidelis,

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