

WMA Liaison Report
June 14, 2007
PDD Katherine Van Gorder

As my first year as the WMA Liaison Officer draws to a close, I would like to express my thanks to Commandant Tony DeGregorio and the Department of Pennsylvania, Marine Corps League for the opportunity to showcase the Women Marines Association, and the efforts of the WMA to re-establish itself in Pennsylvania. It has been a whirlwind year of accomplishments and growth for WMA, and particularly for PA-2 Liberty Belles Chapter.

PA-2 Liberty Belles Chapter encompasses the greater Southeastern PA area, having members in several different Marine Corps League Detachments, from whom we have also received great support. Chester County Detachment has been most accommodating in allowing the use of their Detachment Home in Downingtown for our meetings, Russel M Butterweck Detachment in Reading was supportive of our WWII Recognition and Women Marines Anniversary Dinner in April, as well as sharing space for our members to display their information and memorabilia from WWII at the Reading WWII Air Show in June. Valley Forge Detachment joined with WMA's recognition of merit to an outstanding MCJROTC Cadet with assistance on fund raising to allow him to attend a Drill Camp this summer. We have members actively holding office in most MCL Detachments in our geographic area, and in the Joint Veterans Council of Pottstown, the American Legion, the Bux-Mont Women Veterans Association, Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation, and other veteran's organizations. One member serves on the Board of Directors and the Finance and Resources Committee for the Burlington county Boys and Girls Club, teaches Sunday School, working full time and going to college to earn her Bachelor's Degree and together with her husband, raising a family of teenagers. Another has created a website for PA-2 [<http://wmapa2.org/>] that has links to many other sites of information and points of interest to Marines and League members. We are still looking forward to seeing our link on the Department web site in return, and still looking for a Detachment in the Wellsboro area for a potential member.

We are proud to say we have participated in and accomplished the following during the past quarter:

- April:** 1) Hosted a dinner near Reading to recognize and celebrate our WWII Women Veterans combined with celebrating the 64th Anniversary of the Women Marines Association; Ferne Lauter, Chairman. Reading High School MCJROTC Cadets performed the opening and closing flag ceremonies.
- 2) Represented at the Marine Youth Foundation Youth Physical Fitness event at Allentown to assist with judging.
- May:** 3) Several members witnessed the Reading High School MCJROTC Awards Ceremony, with Ferne Lauter to present two awards to outstanding cadets, and a Certificate of Appreciation to the instructors.
- 4) Represented at the Chester High School MCJROTC Awards Ceremony, with Alycee Ruley to present the awards to the outstanding cadets and the Certificate of appreciation to the instructors.
- 5) Assisted the Pottstown American Legion, the Joint Veterans Council and the Boy Scouts to place over 1,800 flags on veterans' grave sites at Highland Memorial Gardens in Pottstown.
- 6) Assisted the Valley Forge Detachment with placement of flags at Greentree Cemetery in Oaks.
- 7) Joined a "mega yard sale" in Norristown to raise funds for the PA-2 Liberty Belles Chapter.
- 8) Participated in the Pottstown Memorial Day Parade, sharing the American Legion Float (our Chapter President is the current Commander of the Pottstown American Legion and a member of the Pron-Seton Det.), followed behind by an open vehicle driven by one of our Loyal Escorts and MCL Service Officer, E Van Gorder, displaying our Chapter Flag. Assisted with laying of the wreaths and reading the names of fallen Marines at the ceremony in the park.
- 9) Participated in the Reading Memorial Day Service at the Russel M Butterweck Gravesite.
- 10) Joined in affiliation with the Joint Veterans Council of Pottstown area.
- June:** 11) Shared a booth with the R M Butterweck Detachment at the Mid Atlantic WWII Air Museum WWII Days to assist with selling the Dept Scholarship tickets. Four members of PA-2 described their contributions and experiences as women in the Marine Corps in WWII in an outdoor theater with questions from the audience.
- 12) Recognized Outstanding MCJROTC Cadets and their instructors with certificates at 6 Pennsylvania High Schools: Sun Valley High School, Aston; Bensalem High School, Bensalem; Ambridge High School, Ambridge, and West Allegheny High School, Imperial, PA, in addition to the Reading and Chester High Schools noted above. Graduating Cadets are eligible to apply for WMA College Scholarships.
- 13) Signed on with the VAVS for the "Friend of a Veteran" program and 'adopted' one of the female residents of Coates Hall at Southeastern PA Veterans Center.
- 14) 'Adopted' another half-dozen Women Marines serving in Iraq and sent 2 large boxes of goodies and comfort items for them to share. We are still collecting books and food coupons to send to the troops.
- 15) Sponsored the daughter of a Marine Vietnam Vet for a WMA Scholarship to attend Gettysburg College.
- 16) Donated batches of Campbell's Soup labels to Marshall Street School in Norristown for equipment purchases.

The Fewer, The Prouder, The Women Marines.
Respectfully Submitted, PDD *Kathy Van Gorder*