



# Marine Corps League and Auxiliary

## 2018 Department of Colorado Convention

### “Financing a Convention”



Tuesday, January 23, 2018

Happy New Year everyone!

Because I can find virtually NO information on this subject, I thought I would send it with the required Banquet information. Hopefully, to calm some fears.

Probably the number one fear for a detachment to “Host” a convention is the cost. Of the detachments in the Department of Colorado, there are probably only 1 or 2 with enough funds to outright host a convention. This causes fear and trepidation in the ranks as they see their very small nest egg quickly dwindling, preventing them from doing the one thing they are chartered by congress to do, help Marines. I understand that. I have heard the very same comments from our own detachment.

Here is my going in position: The Department of Colorado convention is NOT the Host Detachment convention, it is EVERYONE’S convention. Therefore, everyone should help bear the cost. Here is how you help bear the cost from a non-host detachment perspective:

- **Stay at the host Hotel:** This seems like an easy one. The “Host” detachment picks a suitable place to stay, for a reasonable cost. Knowing that they will be responsible for paying for the Dept Commandant and the Dept President rooms and the Hospitality suite, they, in good faith, negotiate with the hotel for “Butts in Beds” to get “Free Room Nights”. So for example, the hotel will generally offer 1 free room for every 25 room nights. So if you have 12 rooms for Friday and Saturday, you have 24 room nights. So if you want to get 2 free rooms, you need 25 rooms for both Friday and Saturday. Early bird aside, this seems like the easiest way to contribute to the Convention Cost. If you don’t stay at the host hotel, the host detachment has to eat the cost of the **mandatory** free rooms.
- **Place an Ad in the Ad-Book:** Again, this seems like an easy one. The funds from the Ad book are used to CREATE the Ad-Book and pay for the meeting space. This is a requirement for hosting the convention. The ad book can cost anywhere from \$3 to \$5 per book, extras are always required. The ad book fees also help pay for the meeting rooms. In a minimalist view, if every detachment took out a full page ad, and every auxiliary Unit took out a full page ad, the meeting room space would be covered. If you sell ads, above and beyond the minimal ones, the additional funds help pay for the required space, i.e. the Hospitality Suite, etc. Selling at a minimum the inside covers and the back cover should net enough to pay for the hospitality suite.
- **Attend the Banquet!** Again, this seems like an easy one. The Host detachment uses banquet attendance to reduce the cost of the meeting rooms. In one hotel example, if we skipped the banquet, the meeting rooms were going to be over \$3,000! With the banquet, with modest attendance, the meeting rooms were \$1000, easily covered with minimal ads in the ad book. There isn’t usually “Profit” on the banquet, the cost is merely passed on to Members to help reduce costs elsewhere.



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- **Ship Store / Auction / Other events:** This one is where the host detachment can earn some extra money. When you participate in the host detachment events, they not only cover any unforeseen costs, but they also can make some extra money. For example, suppose everything is working perfect, you have 100% of the detachments/units placing Ads, you sell the inside front and back pages, you have 25 rooms booked for Friday and Saturday so the Commandant and President rooms are free, banquet has full attendance, so everything is covered. When you get the bill at the end of convention, you notice there is a 18% gratuity added, oops, didn't account for that! The Ship Store, Auction and other events help pay for those unforeseen expenses.

Overall, when looking at financing a convention, if ALL of the detachments do a “little”, i.e. take out an ad, book a couple of rooms, attend the banquet...then financing a convention should be the easy part. Again, this isn't the host detachments convention, it is the Department convention, and should be treated as such. If all of the detachments pull together and participate, my humble position is that ANYONE could host a convention. It is designed to be rotated anyway so you don't get burned out doing all the work required to make one successful. There is work, make no mistake, but the work should be rewarded in the end by not only having a successful convention, with great participation, but successful in the sense that the convention made you a little extra money so you can complete your mission of helping Marines.

If you want to host a convention and you don't know where to start, please ask. The dept staff have all participated in hosting a convention and are a wealth of knowledge. I'm sure they would be glad to help in any way they can so when it's their turn to host again, in 10-12 years, the process is working as it should! Keep in mind, if you are considering hosting the Next Convention, bids are due to the Time and Place committee by the Feb quarterly staff meeting. Chat with your detachment and if you want to host, please let us know so we can help you be successful.

Once again, it has been my pleasure serving as Host Commandant for the 2018 Dept of Colo Convention. I have learned a LOT and would love to pass on some of that knowledge to you. Please contact me if you have any questions, I'll do my best to answer!

Phil Price

Commandant – Frank J Carroll (#28)

(303) 902-1583