

Commander-in-Chief's message to the membership #4/2017-18

Brothers,

Much has happened since, I last wrote to you. The holiday's passed quickly and pleasantly here in Lynchburg and I hope that they did the same at your homes.

January saw the beginning of a new year and the beginning of the Annual Encampments. Our Brothers in Kansas held the first annual encampment on January 13th but unfortunately, I was unable to attend due to winter weather issues. I was however able to attend the Mid-year meeting of the Department of Indiana at the end of January and the Mid-year meeting of the Department of Wisconsin and Minnesota the first weekend in February. Both Departments are very involved with the work of the Order and I commended them for their efforts. I was particularly impressed with the determination both departments displayed for completing the "Last Soldier Project" and I found the work Indiana has done in documenting the locations of their last soldier graves and their monuments using a Google Mapping application worthy of being considered by the rest of the Order.

In the coming weeks, I shall be making visits in the departments of California, Rhode Island, Georgia / South Carolina, and the Chesapeake. If you are a member of one of those departments, I hope you will attend your encampment so I can have an opportunity to personally meet you.

Administrative Items of importance:

1. General Order 23 (Awards) – I recently sent out my General Order 23, which details the procedures for submitting awards to the national for the period August 2017 – July 2018.

I encourage each of you to review both General Order 23 and the Awards Policy, which can be found by clicking the Governance Link on the National Website and looking on the left-hand side of the page.

a. Mary Walker Award – To eliminate any ambiguity, I remind you that if your camp or department is going to recommend a lady for the Mary Walker Award, at either the department or national level, she must be a member of the LGAR, the WRC, the Auxiliary, or the Daughters to be eligible. I would also suggest that you review the awards policy for the additional specific criteria necessary for the award.

b. Stephenson Memorial Plaza Streamer – Many of you have written to me asking about the streamers, I said would be given for donations to the Stephenson Memorial Plaza project. I have had the streamers produced and shall begin to issue them throughout the spring months. I want to express my thanks to each camp and department who provided funds and would like those who have not to know there is still time. I will keep the award open right up to the National

Encampment.

2. General Order 18 (By-laws changes) – I have issued, at the request of the National Treasurer General Order 18, which requires the Camps and Departments to make changes to their by-laws no later than June 2019, in support of our continued attempts to gain a Group 501c3 tax exemption for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Several Brothers have written to me with questions on this General Order. In preparing this Order, I discussed several aspects of the required IRS wording with former Commanders in Chief, Brothers who are experts on our Constitution and Regulations, and my Counselors. These eminent advisors helped to formulate a way to meet the IRS requirements and remain compliant to our C&R. Chapter V, Article V(a) of the C&R states that all property of the Camps and Departments are held in Trust for the National and the Regulations authorize the Department Commander to take possession of the materials, as agent of the National Organization. In the section of IRS required language on disposing of property from disbanded Camps found in GO 18 we are citing Chapter V Article V(a) as the justification for designating the Department Commander to act as agent of the National Organization in the case of a Camps disbandment and to hold any property in trust for the National Organization. In this way a method was devised to comply with IRS regulations in our attempt to obtain 501c3 for the subordinate units and yet not be in violation with the C&R. Having said this, I will expect there to be several proposed changes to the C&R this summer in Boston to help

bring it in line with the current IRS laws and policies for 501c3 organizations.

a. I have also been contacted by a few Brothers regarding who is responsible for approving the By-law changes of Camps. In answer to that let me share the following:

National Constitution and Regulations Article XIV By-laws
Section 1. Camps shall adopt By-Laws subject to the approval of the Department Commander. All amendments, alterations, or deletion of Camp By-Laws shall be submitted to the Department Commander for approval as to consistency with the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Regulations and Department By-Laws. No By-Laws, amendments, alterations, or deletions shall be effective until approved by the Department Commander in writing.

3. Updated Annual Report Forms – Brothers should be aware that a new Form 27 and a new Form 35 have been published on the National Website.

4. Memorial University – I have received several emails from Brothers asking about the Memorial University Program. I apologize for any problems that our Brothers might have experienced. I have communicated with the Patriotic Instructor and he assures me that the program is running smoothly and that all completion awards will be forwarded to those who have earned them.

5. I wish to acknowledge that an error was made in G0 13. Real Daughter Maggie Devane

lived in St. Pauls, North Carolina, not St. Paul, Minnesota.

Upcoming Events of Interest

6. 150th Anniversary of General Logan's GO 11 and the first Memorial Day at Arlington National Cemetery in 1868.

a. Brothers this coming May 30th should be a 'Red Letter' date on our calendars.

We will be marking the 150th Anniversary of General Logan's GO 11 and it is my hope that every Camp and Department will consider holding a special event to celebrate this momentous occasion.

b. In honor of the 150th anniversary of Logan's GO 11; the SUVCW Foundation has produced a medal that will be available later this spring. For more information you should go to the Foundation's link on our National Website or contact Brother Robert Petrovic at rpeto7776@aol.com

7. Lincoln Death Day Ceremony and Luncheon (14 April)

This is an annual event that many of the Brothers attend. It is a singularly special ceremony to honor the memory of our 16th President and is held at the site of his final resting place. As Commander-in-Chief, I have to opportunities to give due homage to this great man however, this ceremony in Springfield is the most significant for me.

Please join me if you can on April and then come over to the Luncheon and spend an hour or so with your Brothers and Sisters of the Allied Orders. Reservation forms were included in the recent Banner and they are available on the

National Website.

Later in the afternoon there will be a ceremony at the Stephenson Memorial Plaza in Petersburg, about a 35-minute ride from Springfield. Current plans call for a dedication of flag poles and other fixtures at the Memorial Plaza.

Other Upcoming events of Note:

8. Testimonial Dinner for Commander-in-Chief Day, Frederick Maryland, March 10th

9. Meeting of the National Council of Administration in Franklin Tennessee, March 23 and 24th

10. National Encampment, Boston, Massachusetts, August 8-12

Brothers let me conclude my message with this comment. Our Camps and Departments are incredibly engaged in reaching our mission goals, and I am so proud to be your Commander-in-Chief. As proof, I offer these few examples; we are chartering new camps in four departments, in Utah we are making progress on having US Hwy 6 once again designated as the G.A.R Highway, and in the Chesapeake the brothers are supporting the preservation of battlefield land near Manassas as well as the reburial of Union soldiers remains at Arlington. Each of you can be proud to belong to this great organization, which daily fulfills its mission to preserve, honor the men who preserved the Union and set a people free from bondage.

May God Bless each of you, our organization, and our nation.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty

Your Brother and servant

Mark R. Day

Commander-in-Chief, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War