



This statue of a Roman Catholic priest is on the Gettysburg battlefield. See the Trivia on page 4.

C.K. PIER BADGER CAMP #1

SUVCW



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SERIES 2024

## CAMP ORDERS

JULY 2024

CHOSEN AS THE 2022 BEST CAMP IN THE NATION

### 2 JULY EVENTS SHINE; 2 MORE IMMINENT

July is a huge “meet the public” month, the busiest of the year, and this year the challenges have been even bigger. The Camp and Auxiliary are responding with fraternity, charity, loyalty – and diligence.

Last weekend was the Civil War Encampment in Menomonee Falls, the 32nd annual. Two of our mainstays, PCinC Steve Michaels and PDC Tom Brown, had out-of-town

commitments. We always have had several extras helping pull shifts at the table, but this year, the extras had to become the main players.

Kudos in particular, for double stints, if not more, to CC Grant Johnson for being officer in charge, SVC



The Camp and Auxiliary’s strong contingent of 12 heads out at the Fourth of July parade in the Humboldt Park neighborhood. One of the dozen was Pat Kulas of Camp 15.

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There is no Camp meeting in August, but all Brothers no doubt will be pursuing their various and many Civil War interests – and thus helping fulfill the SUVCW missions. The next Camp meeting will be in September, at the Lions Clubhouse, 7336 St. James St., Wauwatosa.

# 4 July events, parades start with the Fourth

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Mike Benton and JVC Tom Hesse. And the other signees.

Kudos also to Auxiliary 4, featuring its usual pantry of canned goods by Danielle Michaels, past national president – and, more than ever, shepherding many of the Camp materials. Danielle brought many of Steve's usual display items of soldier gear. And kudos to the children's games, handled by chapter President Susan Fallon.

Before that was the Fourth of July parade in the Humboldt Park neighborhood, and our two groups had 12 marchers, the most in recent years. Camp 15's Pat Kulas assisted, as he often does for us. Bearing the flags were Danielle and Lisa Avila.

The schedule does not get any easier.

The South Milwaukee parade is Saturday, July 27, overlapping with German Fest, which is July 26-28.

The fest table of German Immigrants in the

Civil War always had been run as a personal project by Brother John Thielmann, who last year enlisted the Camp's support amid his declining health. The Camp and Auxiliary responded in force, and looked forward to doing the same again this year with him.

But Thielmann died June 2, and now the Camp has taken on the entire effort. Particularly tough is July 27, because the parade is at 11 a.m. and the fest opens at noon.

So, just like in Menomonee Falls, we are tightly organizing – and tweaking, and lobbying people about – the signup list, especially the first shift of Saturday.

Kudos in particular to Steve Michaels for organizing and nurturing the German Fest team and acting as liaison to the fest itself and with Thielmann's siblings. And to Danielle Michaels for being the officer in charge, PDC Tom Brown, and the other signees.

Although PCC Tom Mueller is out of action on medical leave, he provided the table with 50 copies of the Camp Orders' recent research about each name on the German memorial at Turner Hall, sure to be popular with the fest patrons.

Last year, Mueller gave out the story of his German soldier relative, Sgt. Moritz Ganser, complete with an 1864 photo in uniform.

## REMEMBERING COL. PIER: FIRST MARCH TOWARD ACTION

*These monthly articles about our Camp namesake are written by PCinC Steve Michaels. This item first was published in the July 2004 Camp Orders.*

On May 30, 1864, Lt. Col. Pier and the 1st Battalion of the 38th Wisconsin started for Alexandria, Va., from Arlington Heights – a distance of about five miles.

Enthusiasm was abundant and the march was pleasant.

The battalion's trusty guide, "Charlie," conducted it via green by-paths, across fields, through forests and grassy lanes and over gurgling brooks. Thus, the men were able to avoid the dusty highway. A battalion of the 1st Minnesota accompanied the unit on its march, keeping step to the stirring measures of martial music.

While several units had left Arlington Heights at about the same time, the 38th Wisconsin arrived at Alexandria first. Therefore, Pier was given the choice of boats assembled for transportation of troops. The steamer Emilie was selected, and the 38th and the 1st Minnesota immediately embarked for White House, the base of supplies for General Grant's army.

The Emilie had been a British blockade runner, captured by the Union at Bull's Bay, S.C., nearly two years earlier. Originally, it carried whiskey; now it carried Union troops.

The voyage down the Potomac River, through the Chesapeake Bay, up the York and Pamunkey Rivers, was very pleasant and enjoyed by all. Arriving at White House on June 1, the 38th was assigned to the Provisional Brigade of Gen. John Joseph Abercrombie. The first assignment was to escort supply trains to Cold Harbor. Less than a week earlier, Grant had directed his base of supplies to be shifted to White House, and Abercrombie was in command. On June 9, all organized troops there were directed to report to Gen. Benjamin Butler. The offensive against Petersburg had begun.

*From Battlefields & Campfires of the 38th Wisconsin Volunteers, by Lt. S.W. Pierce, Daily Wisconsin Printing House, Milwaukee 1866; CSN Prisoners at Fort Delaware, <http://bub.dataline.net.au/-tfoer/delaware.htm>; Military History of Wisconsin by E.B. Quiner, Clarke & Co., Publishers, Chicago 1866; The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant, New York 1885; South Atlantic Blockading Sqdn. / The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union & Confederate Armies (1880-1901), <http://paza.ufl.edu/moverten/html/Sablck.html>*



## SOLDIER'S GRIEVING FATHER WAS LOST ON SULTANA



*This article was compiled by Paul Eilbes and Dave Wege and first ran in 2022 in General Orders, the newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee.*

The overcrowded steamboat Sultana exploded and sank on the Mississippi River seven miles north of Memphis on April 27, 1865. A total of 1,195 people died, most of them recently paroled Union soldiers who had survived Confederate prison camps, only to now lose their lives through negligence and greed.

Among those killed was Enoch Bent, who had traveled from Kenosha County to claim and bury the body of his son Elijah, an Illinois soldier who had died in a hospital in New Orleans two weeks earlier.

Built in 1863 in Cincinnati, the Sultana measured 260 feet in length. She drew seven feet of water and was licensed to carry 376 people. Paddlewheels on the sides drove the ship through the water, powered by four boilers that drew water directly from the river. This design was poor for a carrier on the muddy Mississippi, whose waters forced frequent cleaning.

As the Sultana made her way upriver from New Orleans, the engineer noticed a bulge developing in one of the boilers. Ship's captain James Cass Mason pulled into Vicksburg for repairs, docking there on April 23.

Vicksburg was the collection point for more than 5,000 recently released soldiers who had been incarcerated at the Andersonville and Cahaba prisoner camps. These paroled soldiers were the responsibility of the quartermaster of the district, a man named Reuben Hatch.

Hatch had a reputation as a fellow who saw the war as a means to make money. He had been involved in various schemes to defraud the federal government, having had 1,696 claims lodged against him during the war. With the government paying \$5 each for transporting these soldiers north, Hatch saw a prime opportunity to set himself up for a nice kick-back from whichever steamboat captain received the contract to carry prisoners homeward,

As the boiler underwent repairs, Captain Mason began pressuring the clerk responsible for assigning ex-prisoners their transportation to load as many as possible aboard the Sultana. This was despite the fact that a larger ship, the Lady Gay, and her captain also were seeking to carry paroled men north. Unsuccessful in his bid, the captain of the Lady Gay steamed north with no soldiers.

The repair to the boiler consisted of a patch riveted over the bulge. This repair, scheduled to take

three days, was finished in only one. The engineer advised keeping the steam pressure under 100 pounds. As the ship fought upstream against the heavy current, pressure in the boilers exceeded 130 pounds.

As she passed Mound City, Miss., and was rounding a bend in the river, three of her four boilers exploded and the ship caught fire. It is estimated that between 400 and 500 men died instantly, among them Captain Mason, who was in the pilot house, which received the full force of the blast.

Many passengers were thrown into the river. Some were scalded by steam, while others were badly injured by flying debris. Passengers who survived the initial explosion faced jumping into the icy spring runoff of the Mississippi or burning with the boat. Many died of drowning or hypothermia. Survivors were plucked from the tops of semi-submerged trees along the Arkansas shore. Bodies of victims continued to be found downriver for months, some as far away as Vicksburg. Many bodies never were recovered.

Enoch Bent, 52, justice of the peace for the Town of Randall in Kenosha County, was killed. He was returning north after ensuring a proper burial for his son, Elijah, of Co. A, 95th Illinois Infantry. Elijah had died in a hospital in New Orleans on April 14, five days after Lee surrendered and the day Lincoln was shot. Elijah had joined in September 1864 in McHenry County, just below the state line.

Enoch was born Feb. 19, 1813, in Greater Manchester, England. As of 1860, he was living in Randall with his wife Johanna, and six children (a son John had died in 1855 at age 16).

Enoch had made his way to New Orleans to attend to his son's body and was returning to Wisconsin. He purchased passage on the Sultana, traveling with the returning POWs. When the boilers blew, Enoch was killed.

His grave marker at Wilmot Cemetery in Kenosha County lists his death as April 26, 1865, but the Sultana exploded on the 27th, and there is ample evidence of Enoch's presence on the ship. Questions had lurked about whether Bent was on the Sultana when she burned. The research of historian Gene Salecker, an authority on the disaster, settles the matter – Enoch Bent was lost on the Sultana.

The Milwaukee Civil War Round Table has purchased a commemorative brick to honor Enoch Bent. This brick is for the Memorial Walkway at the Sultana Disaster Museum in Marion, Ark.





## From Shorewood to St. Francis

The Camp and the 29th Colored Infantry, Co. F, raised the flag to kick off Juneteenth Day in Shorewood. Village Clerk Toya Harrell joined in. Patriotic Instructor Paul Eilbes, left, is the accounting assistant for Shorewood.

The St. Francis Days parade used a photo of Bugler Bill Seaman on its preview page for this year's event. See <https://stfrancisdays.org>



## CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

**Q:** Why is there a statue of a Roman Catholic priest on the Gettysburg battlefield?

**A:** The Rev. William Corby was chaplain of the 88th New York Infantry, part of the Union Army's Irish Brigade. On July 2, 1863, the second day of Gettysburg, the brigade was preparing to enter battle when Corby stood on a boulder and gave the soldiers a general absolution. Corby recounted in his memoir, "That general absolution was intended ... for all, North or South, who were susceptible of it and who were about to appear before their Judge." The statue was erected in 1910, and a copy is at the University of Notre Dame, where Corby later was president. More at <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/when-fr-corby-gave-general-absolution-to-530-men-at-gettysburg> and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaplain\\_Corby\\_of\\_Gettysburg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaplain_Corby_of_Gettysburg)



## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

3 – Tom Ludka	26 – Jerry Reick
11 – Bill Liebert	28 – Rich Beggs
23 – Bruce Nason	

## COMING UP

**St. Francis parade:** Saturday, Aug. 31, 11 a.m. The last march of the season; we thank the hardy paraders of the Camp and Auxiliary. Parades earn vital funds for each group's programs.

**Forest Home tombstone dedication:** Saturday, Sept. 21, 2 p.m. The two soldiers involved were discussed in the March newsletter.

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**We are at <https://www.facebook.com/CKPierBadger>  
and <http://www.suvcw-wi.org>**

The SUVCW is a tax-exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)3, as per the Internal Revenue Service. Donors thus are allowed to deduct contributions they make to C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1, if they do not use the standard deduction on their taxes.

Report address changes to editor Tom Mueller, PCC, at [thewisconsin3800@gmail.com](mailto:thewisconsin3800@gmail.com) Your Banner is not forwarded by the Postal Service, so you need to report a new address to us.