



Wisconsin Department Dispatch



Summer 2023

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Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

SUVCW

140th Department Encampment hosted by C.K. Pier/Badger Camp #1



This year, the 140th Wisconsin Dept. Encampment was held June 3rd in Wauwatosa. Thirty-three delegates were present, representing six of the Department's seven Camps. The day's activities included business sessions which reviewed the past year's events, discussed upcoming activities and various business issues, and voted in a slate of officers for 2023-2024.

Presentations were given by guests from the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table, the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance, and a descendant of one of the original Sons organizers in Wisconsin. Commander-in-Chief Bruce Frail visited from Rhode



C.K. Pier/Badger Camp #1, Camp Commander Grant Johnson welcomes Brothers and Guests to the Encampment.
(Photo courtesy of PDC Kent Peterson)

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"PRESERVED BY THE GRACE OF GOD"

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Commander in Chief Bruce Frail

Island and Past Commander-in-Chief Ken Freshley from Ohio also attended.

The Wisconsin Dept. Auxiliary held its 109th Encampment at the same time.

A wide variety of GAR and Sons historical artifacts were on display, several Camps brought in tabletop materials, and a private tour of the newly renovated Milwaukee Soldiers Home capped off the day.



PDC Alan Hembel (left), Department Treasurer for many years has stepped down from the position and Kurt Kirk (right) was elected to replace him, They are discussing the transition with Department Secretary and Assistant Treasurer PDC Brian Peters.

*Photos on this page by
PDC Kent Peterson*



Brothers recite the Pledge of Allegiance during the Opening of the Encampment.

Descendant of Department Founder Presented Membership

In the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, we're often catching up with our past. This happened most recently at the Wisconsin Department's 140th Encampment, held June 3rd in Wauwatosa. The descendant of one of our department's principal founders was invited to speak to those assembled. J. Philip Walthers, the great grandson of Frederick Julius Walthers, spoke in detail about "F.J." and his family's tradition of military service going back several generations in Europe.



When the Sons of Veterans organized in Wisconsin, F.J. Walthers was appointed the 3rd Grand Division's Assistant Inspector General and an aide to the Commander-in-Chief. In late 1883, he organized Milwaukee's Robert Chivas Camp 7, the predecessor of Badger Camp 1, and was elected its captain (Camp Commander). He resigned this post when he went to Madison. In October 1885, while attending law school at UW, he organized Col. Charles Gill Camp 15 and was again chosen captain. He served until elected to the colonelcy (Commander) of the Wisconsin Division (Department) on July 24, 1886. Before leaving office in August 1887, the number of Wisconsin's working Camps had risen from three to 25.

In late 1888, Walthers organized and was elected commander of Milwaukee's C.K. Pier Camp 35. He led the Camp for three years and remained active through its 1901 merger with Camp 1.

During the 1889 National GAR Encampment in Milwaukee, Walthers served on the Sons of Veterans Committee, coordinating support, as well as a separate Sons campfire program and reunion. He was one of 24 brothers on the Department charter. Over the next three decades, he served in various capacities at the Camp, Department and National level.

Walters was elected Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief at the 1919 National Encampment. Despite a post WWI depression, competition from new veterans' organizations and an uncertain political climate, he was convinced of our Order's great possibilities. He saw the Sons exerting an educative influence on the citizenry, especially youth, and upholding the guarantee of our Constitution for present and future generations.

The Walthers tradition of enthusiasm, hard work, and perseverance continued over the next four generations. F.J.'s son became an electrical engineer and founded the William K. Walthers Model Railroading Company. While Phil Walthers retired as CEO a few years ago, he remains the company's chairman of the board.

Phil was known to C.K. Pier Badger Camp 1, as he had spoken at the Camp's centennial meeting in 2001. Upon his return to speak at this year's Department Encampment, he was presented with a membership in C.K. Pier Badger Camp 1. His wife and son witnessed the event.

The past is never very far away and catching up to it can be a very rewarding experience.

On the right, PCinC Steve Michaels presents an honorary Sons membership to J. Philip Walthers.

(Photo by PDC Kent Peterson)





Department of Wisconsin 2023-24 Officers

Department Commander :

Robert F. Koenecke, PCC commander@suvcw-wi.org

Department Senior Vice Commander:

Samuel M. Keith svc@suvcw-wi.org

Junior Vice Commander:

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Council #1:

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Council #2:

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Council #3:

Jerome Coveney council3@suvcw-wi.org

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Treasurer:

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Assistant Treasurer:

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Patriotic Instructor:

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Gerald W. Drought, PCC chaplain@suvcw-wi.org

Graves Registration Officer:

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Historian:

Scott Schable historian@suvcw-wi.org

GAR Records Officer:

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Counselor:

Kent A. Peterson, PDC counselor@suvcw-wi.org

Eagle Scout Coordinator:

Samuel M. Keith scouts@suvcw-wi.org

Iron Brigade Highway Coordinator:

Robert F. Koenecke, DC highway@suvcw-wi.org

Civil War Memorials:

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Last Soldier Project Officer:

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Recruiting Officer:

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Department Genealogist:

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Camp Organizer:

Kim J. Heltemes, PDC organizer@suvcw-wi.org

Guard:

Thomas S. Mueller, PCC guard@suvcw-wi.org

Color Bearer:

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Signals Officer:

Kent A. Peterson, PDC webmaster@suvcw-wi.org

IRS Compliance Officer:

Brian D. McManus, PDC compliance@suvcw-wi.org

Chief of Staff:

Brian D. McManus, PDC chiefstaff@suvcw-wi.org

Department of Wisconsin Lineage

C.K.Pier/Badger Camp #1, Brother Ron Washburn's Union Ancestor



Captain Jerome A. Watrous

Jerome A. Watrous was born on September 6, 1840 and died June 5, 1922. He was mustered in to Company E, of the 6th Wisconsin Infantry, as a Private, On August 20, 1864, he was promoted to Sergeant Major of the 6th WI Inf, and on October 19, to Adjutant. On April 1, 1865, he was appointed Brevet Captain, U.S. Volunteers.



While with the 6th, part of the Iron Brigade, he participated in the battles of Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness and Appomattox.

Before and after the war, he was

Editor of several Wisconsin Newspapers.

At the beginning of the Spanish-American War in 1898, Watrous was commissioned as a Major and sent to Manila in 1900, and was

promoted to Lt. Colonel in 1904..

(Information was C.K.Pier/Badger Camp #1's CAMP ORDERS newsletter, for more about Jerome A. Watrous go to: http://www.suvcw-wi.org/camps/newsletter_apr23.pdf

Brothers - If you would like to share a bio or story about your Union Ancestor, for a future edition of the Department Dispatch, please email brucelaine@gmail.com.



On April 15, 2023, Wisconsin SUVCW members at Lincoln's Tomb in Springfield, IL. SVR District 4 Headquarters Company and the Iron Brigade Guard are shown together. L to R: Dave Daley, Jerry Coveny, Gerry Drought, Capt. Jeff Graf, DC Bob Koenecke, Capt. Brian McManus, Col. Steve Michaels, PDC Brian Peters, PCC Vince Barker, Lt. Col. Tom Brown and 2nd Lt. Kim J. Heltemes

Photo courtesy of PDC Kim Heltemes



Collins retiring after 3 decades as Camp 1's Memorial Day organizer

In 1995, Dean Collins attended Camp 1's Memorial Day service, a few months after joining the Sons. He counted 24 at the Roman Catholic Mass, of whom 18 stayed for the patriotic ceremony.

Collins thought this could be made much bigger and profound, and brought the matter to the Camp. He quickly became the officer in charge – and within a decade, the crowd size had rocketed to about 800.

Collins, 76, is retiring as the organizer after Monday's Memorial Day, where the ordained deacon and Milwaukee Police Department veteran will concelebrate Mass with Archbishop Jerome Listeki.

Timothy Dolan, now the cardinal of New York, did the event three times, eagerly firing the Cushing's Battery cannon. Listeki has happily filled that role, too.

Way back in 1995, "I saw a tremendous potential for something a lot more meaningful, significant and patriotic," Collins says.

Collins quickly went to work. He got the choir of his parish, Mother of Good Counsel, involved, and invited singers from other parishes. Bob Rotgers provided a great Lincoln – "He was not part of the event when we began. He was outstanding and he had THE FACE." Later, Nic Bur succeeded Rotgers.

Cushing's Battery was enlisted, and, around 2011, the First Brigade Band. And Collins turned to the American Legion Police Post 415 for a second honor guard and the bugler.

Danielle Michaels and the Auxiliary encouraged him to have children decorate graves at the ceremony. Collins says others in the Camp, including Steve Michaels, Fred Murphy and Maurice Felton, were instrumental in providing ideas and muscle.

"This all was very much a total Camp and Auxiliary

effort," Collins says.

One of the duties in the Camp is posting a guard at the Calvary Cemetery entrance until the Mass starts, and counting with a hand-held clicker. Collins keeps this attendance history in his computer. The crowd first passed 100 in 1998, then doubled every couple years, peaking when Dolan first concelebrated the Mass in 2003.

As a deacon, Collins has many ties in the Archdiocese and thus was able to recruit Dolan. Dolan was honored with an artillery kepi from Cushing's Battery.



Above, Dean Collins, right, was at the small Camp 1 Memorial Day event of 1995, took over the next year and turned it into a giant one by 2003, with an appearance by future Cardinal Timothy Dolan and Bob Rotgers as the nation's 16th president. *Photos from PDC Kent Peterson's archives.*

Listeki has come every two years. Last year, after two years with no public ceremony because of the pandemic, and no Listeki, the counter showed 351. The year before COVID, it was 421.

Collins works before Christmas to line up the keynote speaker. He is the chief publicizer of the event, posting fliers up and down Bluemound Road, at Gilles Frozen Custard and giving them out to businesses and passersby all over town.

It's like a cop pounding his beat, which is exactly what Collins was when he started in the Milwaukee Police Department in 1969, walking a beat around 20th and North Avenue. He retired at age 55 in 2002, as a deputy chief, full inspector of police.

"I was retired 16 days," he says, and quickly heard about an opening for assistant chief in Brookfield. He retired from Brookfield in 2016; this time for good.

As for his deacon job: A decade into his MPD career, Collins was feeling the religious calling more and more. He was married and a father, so the priesthood obviously was not a route. But being a deacon was. He launched three years of study at St. Francis de Sales Seminary (during which time his second daughter was born), and was ordained on June 9, 1984.

"I knew a cop, Claude Kennedy, who was a deacon. That's how I got interested," Collins says. "It is a perfect fit: Cops and deacons are servants. It's all about service. Cops are God's ministers. Being a deacon made the whole MPD career a religious vocation easy to navigate."

How to be an MPD officer and a seminary student at the same time?

"As a lieutenant and shift commander, I was not allowed to leave my desk. All arrests, reports and serious phone calls had to go through me. Thus, I had (some) time to study Scripture (Old and

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Dean Collins co-celebrated Mass on Memorial Day with Archbishop Jerome Listeki. Collins retired that day after organizing the Camp event since 1996.

New), Letters of Paul, sacramental theology, moral theology, etc., etc.

God evidently had a plan in mind for me when He got me promoted to lieutenant. "Classes were on Saturdays but the homework and the papers were every night."

A deacon performs weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc., but not Mass, Confession and the Last Rites.

Collins organizes the Archdiocese's part of Memorial Day along with the Camp's. He lines up the other concelebrants, Communion hosts, altar servers and the like.



Camp #1 present a commemorative plaque for his 30 years of service at the Department Encampment.

Collins will stay involved, but already has taken care of two big tasks in the transition: He will mentor Brother Paul Eilbes, who will take over the Camp's organizing, as well as two men in Collins' parish who are studying on the deacon track and have agreed to be the religious liaisons.

Collins has no plans to step down from deacon duties.

Department Events Calendar

August 3-6 National Encampment of the Allied Orders - Nashua, NH

August 12 Last Soldier Ceremony for Albert Woolson -Duluth,

October 22 Member Orientation via Zoom, presented by Camp #1

November 18 Remembrance Day parade and ceremony - Gettysburg, PA

December 17 Wreaths Across America

The *Wisconsin Department Dispatch* is published four times per year for members of the Wisconsin Department, SUVCW. Articles, photos and news items may be submitted to PDC Bruce Laine at brucelaine@gmail.com.

Editorial deadlines are the 1st of April, July, October and January.

Visit us on the Web at

<http://www.suvcw-wi.org>

Thank you to everyone that contributed to this Edition!



Wisconsin Department Pioneers

Edward “Ned” Withers *“Post War Plans”*

Edward “Ned” Withers, an Ashland abstractor, was elected commander at the 1919 Wisconsin Department Encampment, held June 16-18th in Waukesha.

Ned was born February 13, 1859, in Bloomington, Illinois, the third youngest child of farmers William Price and Mary Elizabeth (nee Coles) Withers’ ten children. His father had served as captain of Co. C, 5th Illinois Cavalry from September 1861 to November 1864. His great grandfather, John Withers, had fought in the American Revolution.

Br. Withers was elected Dept. Sr. Vice Commander at the 1918 Dept. Encampment, held in Ashland. It was customary to elect that officer from the host Camp’s members.

Ashland’s Col. John H. Knight Camp #30, chartered in July 1896, lasted less than five years. A Camp was re-established in Ashland in May 1915; Withers was one of 22 charter members and elected Secretary/Treasurer.

Upon his election as Dept. Commander, Br. Withers vowed to raise department membership to 3,000 before the next encampment. But after a peak of 1,821 members in 1917, Wisconsin’s membership again began to drop. Within three years, 800 members were lost. There were several reasons: With the signing of the Armistice, the government immediately began cancelling wartime contracts, signaling a postwar depression. Hundreds of thousands were out of work. 4,500,000 returning servicemen were unable to find work. The Sons of Veterans was certainly tame by comparison to military service and many men were drawn into veterans’ organizations.



Withers visited Sheboygan’s Camp in November 1919 and La Crosse in January 1920 to encourage them and promote new work for the Order. In an effort to increase interest and establish a unique role, PDC George Palmer and a Superior, Wisconsin, professor sent list of subjects for lectures, debates, and open discussion to each Camp. A Camp committee could then request books and literature from the Wisconsin Free Library Association and the Wisconsin Extension Division to prepare for presentations. Camps that could not do the lecturing, debating or discussion were asked to call on high school principles to arrange for students to take up the work. Then, public meetings would be advertised so that the public would hear their children on vital subjects.

Withers attended such a debate about whether Lincoln was a greater politician than statesman, hosted by Madison’s Henry Harnden Camp #2 in late January 1920. Camps at Fond du Lac, Eau Claire, La Crosse, and Boscobel were revived by the plan for new work, elected officers and began meeting again. Others waited to see what would happen before making a start. Still others did nothing and were dropped.

Br. Withers married Dorothy “Dollie” Elizabeth Broughton (1863-1937) in Chicago in July 1882. They had seven children: Myrtle Dodge (1883-1961), Mary Coles (1887-1918), Carlos Broughton (1888-1911), Avis (1892-1980), Edward “Ned” Jr. (1894-1978), William “Bill” Price (1896-1978), and Laird Taylor (1905-1959).

After living in Chicago for about six years, the family moved to Ashland in early 1888, as Ashland had just been incorporated as a city. Br. Withers worked as a bookkeeper at a lumber yard. By 1895, he was working as a clerk in the Register of Deeds office. He ran for alderman in 1903, but was unsuccessful. He soon afterwards was working as an abstractor, eventually opening his own business.

Edward “Ned” Withers died February 27, 1925, in Bayfield, Wisconsin. He was 66 and was buried at Mason City, Iowa.

By PCinC Steve Michaels with research assistance from PDC Kent Peterson

Sources: Ancestry.com
Ashland Weekly News (Ashland, Wisconsin) · 8 Apr 1903
Press Forward the Good Work, History of the Wisconsin Dept. SUVCW (Vol. 2) by PDC Stephen Michaels, 1998
The La Crosse Tribune (La Crosse, Wisconsin) · 11 Jan 1920
The Sheboygan Press (Sheboygan, Wisconsin) · 20 Nov 1919
Wausau Pilot (Wausau, Wisconsin) · 25 May 1915
Wisconsin State Journal (Madison, Wisconsin) · 27 Jan 1920,

Meeting Minutes
Wisconsin Department, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
140th Annual Encampment
Saturday June 3rd, 2023
Lions Club building, Wauwatosa, Wis., Camp 1 Hosting

The encampment was called to order at 9:03 AM. Guests were introduced. Attending were: SUVCW Commander in Chief Bruce Frail; National Auxiliary President Allison Pollitt; PCinC Ken Freshley; Br. Paul Eilbes, Treasurer, Milwaukee Civil War Roundtable; Jeremy Ebersole, Executive Director, Milwaukee Preservation Alliance; J. Philip Walthers, Chairman, Wm. K. Walthers, Inc. The spouses of guests in attendance were also introduced.

Welcoming remarks by DC Robert Koenecke, Auxiliary Department President PNP Danielle Michaels and Host Camp 1 Commander Grant Johnson extend greetings.

Br. Paul Eilbes gave a short history and accomplishments of the Milwaukee Civil War Roundtable. Their emphasis is education, support and cooperation.

Guest Heremy Ebersole explained the goals and accomplishments of the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance which included the renovation of buildings at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home that are now used as residential units for veterans who are homeless or in need.

PCinC Steve Michaels gave some background on Frederick Julius Walthers and his role in preserving the SUV in the 1880's. Guest J. Philip Walthers is the GG grandson of Frederick. He talked briefly on the history of his ancestors in Milwaukee. After his talk he was awarded an honorary membership in C.K. Pier Badger Camp 1, SUVCW.

A joint opening ceremony and memorial service was held. Including a prayer by Auxiliary Chaplain Lisa Avila, and the reading of Gen. Logan's Order by Sons Dept. Chaplain Gerry Drought.

The Auxiliary then adjourned to their meeting room and the Sons Encampment official opening ceremony was conducted.

Announcements: past years' ribbon/button badges are available from Dept. Secretary Brian Peters for anyone wishing to obtain one or more.

Roll call of officers was conducted.

Officer reports: (see separate reports packet) Commander, as submitted; SVC, as submitted; JVC as submitted; Council, as submitted; Patriotic Instructor, as submitted; Eagle Scout Coordinator, as submitted; GAR records officer, as submitted and update re: Dane County Historical Society is fundraising for refurbishment of Memorial Tablets with a matching fund of \$5,000. GRO as submitted with a challenge to Camp 56 to reach 10,000 graves registered by the end of the year; Signals Officer, as submitted; Secretary, as submitted; Treasurer, as submitted.

Camp reports: Camp 1, as submitted; Camp 2, as submitted; Camp 4, as submitted; Camp 8, as submitted; Camp 15, as submitted; Camp 49, as submitted, and additional message regarding plans for their 20th anniversary celebration on July 4th with several events to occur that day. Camp 56, as submitted, and additional information on fund raising of \$5,000 for last soldier markers and hundreds of unmarked graves needing headstones. Cost for headstone installation as high as \$550 per grave but it depends on the cemetery policy and varies from one to another.

Appointment of Committees:

Credentials—Brian Peters and Thomas Brown

Fraternal Relations—Ken Freshley and Thomas Brodd

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Resolutions & Recommendations (since there were no resolutions or recommendations forwarded, this committee was not appointed)

Communications: Camp 56 presented a letter of invitation to a last soldier dedication ceremony for Albert Woolson, August 12, in Duluth, MN. A letter of endorsement for Ohio Brother Peter Hritsko for National Commander in Chief was read by PC in C Ken Freshley. 2 Length of service awards were presented to brothers who had 5 year interval anniversaries in 2022.

Special and meritorious service awards were presented to:

Richard Smallwood-Roberts Camp 15, for replacing more than 120 headstones of Civil War veterans over three decades.

Dean Collins Camp 1, for 28 years of organizing, growing, promoting, and conducting the Memorial Day Mass and ceremony on behalf of Camp 1 and the Milwaukee Archdiocese at Calvary Cemetery. Attendance at the ceremony averages 5 to 6 hundred annually.

The Camp 56 Graves Registration Team for their outstanding work in registering several thousand Union soldier graves in Minnesota and conducting Last Union Veteran ceremonies.

Skylar Brown Camp 1, for engagement at the Camp, Department and National levels of the organization, and your active participation with the Camp 1 parade color guard.

SVR Meritorious Service Medal to Captain Jeffrey Graf for recruiting 28 new members into the Iron Brigade Guard SVR Unit.

A 15 minute break was taken at this time.

After the break a new member of Camp 1, Michael Deeken was initiated, with Camp 1 dual member PCinC Ken Freshley conducting the initiation ceremony.

Patriotic Instruction: Not all Camps submitted the Patriotic Instructor annual reports. The song "God Bless America" was sung by the entire assembly.

Comments by CinC Bruce Frail: Commander Bruce talked about the importance of increasing attendance at the National Encampment due to the need for representation from all Departments in making important decisions that will come before the encampment. There have been several General Orders issued that have sparked controversy. Commander Bruce explained the reasoning behind these orders and that helped all to understand the nature of the situations that are being addressed at National. The importance of completing the skill set survey was emphasized. There are many projects in process that could be assisted by brothers who have the needed skills. This will reduce the cost of the projects if brothers can handle the required skills in-house. The issue with gender confusion is being addressed so as to legally cover the organization if situations arise. The quartermaster transition situation was discussed and patience is necessary with the current interim temporary quartermaster. He is doing his best to handle the situation. There are problems with suppliers of items no longer willing to produce them. A new permanent quartermaster should be in place after the National Encampment in August.

Lunch Break was taken with an abundant and delicious array of foods prepared by members of the Auxiliary. A sincere thank you is extended to all who assisted with the marvelous lunch!!

Reconvene Business Session ~ New Business

Annual donations to veterans' hospitals/homes were discussed. It was felt that we should donate to the Wisconsin run homes the same as last year. Motion made and passed to that effect. The donations of \$100 each will go to Union Grove, King, and Chippewa Falls facilities. Motion was made and passed to donate \$500 to Camp 56 for their headstone setting project.

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Camp 56 member Gary Carlberg challenged Camp 1 to increase membership in the coming year since they had a net loss this year.

Steve Michaels announced that Camp 1 will conduct an on-line member orientation session on October 22 from 1 to 4 pm.

Update on the Iron Brigade Highway project, there may be a possibility of adding an additional marker somewhere along the highway as we have done previously.

Update on the Last Soldier marker project, there are two known changes needed to last soldiers due to recent research revealing new information on the dates of burial in two counties.

The National Encampment will be August 3—6 in Nashua, New Hampshire. Attendance is strongly encouraged.

Election of delegates to the National Encampment. The Wisconsin Department is allowed 10 delegates in addition to any past or sitting Department Commanders present. Elected as delegates are the following brothers: Patrick Fallon; Gerald Drought; Jerome Coveney; Gary Carlberg; Kirby Scott; Kurt Kirk; Sam Keith; Rich Kallan; David Howard; Skylar Brown.

Motion made and passed that all remaining Brothers in Good Standing at the time of this Encampment are elected as Alternates to the next annual National Encampment of the SUVCW.

Housekeeping motions passed: that the thanks of the Department be extended to the host facility; that the treasurer write checks necessary to meet the Department's financial obligations throughout the coming year; when the temporary Encampment Committees have completed their duties, they be discharged with the thanks of the Encampment; that upon publication, the minutes become the official record of the Encampment.

Motion made and passed to add the Albert Woolson last soldier event August 12th to the list of Department events.

The location of the next Department Encampment was discussed. Camp 49 is next in line to host but no representative was present so Commander Koenecke will contact their commander to see if they are able or not. If not then we will need to determine the next Camp in line.

Brother Gary Carlberg gave a description of Camp 56 Memorial Day services and the increase in attendance.

The report of the Credentials Committee on the number of allowable votes by Camp was given by Dept. Secretary.

Nomination and Election of Officers

Department Commander: Robert Koenecke (unopposed)

A motion was made and passed that any unopposed nominee be automatically elected by unanimous ballot.

Department SVC: Samuel Keith

Department JVC: Pat Fallon

Department Secretary: Brian Peters

Department Treasurer: Kurt Kirk

Department Council: John Decker, Tom Brown, Jerome Coveney

All nominees were elected by unanimous ballot.

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Appointed officers will be the same as last year except Brother Scott Schable volunteered to serve as Department Historian.

The Installation of Officers was performed by National CinC Bruce Frail.

Closing of the encampment by Department Commander Robert Koenecke at approximately 2:30 PM.

Upon closing the song "America the Beautiful", verses 1 and 3 were sung by the entire assembly.

Respectfully Submitted:

Brian G. Peters, PDC, Wisconsin Department Secretary

June 9, 2023 (edited)

Camp News & Activities

CK Pier Badger Camp #1 - Milwaukee



At Oak Hill Cemetery in Wauwatosa, Camp 1 again teamed up with Boy Scout Troop 61 for the annual cleanup. Chaplain Dean Collins and PCinC Steve Michaels (above left) installed the cemetery's address numbers, 11900 W. Capitol Dr.

PCinC Steve Michaels presented Camp #1's wreath at the Lincoln Tomb Ceremony in Springfield, IL in April.



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Above, At Milwaukee's Calvary Cemetery, Brother Cliff Howard and his son, Parker, 8, helped place flags on the graves of veterans of the Civil War and other wars. Above right, Camp #1 and Auxiliary #4 march in Calvary Cemetery on Memorial Day.

Right and below: PDC Tom Brown stands guard at the gravesite of Gen. Lysander Cutler in Milwaukee's Forest Home Cemetery. The Milw. Civil War Round Table led an effort to have a new monument created to replace the badly weathered old one. Camp 1 provided the Color Guard for the event. Below left, Camp 1 Commander and MCWRT member Grant Johnson speaks on the life of Gen. Cutler, and below right, Camp 1 Patriotic Instructor and MCWRT member Paul Eilbes was emcee for the ceremony.



MG John Gibbon Camp #4– Waukesha



Above, at the Gibbon Dinner, Jeannine Krachtt, PCC Tim Krachtt, PCC Craig Wheeler, Debra Keinert and PCC Allen Keinert.



Memorial Day Activities

On the left, PCC's Bob Mann, Allen Keinert and Craig Wheeler at the grave of Private William Reuter, Co. F, 46th Wisconsin Infantry at Prairie Home Cemetery in Waukesha.

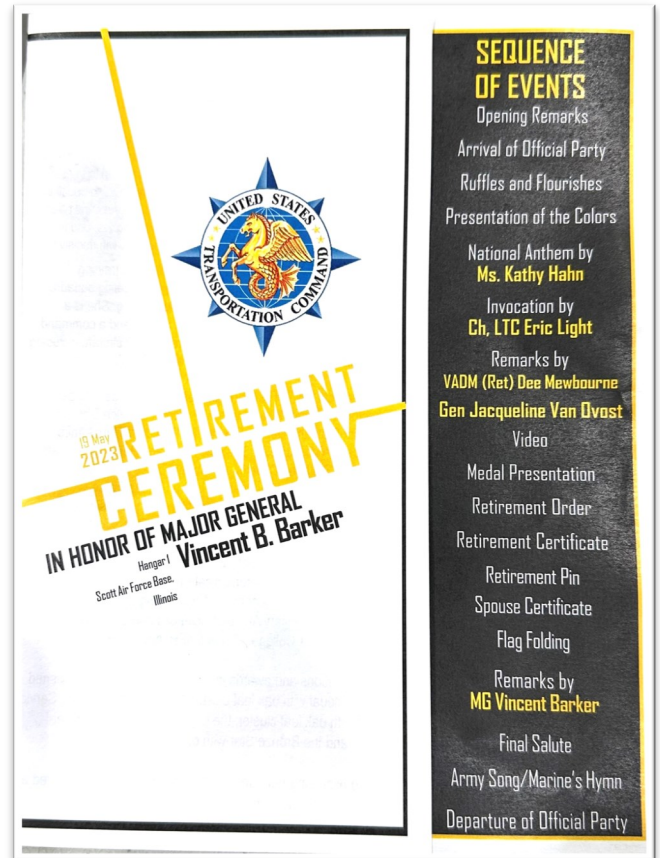
On the lower left, PCC Keinert and Wheeler at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Cutler Park, Waukesha

Below, PCC Keinert, Wheeler and Tim Krachtt at the Cushing Memorial in Delafield.



Old Abe Camp #8 - Fox Valley

Old Abe Camp 8 member and PCC, Major General Vincent Barker, retired from the U.S. Army on Friday, May 19, 2023. He had 42 years of military service to his country. The retirement ceremony was held at Scott Air Force Base, Belleville, IL. *Photos by PCC Kirby Scott*



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Old Abe Camp #8 - Fox Valley



Old Abe Camp 8 Brothers, left to right; PDC Brian Peters, PDC Kim Heltemes, Jim Schumann, and PCC Kirby Scott, participated at the Memorial Day Ceremony held at the Central Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in King, Wisconsin.

Colonel Hans C. Heg, Camp #15- Wind Lake



Left, PDC Jeff Graf and PDC Brian McManus visited the Centec Foundry in Fremont, OH while on the way to the National Encampment in August 2018. Jeff is holding the mold for the Last Soldier marker sold by the Camp. *Photo by Brian McManus.*

Right: Camp 15 Brothers were part of the Memorial Day Ceremony at Milwaukee's Calvary Cemetery. The event is hosted by Camp 1 and Camp 15's Honor Guard is an annual participant.



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Brothers from Camp #15 participated in the Waterford 4th of July Parade. Their "float" is a crowd favorite each year and placed 2nd in the Non-Commercial Division!

Big thanks to the Koenecke, Malliet families for all their work putting this together. Also big thanks to Dave, Anne and Bob Daley for staging the float assembly and meeting place and hosting the picnic after the parade. Everything was well done!



L.G. Armstrong, Camp #49 - Boscobel



Back Row: Steve Updike, Stan Updike; Middle: Dwayne Updyke, Ruth Updyke Richards, Rod Dary; Front row: Camp Commander Dan Chroninger, Clyde Updike.

On July 1, 2023 the Boscobel GAR Hall Preservationists, Woman's Relief Corps #32 and L.G. Armstrong Camp 49, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War held a memorial ceremony at the GAR Hall in Boscobel, for Grant County members of the Iron Brigade who died protecting the Union during the Civil War. After brief remarks from Brother Rod Dary, the flag was raised by Brother Dan Chroninger, while taps was played followed by a 21 gun salute by members of the Boscobel VFW Post 10393.

On April 14, 1861 Governor Alexander Williams received a call for 7,500 men from President Lincoln. By April 21 the first troops had set off by rail from Boscobel to Madison for training. Grant County recruits were well represented among those assigned to the 2nd, 6th and 7th Wisconsin Infantry Regiments. These Wisconsin units were combined into an all-western brigade with the 19th Indiana and 24th Michigan Infantry with support from Battery B of the

4th U.S. Light Artillery. They earned their nickname "The Iron Brigade" due to their actions at the Battle of South Mountain, September 14, 1862. In the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1-3, 1863 they took heavy casualties, with only 671 of the 1883 soldiers who entered the battle able to report for duty at its conclusion. Grant County reported 80 men killed, wounded, and missing during the battle. By the end of the war over 125 men from Grant County had given their lives.

After the salute there was an honor ceremony for descendants of Benjamin Updyke, who served in Company I of the 7th Wisconsin Infantry and was killed March 4, 1864 at the Battle of the Wilderness. Visiting family members were presented with a certificate and a specially commissioned medal to honor them as a Gold Star Family. Receiving the awards on behalf of their families were Stan and Steve Updike, Boscobel; Dwayne Updyke, Clermont, Florida; Ruth Updyke Richards of Richland Center; and Clyde Updike, Orfordville, Wisconsin.

Future memorial ceremonies will be held in the future as arrangements to honor other Grant County Gold Star Families can be arranged.



Boscobel VFW Post Honor Guard prepares for 21 gun salute.

Col. William Colvill Camp #56 - Minnesota

For Camp 56, the work of the Last Union Veteran ceremonies proceeded in earnest. Thanks to the unwavering commitment of Jr. Vice Commander James (Jimmy) Johnson, Commander Gary Carlberg and Sr. Vice Commander Mike Huttner, the camp has completed 12 of 20 scheduled for the year. Completed by June 2023 are the following counties: Becker (Pvt. James Brigham: 12th New York Cavalry), Mille Lac (Pvt. George H. Malkson: 11th Maine), Todd (Pvt. William M. Johnson: 7th Minnesota), Wadena (Pvt. Alfred A. Shaw: 21st Wisconsin), Red Lake, Becker (Pvt. James Brigham: 12th New York Cavalry), Kittson (Pvt. Trafton G. Ricker: 9th Minnesota), Roseau (Musician William A Stewart: 55th Pennsylvania), Anoka (Leverett Peck - 1st Regiment of Dragoons from New York), Grant (Pvt. John Parson, 95th New York Infantry), Marshall (Pvt. Louis Lefrier: 7th Minnesota), Pennington (Pvt. Carl Fromm: 3d Minnesota), and Big Stone (Pvt. John William Gardner: 11th Minnesota). The local VFW and American Legion Posts often assisted these Last Union Veteran ceremonies.



Jimmy Johnson and Vern Barker, Rest at Arms for Pvt. Carl Fromm, Pennington County.
Photo by Donna Johnson

In addition, Commander Carlberg attended the ceremony of two Eagle Scouts, Andrew and Chris Forbes, at the Magnus Veterans Foundation in Dayton, Minnesota. The commander saluted the new Eagle Scouts and discussed Andrew's Eagle Scout project with Camp 56. Commander Carlberg also attended the traditional Soldiers and Sailors Memorial on a Decoration Day ceremony at Summit Park in St. Paul on May 30, where he spoke on the sacrifices of 1st Minnesota at Gettysburg.

On June 17, the camp worked on graves registrations at the Oakland Cemetery in St. Paul. Another registration is planned for August 19 at the same cemetery. Another Headstone Dedication is scheduled on July 11 in Evergreen Cemetery in Brainerd for French Barnes (148th Illinois).

For the celebration of Pvt. John William Gardner, 11th Minnesota Infantry, his descendants were among those in attendance. The Ortonville VFW and Big Stone American Legion assisted Sr. Vice Commander Mike Huttner during the ceremony. In his role as Abraham Lincoln, Bryce Stenzel recited the Gettysburg Address. A special thank you to Mike and Dianne Dorry at the Big Stone Historical Society for the countless hours of preparation for the ceremony.

In addition to the work of the Last Union Soldier Project, the camp held a meeting at the G.A.R. Museum in Lichfield, Minnesota, on May 20. Two new members, Vern Barker and Even Schnell were initiated as new members of the SUVCW. Outside of our work with the Last Union Veteran Project, the camp held a Headstone Ceremony for 1st Lt. Peter A. Lentz and Corp. James Poole at Glenwood Cemetery in Mankato on May 23.



Descendants of Pvt. John William Gardner gather for his Last Union Soldier Ceremony in Big Stone County. *Photo by Cindy Huttner*

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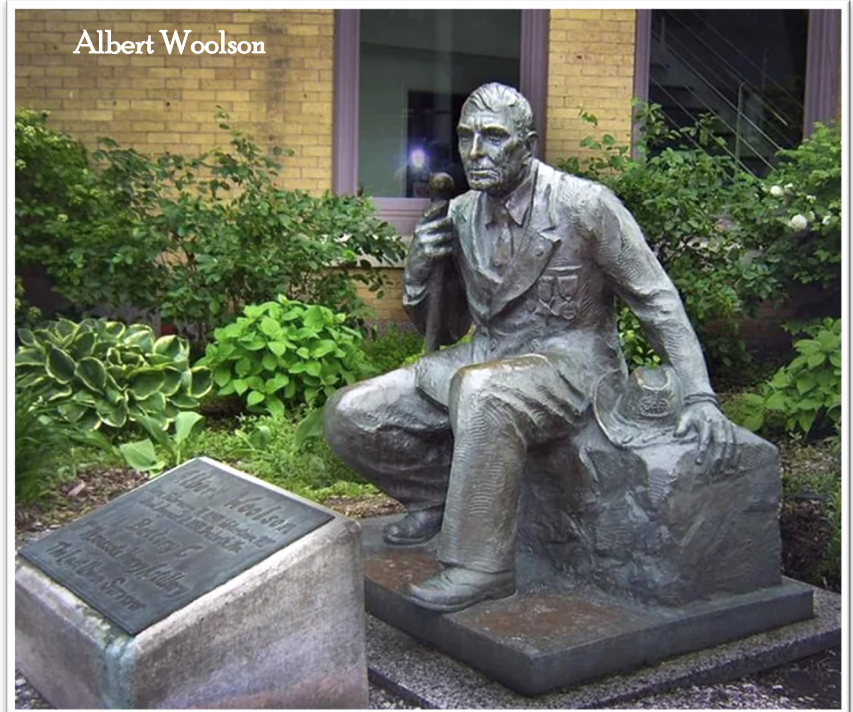
Col. William Colvill Camp #56 - Minnesota continued

Last Union Veteran ceremonies are planned for the following counties during the remainder of the campaign season:

Nobles (Pvt. Reuben Hurd ~ July 9), Stearns (Pvt. Reinhold Zimmermann: 23rd Wisconsin~July 22), Koochiching (Pvt. John Bennington Clark: 148th Illinois Infantry~July 22), Itasca (Pvt. Edward Moses Wilson: 16th Ohio Infantry~July 22), Lake (Pvt. Albert Clarence Blackmon: 1st Indiana Cavalry~July 29), Cook (Pvt. Andrew Jackson Scott; AKA Edwin G. Secor: 23rd MI INF~ July 29) Lake of the Woods (Pvt. Samuel Burton Griggs: 6th Kentucky Infantry~August 5), Beltrami (Pvt. Robert Preston McKnight: 16th Wisconsin Infantry~August 5), and Saint Louis (August 12).

The Last Union Veteran for Saint Louis County, Albert Woolson, 1st Minnesota Heavy Artillery, is believed to be the last Union Soldier in the United States (pending). Woolson's ceremony is scheduled for August 12, 2023, in Duluth at 11:00 am, with the National Commander, as one of the possible attendees. The Camp hopes that Governor Tim Walz, or a member of his staff, can also attend the ceremony.

Camp 56 met on July 8, 1000 hours, at Commander Carlberg's home in White Bear Lake. Thus far in 2023, the camp has added 1,750 Minnesota names to the National Registration Graves Database. Due to the efforts of Commander Carlsberg and others, funds for grave markers and headstone placements increased by \$4,600 in 2023 (with more hopefully on the way).



Matt Nyquist joined the ranks after his initiation ceremony and immediately went to work on Headstone

Replacement Project. Matt has already joined in a few graves' registration days at Oakland Cemetery in St. Paul. As Commander Carlsberg explained, "June might have been the busiest and most productive month Camp 56 has ever had!" While the camp has made great progress over the past two years, we have an ambitious agenda moving forward.



Left: Camp 56 Commander Gary Carlberg, with Brother Matt Heffron, recounts the story of the 1st Minnesota at the Battle of Gettysburg during the Decoration Day ceremony at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial at Summit Park in St. Paul. Photo by Miss Heffron



Headstone dedication for 1st Lt. Peter A. Lentz and Corp. James Poole. SUVCW Jimmy Johnson, Vern Barker, Mike Huttner, Friends of the "Boy in Blue" Bryce Stenzel.

Photo by Julie Schrader

Right and below: On June 10th at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor, SUVCW Camp 56 members Andrew and Chris Forbes became Eagle Scouts! The Court of Honor was an impressive ceremony held at the Magnus Veterans Foundation in Dayton, MN. Camp 56 Commander Gary Carlberg was invited, saluted the new Eagle Scouts with his sword and talked about Andrew's Eagle Scout project with Camp 56.

