

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

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2013 Mid-Year Meeting Report

Brothers,

It has been rewarding to serve the Department in a role that puts me on the “front lines” of initiating contact with our newest potential. To date for the 2013-2014 year, 11 applications have been received by my office and have been forwarded on to 7 different camps within the Department.

A disappointment I’ve been having in doing my job is when faced with the dilemma of placing a potential new member in a camp. While it makes logical sense to place a member in the Camp closest to them, that camp isn’t always the most active in the department, so I’ve felt the need to place the member in a camp that may be a longer drive. Morally, it’s the right thing to do, and the senior members that I’ve conferred with regarding this decision agree with my decision and share this sentiment that it is unfortunate, yet there’s nothing we can do to force a Camp to be more active.

I have no recommendations at this time.

Respectfully submitted in Fraternity, Charity & Loyalty,

John S. Frantz, PCC

Junior Vice Department Commander
Pennsylvania Department
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Report of the Color Bearer
Department of Pennsylvania
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
2013 Mid-Year Meeting

To the Officers and Brothers of the Pennsylvania Department,

The Color Bearer wishes to thank the Webmaster for adding in the Department website a link for the proper retiring of old flags. Seeing the link on the opening landing page of our site was a very pleasant surprise. I am confident the link will be a benefit to all members and non-members alike.

Since the Department meeting in June, the Color Bearer has nothing new to report and I have no recommendations at this time.

I look forward to a successful mid-year meeting.

Submitted in Fraternity, Charity & Loyalty

Tim Ryan
Pennsylvania Department, Color Bearer

Office of the Department Historian
Pennsylvania Department
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Mid-Year Meeting
October 26, 2013

Greetings Officers & Brothers of the Pennsylvania Department:

Since last year, I have been engaged in cataloging the boxes of documents that have been placed in my custody as Department Historian. This task has been completed and my next goal (over the cold Winter months!) is to cross reference this list of documents with what is currently archived in the PA State Archives in Harrisburg to determine what duplicates exist. When this is complete, I will offer recommendations at the 2014 Department Encampment regarding the duplicated items and welcome any suggestions.

Eventually, I want to publish a list of available documents on the Department website which are currently held by either the state archives or the Department Historian and are available for use by our Brothers for research, etc.

I have no recommendations at this time.

Submitted in Fraternity, Charity & Loyalty

Greg Kline, PCC
Department Historian



Department of Pennsylvania
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Office of the Sr. Vice Commander
948 Orr Avenue
Kittanning, PA 16201
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October 10, 2013

Brothers of the Pennsylvania Department,

Since our last meeting at the Department Encampment in Gettysburg, I respectfully submit the following report.

I was honored to participate in the Peace Light Rededication Ceremony held in Gettysburg on the last day of our Encampment. I personally thank Brother Kuhn and Brother Orr for a successful encampment and for organizing an event of which our forefathers would have been proud. I have represented this Department by visiting several SUVCW Camps in this Department and meeting with the Brothers and sharing information and ideas. I hope to visit more Camps in the coming months as time permits. I have participated in Eagle Scout Ceremonies throughout Western Pennsylvania presenting Eagle Scout Certificates and helping to further our Order's working relationship with the Boy Scouts. I represented the SUVCW with my participation in the Kittanning Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (B.P.O.E.) Lodge #203 Heritage and Civil War display. This exhibit displayed more than 20 Civil War rifles and swords found inside a vault at the Elks Lodge. The display was in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. Those who attended this highly publicized event left with a clearer understanding of the purpose and existence of the SUVCW. I have participated in events and spoken on the SUVCW and the importance of membership at local libraries and other civic organizations. I participated in several Grave Rededications including one for a soldier who was shot while trying to escape Salisbury Prison and is buried in a mass grave on that site. I also participated in a grave rededication for a Medal of Honor winner working closely with the American Legion Post in that area. I have been the featured guest on Kittanning Radio Station's Pony Farm program as well as the Kittanning Television Station's "Talk of the Town" program where I discussed in length the SUVCW. Our Department continues to remain strong but we do have serious issues that need addressed. We have one Camp that has six Brothers and is currently under suspension. I was contacted by their Secretary/Treasurer and informed they wished to surrender their Charter. I personally telephoned the Brothers on the roster to gauge the interest in keeping the Camp alive. Unfortunately, I soon discovered to my dismay that the majority were re-enactors and after many years of belonging to this SUVCW Camp could not distinguish between the re-enacting group and the Camp. The one Brother I did speak with who was not a re-enactor, said he never went to meetings and did not have an opinion one way or the other if the Camp survived as he did not have a uniform, did not re-enact and had no intention of ever doing so. I believe there are more Camps in our Department than we are aware of that are

rapidly approaching the point of dissolution. All too often we see Camps lose membership after the completion of large worthy projects or the influx of differing uncompromising ideas among Brothers. We all need to step back from time to time and examine why we belong to this Order. We all should be working toward the same goal of honoring and remembering our boys in blue. We must learn to put aside our petty differences as well as increase our recruitment and retention goals if we are to survive. In order to retain our current and recruit new members, we must actively continue to dispel the myth that uniforms or period dress is a requirement for membership or participation in our Order. I believe there is a serious disconnect between those Brothers who dress in period attire and those who do not. Honoring your ancestor does NOT mean you need to PORTRAY your ancestor. We must work harder to make non-uniformed or Brothers who choose to wear modern attire feel more welcome and inclusive.

I have three recommendations for your consideration:

1. The Pennsylvania Dept. establish a scholarship for High School age students enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This could easily be used as a recruiting tool as well as enhance our standing in our communities. The model could be patterned after the National SUVCW's scholarship program. Ideally, depending on the financial considerations, I would like to see one scholarship for students in the Western section of the state, one for the central region and one for the Eastern side. I suggest the establishment of a special fund to pay for this scholarship annually. Much as National had the foresight to establish the GAR Fund, we should establish a scholarship fund for future generations, perhaps by dedicating a portion of the per-capita tax each year.
2. I recommend this Dept. explore the creation of an essay contest for elementary students based on the same ideas as above. The VFW has a fabulous program we should examine and use as our guide. We need to get our name and brand in front of the public while strengthening our educational mission.
3. In an effort to increase local participation in Department affairs, I recommend this Dept. explore the creation of an Eastern and Western Division. These Divisions would meet in their area and encourage Camps to communicate with each other and share ideas and projects. These Divisions would then report their Brothers ideas, concerns or suggestions to the Dept. Encampment.

It has been a pleasure to serve this Department as your Commander. I look forward to visiting with more Brothers and Camps this year.

Yours in FC&L

Richard Essenwein

PA Dept. Commander

Department Patriotic Instructor Report

Mid Year Meeting 2013

Greetings Brothers,

I have nothing new to report since the 2013 Department Encampment in Gettysburg, PA. I have checked on the National Patriotic Instructor's webpage and there has not been an update since July.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty

Alfred C. Carty

Office of Senior Vice Commander:

Nothing to report

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT

September 25, 2013

To the Officers and Brothers of the Pennsylvania Department assembled in meeting:

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as Co-Counselor for Department Commander Essenwein and I thank him for the appointment. We have discussed several issues via e-mail and telephone conversations. I have rendered formal opinions on specific issues.

The Department By-laws Committee has not had any actions come before it.

The Committee formed at the 2013 Department Encampment to design the badge for the Past Officers Award has had to consider alternatives for the award since actions of the 2013 National Encampment on a proposal from the Department of Florida prohibited such designations. The committee is exploring several options and will report when a consensus is reached.

I regret that I am unable to attend this year's Pennsylvania Department Mid-Year Meeting. The youngest member of my family is being baptized that evening and it will be my first chance to see the boy since he lives in Wyoming. I hope that the meeting is productive and the testimonial enjoyable. My congratulations go to Brother Rich Essenwein for his devoted service as our Department Commander.

I wish you all safe journeys home.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John M. McNulty". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

John M. McNulty PDC

Report of the Signals Officer
Department of Pennsylvania
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Mid-Year Meeting
2013

To the Officers and Brothers of the Pennsylvania Department,

The website continues to be a source of contact for many inquiries about the Pennsylvania Department and the Sons' organizations.

I am currently in the process of updating, to the National format, the G.A.R. monument photos and information. This will be an ongoing process as all the photos need to be changed. Please submit to me any photos of monuments not listed with the geographical location and any history if possible.

All Brothers are encouraged to submit information and pictures of events that will be appropriate for the web page.

The website can be informative for Brothers and the general public, but it can only be kept up to date if the current information is sent to the webmaster.

Respectfully submitted in F, C and L,
Howard F. Wolfe
Signals Officer