



Hartranft Herald
The Newsletter of
Maj. Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

www.SuvcwHarrisburgPa.org/

Celebrating our **143rd** Year serving Harrisburg Area

@ Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Vol 27 No.03

Late Winter Issue

March 2025



Come to our general meetings and view central Pennsylvania from high atop Reservoir Park!

A newsletter for, about, and by the members of Camp 15!

2025 Hartranft Camp 15	Commander ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Kyle Purchase 2025
Officers and your Staff	Senior Vice Commander ~ ~ ~	Logan Swanger PCC 2021-2025
	Junior Vice Commander ~ ~ ~	Scott Debo, PCC 2021-2025
	Secretary ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner 2025
	Treasurer ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	David W. Demmy, Sr. PCC 2007-2025
	Council 01 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Scott Debo, PCC 2015-2025
	Council 02 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2025
	Council 03 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner PCC 2023-2025
	Patriotic Instructor ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2025
	Chaplain ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	David W. Demmy, Sr., PCC 2000-2025
	Graves Registration ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Logan Swanger 2014-2025
	GAR Historian ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Jeffery Smith, PCC 2025
	Counselor ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Charles Brackbill Jr 2025
	Eagle Scout Coordinator ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner PCC 2025
	GAR Highway Officer ~ ~ ~	Gregory E. Kline, PDC 2008-2025
	Guide ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner PCC 2021-2025
	Color Bearer ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner PCC 2021-2025
	Guard ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner PCC 2022-2025
	Webmaster ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Dave W. Demmy, Jr. 2011-2025
	ROTC Coordinator ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Gregory E. Kline, PDC 2011-2025
	Camp Historian ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Wayne Blattner PCC 2020 - 2025
	Longevity Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Late Dave J. Klinepeter PCC 1943-2023
	Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Late Floyd J Demmy WWII Veteran
	Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Late Joseph E. Long, Jr., PDC, Veteran
	Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Late Lee F. Walters, PDC, Past Exec Dir.

Camp 15 routinely meets at the National Civil War Museum, at Reservoir Park, Harrisburg, PA, 2 pm, 3rd Sunday of most months. PA Dept: www.PASUVCW.org National: <http://www.suvcw.org/>

In accordance with General Order #7, March 7, 2022: "Individuals attending events hosted by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, by virtue of their attendance, agree to the usage of their likeness in the *Banner*, any Camp or Department Newsletter, any SUVCW website and/or on any SUVCW Social Media outlet, promotional brochures, or any other SUVCW material."

Membership in our Order does not require a civil war ancestor nor is our Order a reenacting group!

March 2025 *Hartranft Herald* Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
 Award winning newsletter -- Marshall A. Hope Award presented to Hartranft Camp 2010-2011
 Award winning website -- Horace Greeley Award presented to Hartranft Camp 2020-2022
 SUVCW Legal heir of and representing the Grand Army of the Republic

This March issue of our *Hartranft Heard* is draped

in memory of Woman's Relief Corps Past National President Cynthia L. Norton on Sunday, March 2, 2025.

Our March Camp Meeting will be held on : Sunday March 16th will be conducted at NCWM Bldg high atop Reservoir Park Harrisburg; potentially 2nd level ballroom, overlooking the 2 original municipal water reservoirs!

New Camp Commander pinned

Below Brother Kyle Purchase is pinned with his CC, Camp Commander badge, by SVC Logan Swanger, PCC.



Above, Brother Vern Stout is issued his PCC, Past Camp Commander Badge, by brother Kyle.



Above, the *Changing of the Guard* ceremony.

Source of Photos - new camp Counselor Chuck Brackbill, Jr.

Copies of the above images available upon request.

National Membership ID Number

A reprint from *The Banner*, April 1997, Vol 101, Number 3, page 6.

The National Identification Number Committee [long defunct] has assigned a database identification number to all records in the national database. The number only serves to identify a unique number in the national database. It does not have any quality beyond that statement!

Fast forward to modern days, the year 2025, the unique number assigned to each name in the national database is the row number [record] when each new brother is added to the database. The SUVCW has never given a membership number to our brothers.

If you, as a brother, really want a unique number, become a national life member with form 9. You will be given a national life membership number, hardbound ID card and a very colorful membership certificate.

You will be among the less than [current year 2025] 700 living national life members.

As of circa 2000, the national executive director is the coordinator and controller of the national life membership program, organized within the national database.

Reports of living life members available upon request by appropriate personnel. End.

Dues for 2025

During 2024, camp 15 lost 6 brothers mostly due to nonpayment of their 2024 dues.

At press time, for this March issue, Camp 15 has lost 2 brothers. One returned to his previous primary camp in another department [command personnel have changed]; and another brother decided to resign [he has not participated in camp 15 events for a few years]. Camp 15 thanks to all of you brothers for remitting your 2025 dues. Membership cards for '25 will be issued at the forthcoming March camp meeting to save postage; otherwise, they will be mailed!

What is a G A R? A Reprint from *The Banner*, February 1997, Vol 101, Number 2.

All successful organizations have three things in common—identity, focus and dedication! When the names Red Cross, Salvation Army, Procter and Gamble, Kellogg, National Football League, NAACP and, yes, even KKK are spoken you get a *mental image* [icon] of what they do or make or control. Now, under the same rules say Grand Army of the Republic, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War or Women's Relief Corps. What image came to mind immediately?

In the first group of names there was a clear and demonstrative identity recognized almost universally.

American Legion is another one we could have added. When you say that name everyone thinks of veterans. The Grand Army of the Republic, on the other hand, is almost universally forgotten. Even people with an interest in the Civil War will often place the G.A.R. in company with the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia. Where once, in the minds of America, stood a proud organization of veterans doing good in their community is now a faded identity taken over by the Legion and the VFW and others.

As Sons of Union Veterans it is our responsibility to understand who we are, who are ancestors were, and share that identity with the world. So, just exactly, who are we? Through the decades we have taken our identity and added appendages. A look at our National officers and committees shows a range of missions from Graves Registration to semi-pro wreath-laying to what appears to be highway maintenance. But what is our mission, who are we—and more importantly, what is, or should be, our *public identity*.

Get yourself a copy of the Constitution and Regulations of our order look at what our founders thought we were to be. Be on the way to reclaiming its public image. Focus and dedication we will talk about later but for now let's concentrate on finding out what comes to mind when someone says Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. End.

Minutes of February 16, 2025 Camp #15 Meeting

At the National Civil War Museum ballroom!

Sunday February 16, 2025, the weather is cloudy and 40 degrees.

Camp Commander Brother Kyle Purchase opened the meeting according to the SUVCW Ritual. The time was 2:08 P.M.

Roll Call – the following Brothers were present:

1. Kyle Purchase – Camp Commander
2. Logan Swanger – Senior Vice Commander

3. Scott Debo- Junior Vice Commander & Council
4. Wayne Blattner – Secretary & Council
5. David Demmy Sr. – Treasurer
6. Charles “Chuck” Brackbill – Camp Counselor
7. Vernon Stout - Past Camp Commander and acting “Guard” and “Guide” today.

Reading and Approval of Camp Meeting Minutes as printed in the *Hartranft Herald*:

The Minutes from the last meeting was read by Commander Kyle. A motion to accept the minutes as read by Brother Logan and seconded by Brother David. Motion passed.

Treasurer’s Report:

Brother David reviewed the status of Camp 15’s Brother’s Dues renewal status. At this moment only 17 have paid, and 18 have not paid their dues for 2025. All dues are due by the end of February and they are to be sent to Camp Treasurer David Demmy Sr. Reminders for paying the dues have been in the *Hartranft Herald* for the past **three months!** The Camp Secretary made a recommendation to send out an e-mail blast to those who have not paid their dues, and to send them in ASAP! The Secretary will do this task. Brother David also reported there is approximately \$735 in our checking account, with approximately \$500 of that is earmarked for dues owed to the PA Department from Camp #15. All other account balances remained the same. The motion to accept the Treasurer’s report along with the above recommendation was made by Brother Chuck and seconded by Brother Scott. Motion passed.

The Report of a sick Brother or a Brother’s family in distress:

Commander Kyle stated that Brothers refer to the latest *Hartranft Herald* for those who need our prayers. Special prayer concerns were brought to light during this time. One was for Brother Greg Kline’s mother Dot, who now resides in a Nursing Home. Also keep in mind Brother Jeff Smith who is

recovering from eye surgery. And condolences to Bro. Logan on the passing of his Mother. And lastly, all in attendance today are very happy that Camp #15’s Past Camp Commander, Brother Vernon Stout are in attendance. It is good to see him!

Committee Reports:

The Visiting & Investigating Committee, and the Grave Registration & Last Veteran Committee, reported no activity at this time.

Reading and disposing of orders, communications, and bills:

In review, all orders from the Pennsylvania Department, and the National Office SUVCW, are collected by Brother David Demmy Sr. and e-mailed to our members to read and act accordingly. Brothers check emails in your in box to view! Camp Commander Kyle reported the Pennsylvania Department Commander, Brother William Fischer’s “Testimonial Dinner” will be on March 22nd, in Scranton PA. RSVP by March 8, 2025. For details see the latest *Hartranft Herald*.

Old Business:

Brother David brought the Camp up to date what the latest is on the Civil War Museum “Public Days”. It appears that these type programs are not as frequent as they used to be. If they are resurrected, Brother David will let the Camp know.

Form #40 progress. Commander Kyle reported that he was in contact with Brother Jeff concerning what was the status of Brother’s submitting their completed forms. Brother Jeff will try his best to make a summarization from those Brothers who participated and then forwarded it the information to the Department P.I. The deadline is March 1st.

Jeff’s e-mail is jsmith@copic.com

Discussion occurred regarding public outreach to schools and other groups promoting the SUVCW is still a challenge for us and other Camps. It is the same for the Eagle Scout promotions, and the Junior ROTC programs. But we as a group will keep it fresh

in our minds if something comes about concerning these groups.

Unfinished Business:

Camp Shirt project. Brother Chuck & Brother David reviewed the latest progress. They reviewed what has happened since its inception last November. The design had been completed, and Chuck passed around photos of the Hartranft design. Looks great! Brother's Chuck and David will visit Shenk Company soon to finalize some additional details. Could there be a possible e-mail to all Camp members showing what is happening in this project? Or could a space in the *Hartranft Herald* be used for placing the photo of the design on one of the pages? Then following up in the near future with the shirt's designs, pricing, etc. Camp #15 Brothers see future editions of our newsletter for this information!

Camp #15 Council approved the \$20 donation to the repair of General John F. Reynolds grave site in Lancaster County. Brother Wayne and Brother Scott represented Camp Council today.

New Business:

On February 8th, Brother's Demmy Sr., Purchase, Brackbill, and Blattner attended the Lincoln Luncheon event in Sunbury. The food was great, and it was followed by an excellent program. Camp #503 hosted it.

Camp #15 bylaws need to be reviewed. Commander Kyle appointed a committee composed of members of our Camp Council, along with Brother Scott, and Brother Chuck. Fortunately Camp # 15 bylaws are under a dozen pages long.

Brother Vernon Stout was presented with his Past Camp Commander badge by Camp Commander Kyle. Brother Brackbill took photos. Congratulations and thank you Vern for your service!

Good of the Order:

From Brother Wayne concerning the SUVCW Eagle Scout program. Question? How does Camp 503 get notified of Eagle Scout Candidates? Scott said mostly through Boy Scout "Councils" Wayne will take note of this.

Brother Wayne mentioned he has finally had a chance to read the publication of Camp #15's History. Just as a friendly suggestion, in addressing Mrs. Helen Shireman's relation to General Hartranft, she is the Great Grand Daughter. Just **one** "Great" please. Commander Kyle also reviewed the history publication too. He noted it appears that some of our past Camp Commanders are buried in the Harrisburg Cemetery. Maybe we will be able to locate their graves and in the future and formally recognize them as past camp Commanders.

Commander Kyle is writing an article on a Civil War soldier Steven Kelly, a member of 91st PA. More intriguing details will follow. "I'm not dead yet" is the title of the article.

Wayne had a question for Brother David and Brother Vern about the required Tax forms that are needed this time of year. One may be the Form #990, and/or others. Vern mentioned he may be able to assist David in this task. He will check through his items. Thank you Brother Vern for your assistance.

Patriotic Instructor Presentation:

Brother Jeff was not present today.

Adjournment: Adjournment of Camp #15 took place at approximately 3:37 P.M., with Commander Kyle using the SUVCW Ritual. Next meeting is March 16, 2025, at 2:00 P.M., In Harrisburg, PA

Respectively submitted, In F C & L
Wayne N. Blattner, Camp Secretary

Post meeting; several brothers retreated to a nearby steakhouse for an evening dinner.

The Five Finger Prayer

Your thumb is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."

The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

Below, Camp 15 Dual brother Ben Hobbins, left, was awarded on March 3rd, 2025 4pm, Indian Wells, CA: Ben Hobbins is Commander of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Camp #2 Colonel Henry Harnden in Madison, WI and belongs to Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, CA Commandery.



He was recently honored by the Department of Defense, earning a National Service Award for DOD's Vietnam War Commemoration (VWC) Program as an official Program Partner in a solemn ceremony. Ben is on the National SUVCW America 250 Birthday Committee while his daughter Ashley-Anne is a Sister of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War Detached Tent #23 Mary Chesebro Lee, also belonging to the Dames of the Loyal Legion of the United States, DC Commandery.

Dept of Defense VWC Director, Maj General Edward J. Chrystal Jr., US Army, issued Ben an "Outstanding Partner" national service award. The DOD flew Western District Vietnam War Commemoration

Program Director Major Alec Lange, US Army to make the Official Presentation.

The presentation took place at Indian Wells City Hall at the adjacent "General Ike Eisenhower Walk of Honor" monument. The beautiful monument honors our past President and General Ike Eisenhower, area Congressional Medal of Honor recipients and Indian Wells Veterans and is just a mile away from Indian Wells Tennis Gardens, hopping with the BNP Paribas Tennis Tournament in full force.

Camp 15 on the Road for 2025

~~January Meeting 19th~~

~~February 8th Lincoln Luncheon hosted by Sunbury Camp 503. For details visit:~~

~~<https://www.pasuvcw.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/2025-Lincoln-Luncheon-Invite.pdf> RSVP Deadline February 1st.~~

~~February Meeting 16th~~

March Meeting 16th

April Meeting 6th [due to Easter on 3rd Sunday]

April 12th National Council Meeting at Springfield

May Meeting 18th followed by annual event on:

Memorial Day weekend 24th with Camp annual breakfast prior to visiting historical Harrisburg Cemetery and Lincoln Cemetery in Penbrook.

June 20 – 21 [Annual Pennsylvania Department Encampment](#).

July recess

August 7-10 [Annual National Encampment](#)

September Meeting 21st

October Meeting 19th

November 15th Remembrance Day Parade

November 16th National Council Meeting. Gettysburg.

December Holiday Event TBA

Dates subject to the call of our Camp Commander.

Copies of 2025 colorful word version camp calendar available upon request. submit email request to DoubleD@Demmy.cc.

Calendar is not pdf so you may save the file and update it to suit your schedule and personal needs.

Be Proud - Wear the Badge



Come out to a meeting and engage with us!

- **The Allied Orders of the GAR:**
- -Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to GAR,
- -Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic,
- -Daughters of Union Veterans of Civil War,
- -Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and
- -The Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans Civil War.

Camp Officers & authors, the first Friday of each month is the Deadline for submission of stories, events, articles, and photos for *Hartranft Herald*.

Membership Bio Profiles will continue to appear as members submit them.

Complete an e-worksheet, please ask for one – send e-mail request to DoubleD@Demmy.cc

Bring a nephew, uncle, brother, father, grandfather, cousin, your neighbor and all your friends to a Camp meeting! Family and our sisters of the Allied Orders are always welcome!

Camp 15 Established February 11, 1882
in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty!

God bless you and yours and God bless the USA.