


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 **144th** Year serving Harrisburg Area

 @ Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
 <https://www.instagram.com/hartranftcamp15pa/>



Vol 28 No. 06

Summertime

2026



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!

2026 Hartranft Camp 15 Officers and your Staff	Commander ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Senior Vice Commander ~ ~ ~ Junior Vice Commander ~ ~ ~ Secretary ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Treasurer ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Council 01 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Council 02 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Council 03 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Patriotic Instructor ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Chaplain ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Graves Registration ~ ~ ~ ~ GAR Historian ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Counselor ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Eagle Scout Coordinator ~ ~ ~ GAR Highway Officer ~ ~ ~ Guide ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Color Bearer ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Guard ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Webmaster ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ROTC Coordinator ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Camp Historian ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Longevity Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Kyle Purchase 2025-2026 Logan Swanger PCC 2021-2026 Scott Debo, PCC 2021-2026 Wayne Blattner, PCC 2025-2026 David W. Demmy, Sr. PCC 2007-2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2023-2026 Charles Brackbill Jr 2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2026 Logan Swanger 2014-2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2026 Charles Brackbill Jr 2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2025-2026 Gregory E. Kline, PDC 2008-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2021-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2021-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2022-2026 Dave W. Demmy, Jr. 2011-2026 Gregory E. Kline, PDC 2011-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2020 - 2026 Late Dave J. Klinepeter PCC 1943-2023 Late Floyd J. Demmy WWII Veteran Late Joseph E. Long, Jr., PDC, Veteran Late Lee F. Walters, PDC, Past Exec Dir.
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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!

June Summertime 2026 *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 issue is draped in remembrance of our national last Real Son William Pool! Brother Bill, a WWII veteran, was the last of our nationwide known real sons.

And in reminiscence of Charlotte Walters, first unofficial assistant executive director who greatly supported her late husband Lee Walters conducting business at national HQs.

Brothers, this issue of *Hartranft Herald* contains photos of Camp 15's Memorial Day activities.

Brothers and Sisters in distress

Sister Helen Shireman, great granddaughter to our camp namesake, Maj Gen John F Hartranft, is recovering from an ailment; likewise, Mrs. Bill Jackson, is residing at a special-care facility. Brother Bill is downsizing to a one-bedroom apartment. This current list includes prayers for camp commander Kyle Purchase; Brother David Demmy Sr. as he struggles with some health issues; Camp counselor Chuck Brackbill Jr, ailments;. The family of late Charlotte Walters PDP, upon her recent death. And National Secretary Jim Crane with an ongoing concern! Lastly brother Wayne B with very recent concern. Please keep all these Brothers and Sisters and their families in your prayers.

Photos of recent events:

Brothers in Action – Headstone Cleaning and Memorial Day

By Camp Commander Kyle Purchase.

Before Camp 15's Memorial Day events, [below] SVC Logan Swanger and I attended a gravestone cleaning workshop at Ashland Cemetery, not too far outside downtown Carlisle. The event was hosted by the Pennsylvania Reserve Volunteer Corps Historical Society (PRVCHS), an organization dedicated to honoring the service and memory of the Pennsylvania Reserves. You can find more information about them on their website [here](#).

We were also joined by PDC Brother Doug McMillin of J.P. Brindle Camp #50. Before leaving for the day, the brothers stopped by



the Ashland Soldiers Lot, which is the resting place of Sgt. Jacob Cart, Co. A of the 7th PA Reserves. Sgt. Cart was awarded his medal for actions at the Battle of Fredericksburg, where he captured the flag of the 19th Georgia Infantry. The plot also has a massive plaque

dedicated to the Civil War dead, where only 35 have been identified. Well done brothers!



Harrisburg historic Cemetery events:



Memorial Day events were conducted a week earlier than usual. This time we were joined by America250PA, the Harrisburg High School NJROTC and Thomas Coreau, Director of Veteran Affairs for Dauphin

Camp
15's

County. While there, Camp 15 assisted in placing flags throughout the cemetery and read Special Message #17 from SUVCW C-in-C Kevin Tucker, entitled "Decoration Day and the Sacred Duty of Remembrance." Brother Demmy also read the annual list of 30+ brothers who have passed in recent decades. The camp also placed GAR/SUVCW grave markers at graves identified by Commander Purchase as significant.

Col. Seneca Simmons Post #116; David Hammelbaugh (his son) was a former Camp Commander of Camp #15; Joseph Pilkay was in both the 25th and 127th Pennsylvania The



graves included **Philip and David Hammelbaugh, Joseph Pilkay and John Winters**. Philip Hammelbaugh was in the 201st Pennsylvania Infantry and a member of Infantries and was 1 of the last 2 survivors of Hartranft Post #58; and 1Lt. John Winters was in the 18th Pennsylvania Cavalry was killed in action at the Shenandoah Valley.

Camp 15 concluded the day by visiting



Lincoln Cemetery to place a wreath at the grave of Ephraim Slaughter.

L to R: Logan Swanger, Kyle Purchase, David Demmy, Sr., and Wayne Blattner, pay tribute to Ephraim Slaughter, the last civil war veteran of Harrisburg.

Photos in this newsletter courtesy of brothers Wayne, Kyle, and David.

Thank you to all for honoring those who gave their last full measure to secure freedom for future generations!



Greetings brothers of Camp 15,

As we have a break for the summer, I wanted to take the time to express my gratitude for those who have supported our camp throughout this year and in previous years. [historically, Camp 15 does not meet during June, July, and August – our fall kickoff will

continue in September with nominations and election of officers for 2027 during October business meeting.

As expected, 2026 has been and will continue to be a significant year for our Camp, our Department, our Order and our country – **America 250**.

The camp participated in our Memorial Day services on May 16 at Harrisburg Cemetery where we assisted America250PA and the Harrisburg NJROTC place flags throughout the cemetery, as well as placed a few GAR grave markers and one SUVCW medallion. I want to thank Mr. Thomas Coureau, Director of Veterans Affairs of Dauphin County, for organizing the event and for offering his services to the camp. I also thank the staff at Harrisburg Cemetery for hosting us. The camp then concluded with visiting Lincoln Cemetery to place a wreath at Ephraim Slaughter's grave. Brother Wayne Blattner and I the following Saturday represented the Camp at Memorial Day services at Montgomery Cemetery in Norristown where we honored our camp's namesake, General and Governor John F. Hartranft, as well as Generals Winfield Scott Hancock, Samuel K. Zook, Adam J. Slemmer, Col. Matthew McClennan, and the S. K. Zook Post #11 plot.

There are brothers from our camp who intend to attend the Department and National Encampments over the summer and I'm sure you will represent us well!

I also want to welcome brothers we recently added to our ranks: Bob Hollinger, Hank Beers, Ken Beers and Jacob Lemon. We are happy to have all of you!

I again thank all new brothers for joining us and wish safe travels for those brothers attending the Encampments. I look forward to seeing you in the fall when we will conduct camp business once again.

Enjoy your summer break everyone and continue to do your due diligence promoting our Order!

In F, C, & L,

Commander Kyle G. Purchase

SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

Brothers, it has come to my attention that there is a need for a second camp assistant treasurer. The purpose of having assistant treasurer is that in case of emergency the Camp Treasurer is unable to perform his duties. As of now, Brother David Demmy Sr. serves as our Camp Treasurer and Brother Greg Kline is our assistant treasurer. The camp is seeking an **additional** assistant treasurer to add his name to the financial institute account we have. Per Rules and Regulations, the Camp Commander is not permitted to be in such a role. If interested, please inform us **ASAP**.

Secondly, Camp Counselor Chuck Brackbill has suggested lowering the number of brothers to establish a quorum. Our current bylaws state that [any] 5 brothers must be present to establish a quorum, and the proposal is to lower that to **4**. I am therefore re-establishing the **Bylaws Committee**, which will consist of Brothers **Chuck**

Brackbill, Jeff Smith, and Scott Debo to reevaluate the Bylaws and to report back to me by the September meeting if any other changes shall be voted on.

The committee will make the following motion at our September meeting:

Three officers, or two officers and one member, present at any regularly scheduled meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Thirdly, since we do not meet as a camp until September, elections for camp officers will be here before you know it. If you are interested in camp positions, please let us know! The open positions are as follows:

Commander

Senior Vice Commander

Junior Vice Commander

Secretary and/or Treasurer

Camp Council 1

Camp Council 2

Camp Council 3

(Other positions such as Patriotic Instructor, Chaplain, ROTC Coordinator, Graves Registration Officer, etc. are all appointed by the Commander.) Nominations and Elections will be held during our October meeting.

[Memorial Day events at Montgomery Cemetery, photos courtesy of Commander brother Kyle:](#)



General Hartranft



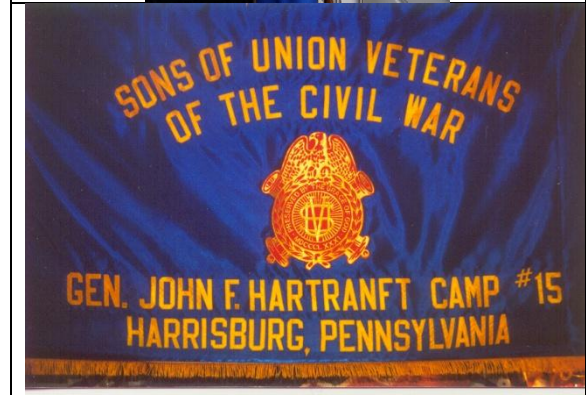
Kyle Purchase



Wayne and Kyle on duty



Joyce Racey and Helen Shireman,
descendants of the General.



Background: the tab that held our flag on pole was like *thin felt* material and the buttonhole wore out, thus not holding flag upon the pole. Pai Swanger replaced the tab and reinforced it with tab from zero coke can? We don't believe the flag will be flying off of the pole anytime soon! From the brotherhood of Camp 15, Pai thank you very sincerely.

Camp 15 Flag Story:

Our camp flag was damaged and needed some loving care with a patch job. Mrs. Logan Swanger stepped up, volunteered to handle the fix, and she did it.

[Minutes of May 17th, 2026, Camp #15 Meeting](#)

We met at the National Civil War Museum, upper level, in Harrisburg, PA., Sunday May 17th, 2026. The weather was partly cloudy, and 83 degrees.

Camp #15 Commander, Brother Kyle Purchase was prepared to open the meeting according to the SUVCW Ritual; but he could not do that because there was not enough Brother's present for a *quorum*. We needed at least five members present. An informal meeting started at 2:06 P.M.

The following Brothers were present:

1. Kyle Purchase – Camp Commander
2. Wayne Blattner – Secretary and Council #2
3. David W. Demmy Sr. – Treasurer

Camp Meeting notes.

The last "official" April 19th, 2026, meeting minutes were published in the May 2026 *Hartranft Herald*. Hopefully at the future September 20th, 2026, Camp meeting they will be reviewed and approved, along with any of the informal notes taken today.

Treasurer's Report:

Brother David Demmy Sr., shared with the Camp that there are two outstanding checks that have not cleared the bank yet. One is for the Pennsylvania Department Encampment Booklet Ad, and the annual reports form 27 remittance to Dept of PA. Historically these 2 remittances are outstanding until the PA Dept encampment is conducted. New member Jacob Lemon's check to join our Camp cleared.

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

In addition to our regular list, keep in mind Commander Kyle, who is recovering from a concern, is feeling much better. Brother Scott Debow had back surgery and undergoing therapy. Past Pennsylvania Department

Commander, Brother Dane DiFebo was involved in an automobile accident. It appears that he is doing better. Please keep all the brothers mentioned above in your prayers.

New Applicant petitions Camp #15 for membership:

The formal initiation for new member Jacob Lemon will take place at the September meeting. All paperwork submitted by Brother Lemon with his application to the SUVCW was excellent. His check was included. Brother Lemon Civil War ancestor was Jacob Vetch a soldier in the Co D 11th PA regiment. Welcome Brother Lemon!

Committee Reports:

Grave registration: Commander Kyle stated in the past year he has submitted 64 veteran's records to the "Grave Registration" database that the SUVCW maintains. These Veterans are from Dauphin County. Brother Kyle will submit the information to the Pennsylvania Department soon.

Orders from National and PA Department:

General Order #14, (from National 27 April 2026), dealt with "Administrative Access to Department and Camp Digital Assets", and social media concerns. Special Message #16, (from National 14 April 2026), dealt with "Appomattox and It's Meaning, etc. Special Message #17, (from National 6th May 2026), dealt with "Decoration Day and the Sacred Duty of Remembrance".

In reference to the Order #14 above, Brother David urged the Camp to look deeper into our current Camp #15 Treasurer's position, and the assistant Treasurer position too. In review, David is the current Treasurer, and Brother PCC Gregory Kline is assigned as backup with our financial institution.

Fortunately, both brothers have signature cards registered at our credit union. Brother David's concern is if he unexpectedly is not able to perform the Treasurer's duties, and for some reason Brother Greg is not available, the camp may want to think about having a third treasurer? It is kind of a disaster recovery *precaution* [insurance policy] to keep our Camp up and running if such situations ever arise. Brothers think about this subject, and we are open to all suggestions and a volunteer to be 3rd our signer with the local credit union!

Old Business.

Camp #15 participated on Saturday, May 16th in a pre-Memorial Day event, at the Harrisburg Cemetery. Brothers in attendance were Purchase, Blattner, Swanger, Demmy Sr., and Lute. We were joined by students from Harrisburg High School's NJROTC, the Dauphin County VA, and a group called "America 250 PA". Flags were placed at veterans' gravesites. Camp #15 separately visited four GAR and one SUVCW grave. We also visited General John W. Geary's grave site. From there the five Brothers moved on to the Lincoln Cemetery at Penbrook and placed a flag and wreath at Private Ephraim Slaughter's grave. [Slaughter was the last union veteran of Harrisburg, not the county]! Brothers Kyle and Wayne will visit Montgomery Cemetery in Montgomery County on May 23 and place a wreath on General Hartranft's grave and be a part of the Memorial Day service therein.

New Business:

Yesterday Brother Logan Swanger mentioned the Camp #15 Flag is done being repaired. A big thank you to his wife Pia! Brother David was wondering if Camp #15 Council, (Brothers Jeff, Wayne, and Chuck), would look into amending our Camp's

Bylaws to state that a minimum of four brothers in attendance would become a quorum for a meeting. Right now, the required number to be present is five. Question, is that number dictated by National? [No! a camp makes up their own bylaws with some guidelines from nat'l]. SUVCW Encampment Credential Cards were signed and distributed by Brother Wayne. If you are interested in attending these events, email me at

Wblattner1@Comcast.net and I will send them to you via the US Mail or catch up with you at the Encampments and I will hand deliver it to you! All the required registration forms for the Pennsylvania Department Encampment in Carlisle are in the Battle Cry of Freedom. For the National Encampment in Gettysburg, all registration forms are in the SUVCW Banner Magazine.

Brother David Demmy bought up the 2026 Christmas Party. Last year's event was a great success. For 2026 a date of December 13th has been selected. The location, if available, would-be Hoss's in Mechanicsburg, PA. Davis suggested maybe Brother Jeff could check the availability to see if they could accommodate us on that date.

Adjournment:

Adjournment of Camp #15 took place at approximately 3:30 P.M. Now 85 degrees.

Next meeting is September 20th, 2026, at 2:00 P.M., in Harrisburg, PA. We will be meeting at the Upper Level of the Civil War Museum. Brothers please attend!

Respectively submitted,

In F C & L

Wayne N. Blattner,

Camp Secretary

June 2026

End

Camp 15 on the Road for 2026

Summer break! Camp 15 does not meet during June – July – August!

2026 National Encampment begins July 31st at Gettysburg. Visit:

<https://suvcw.org/national-encampment>



September Camp Meeting

Sunday the 20th at 2pm at NCWM upper level.

October Camp Meeting

Sunday 18th at 2pm at NCWM upper level.
Camp Elections today.

Veterans Day Free Day Saturday, November 7th, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, at the National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg. Brothers, please consider attending this weekend's event to support Camp 15, and the PA Department too.

2nd annual tri-camp holiday banquet event for 2026 is scheduled for **Saturday December 12th at Hoss' Mechanicsburg**, same venue as 2025. Tri-camps = camps 15, 50, and 503. Please mark your calendars now! More data later.....

Highlites of 2026 PA department encampment will appear in late summer edition of *Hartranft Herald*. Quik note, NO increase in PA dues for 2027. Hooray

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.

Next edition *Hartranft Herald* will be issued in September time for September meeting.

S U V C W



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Greg Kline

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These products will be on hand at Carlisle; see brother of camp 15 to make a *cash* or check purchase.