

Michigan's Messenger

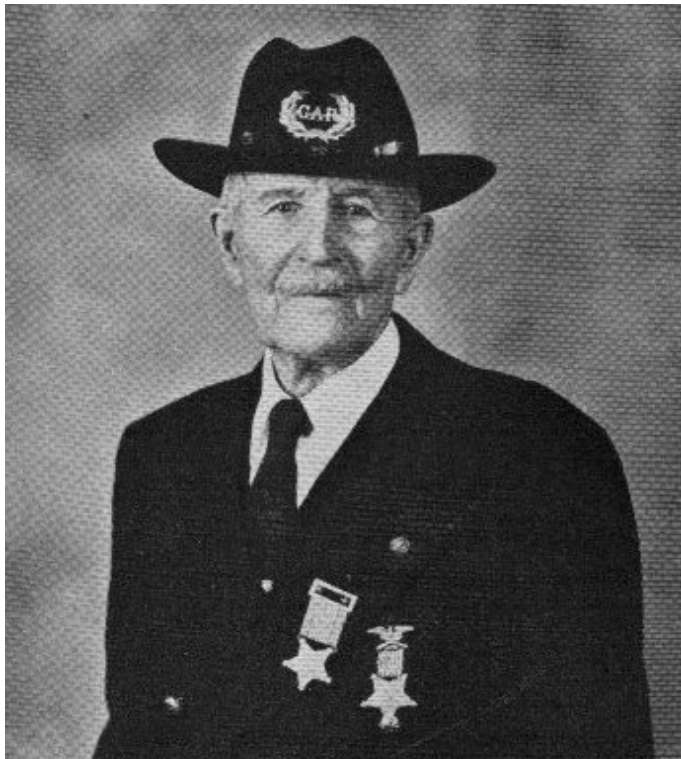


THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN ~ SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF

Volume VII Number 2

Chartered June 24, 1884

November 1998



Above is Orlando LeValley, last Commander and member of the Michigan Department, Grand Army of the Republic. This photograph was taken a few years prior to his death, April 19, 1948, at the age of 99 years and 7 months.

But who is that handsome guy on the right? Here are a few clues: He was the S.U.V.C.W. Michigan Department Commander at the time of LeValley's death. He was 42 years old and a Sons Member for 19 years when the photograph was taken in 1946. His brother Dean (killed in WWI) was a Charter Member of Austin Blair Camp 7. His father was a Private in Company F, 76th Illinois Infantry, serving from August 7, 1862 until March 6, 1865, when he was discharged for disability.



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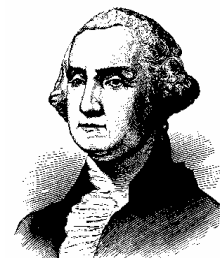


1999

WASHINGTON/LINCOLN

DINNER

by Paul Hodges



Plans for the next George Washington/Abraham Lincoln Commemorative Dinner are well underway. Held annually under the joint sponsorship of the Michigan Department, S.U.V.C.W. and the Sons of the Revolution in the State of Michigan (S/R), the 1999 event will be hosted by the S/R. It will take place at the Midway Motor Hotel, Lansing, on Saturday, February 13, following the Department's Mid-winter Conference.

The speaker for the evening will be Max Riekse, Past Camp Commander of Henry Plant Camp 3 and current president of the S/R. He will give an illustrated talk on "The Culminating Battle of the American Revolution: Yorktown." More details of the dinner meeting will be presented in the next issue of *Michigan's Messenger*.

THAT HANDSOME DUDE ON THE COVER

He's none other than Thayne C. ("Where's the gals? I'm on the prowl!") LaBanta, who celebrated his 94th birthday October 11th.

Michigan's Messenger

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DEPARTMENT ORDERS No. 2

SERIES 1998-99

1. It is my sad duty to report the passing of Brother **Solon J. Yax**, grandson of Private Oliver Yax (Company F, 22nd Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment). Brother Yax was a Charter Member of **Alexander French Camp No. 28** and his active role in both his Camp and community, made him a credit to this Department and the Order. All Camps are directed to have their Charters draped-in-mourning for thirty days.

2. With the month of November at hand, all Camps and their memberships are respectfully encouraged to host, or join other patriotic organizations in, observances of *Veterans' Day* on the 11th, and *Remembrance Day* on the 19th.

3. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Remembrance Day Parade/Ceremony in Gettysburg, PA on November 21. At 12:00 Noon, the parade will form up at the "old school complex" on Lefever Street and step-off at 1:00 PM. After the parade & ceremony, held near the Gettysburg National Military Park Visitor Center, I invite you to join me in placing a wreath at the 24th Michigan Monument, on Meredith Avenue. Every *Member*, *Associate*, or *Junior* is invited to take part, whether you are part of a uniformed Camp Guard or not. Chief-of-Staff Pangburn can help you with further details and information on the 9:00 PM Military Ball.

4. With annual Camp elections taking place this time of year, our smaller-staffed Camps are respectfully reminded of the necessity to elect a 3-man Camp Council. A Camp Commander, Secretary & Treasurer are naturally, not allowed to serve on this council. Current Camp Commanders and Secretaries are asked to please let me know if, for whatever reason, your Camp does not have copies of the *Job Descriptions for Camp & Department Officers* and the *Camp Structure* diagram of elected and appointed Camp Officers, to share with your membership.

5. The Department Archive is in receipt of a videotape record of the August 1 & 2, 1998 *Weekend of Remembrance*, courtesy of the staff at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. To all who helped plan and take part in this observance, Thank you.

6. Many thanks to all who comprised our delegation to the 1998 SUVCW National Encampment at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on August 7, 8 & 9 (see photo elsewhere). Past Department Commander Thayne Chamberlain LaBanta was introduced by Commander-in-Chief Richard D. Orr, during the

opening ceremony, as the senior-most member present. Another special moment for Brother LaBanta took place at the banquet, where C-in-C Orr called Thayne forward and presented him with a 70-year pin for his membership badge. [Needless to say, we are all happy that Thayne is feeling better and was able to make the trip to Pennsylvania. Brothers Lowe, Mann, Miller and Williams are to be commended for getting Thayne there and for helping in his stay & navigation of the Encampment. A special memory for my wife and I, is the distinct pleasure of attending the Banquet with Thayne and sharing his company.] Please see a special photo-story, elsewhere in this issue, on Bro. LaBanta.



*Brother LaBanta receiving his
70 year membership pin from
Commander-in-Chief Orr.*

7. Please join me in congratulating Brother Gary Gibson, on his election to the National Council-of-Administration and Brother James Pahl on his election as National Treasurer. A table, listing the many National Organization assignments of Michigan Brothers, appears elsewhere in this issue.

8. Congratulations are also in order for the following Brothers, in recognition of awards presented by Commander-in-Chief Orr at the National Encampment. National Webmaster Harrison and Department Webmaster TenBrink both received a *Distinguished Service Certificate* for their dedication and long-hours given to our Internet Web-sites. Department Secretary Lee received the *John G. Nicolay Award* for his efficiency-in-office.

9. Please be advised that the delegates to the National Encampment voted for the National Organization, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War to support *The Citizens Flag Alliance, Inc.* and endorse the "Flag Amendment" (H. J. RES. 54 - ref. Page 20 of the August 1998 issue of *Michigan's Messenger*).

10. Another outcome of the National Encampment, affecting our Camps with fewer than fifteen members, is the vote to do away with the term, Provisional Camps. From now on, a "Full Camp" will be recognized with as few as the five *Members* previously allowed for a Provisional Camp to form. Thus, in cases where a Camp opens with 5 or more - but less than 15 *Members*, there will no longer be a need to apply or pay for a "Full Charter" when a Camp reaches 15 or more *Members*.

11. All Camps with Charters are encouraged to photograph the document or have large photocopies made of it. Two prints or copies should then be sent to the Department Secretary, who will forward one to the National Secretary. The reason for this

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SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

William Morris

Brothers, on joining our Order, each of us became bound to each other "... by the sacred ties of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty." While we extend these kindly feelings towards each other, I believe we never really come to know their true nature and meaning until we receive the full benefit of them.

At the beginning of this past summer my household was placed in great upheaval with the news of a close family member suffering a life threatening illness. It quickly became apparent that demands of our family would far outweigh most everything we would be doing for the next few months. I notified the Department Commander and my Camp's Officers that, in view of this, it was unlikely I would take an active roll in the Order until things settled down. Over the next several weeks our time was spent taking care of those things that needed to be done. We took occasional breaks, attending some of the Order's functions and a few reenactment so that we might spend a little time with our friends. It was during this time that I came to fully understand the depth of our bonds of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty. My fraternal Brothers and Sisters were always quick to offer us their able assistance. They stood by us, without question, quietly doing whatever needed to be done, always offering their prayers, insight and knowledgeable answers to any questions we had. For reasons known only to the Great Creator, although the illness continues, things seemed to have leveled out for the moment. Both my wife and I wish to thank our Brothers and Sisters of the Allied Orders for all they have done, and continue to do, to help us through this very difficult time.

As always, the more we progress in the Order the more need we have for volunteers. Much to our delight, having a very active Department Commander has lead to a strong increase in our needs for those with dedicated and willing hearts. If ever you have thought about doing something positive to help others remember those that have gone before, now is the time.

Earlier this year, our Brothers of the General Phil Kerney Camp No. 67 reported the loss of a Civil War era cannon tube from the Veteran's plot of a local cemetery with its sale by the cemetery owner. Likely, it never crossed the mind of the old soldiers who placed it there that someday someone would take their monument and sell it for profit. It shocks our collective consciousness that the incident happened at all. In spite of this, this kind of loss happens more often than we would like to believe. PCinC Alan Loomis has been actively pursuing the return of cannon tubes taken from a beautiful monument located his home state of Indiana. He recently told me of yet another three artillery tubes that were recently removed from a monument in Illinois and sold. It greatly distresses and angers all of us whenever we hear of such things and it leads us to wonder at the motivations individuals that market in these sacred touchstones of our history. Yet, in spite of the feelings of helplessness that we might have, there are some things that can be done to help combat this discretion of our Veteran's

monuments.

A very basic element of our protection and preservation efforts is our ongoing Civil War Memorials Project through which our Order is striving to locate, assess, and catalog all monuments related to the American Civil War era. Michigan's Veterans blessed us with so many of monuments erected to the memory of their fallen comrades. Some are very simple, taking the form of a pedestaled dish bearing the letters "GAR," others may be a simple bronze plaque, while still others have strikingly beautiful sculpture that rises to the sky. Yet, in spite of their simplicity or stunning beauty, each one of them is of equal importance to us. No matter how big or small they might be, each helps us all to remember the sacrifices made by our American Military Forces. Although a number of our Brothers have devoted a great deal of time towards this effort, there remains so much to be done to complete this project.

This autumn, while your taking your "fall color tour" in our beautiful state, do it with a purpose. The registration and assessment procedure for the Civil War Memorials Project is fairly simple when using the forms and procedures developed by our Order. By following the instructions on the Assessment Form, the survey of a monument will take but a short time to complete. The forms can be obtained either through your Camp, the Department Commander, or through your humble servant. We can assist you by directing your efforts towards known monuments yet to be surveyed or probable sites of others. Compared to what they did for us, is this now such a small thing you to do for them?

SECRETARY

Richard Lee

Department Commander Kent Armstrong was honored at the National Encampment with two awards which were presented to him by Commander-in-Chief Richard Orr. The first was the Major Stephenson Distinguished Service Award, for personally recruiting 30 new members into our Order in the past year. This was the most new members recruited by a single member of the Order last year.

The second was the Cornelius Whitehouse Award, recognizing Commander Armstrong as the most outstanding member of the S.U.V.C.W. nationally.

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

John R. Mann

Job Description for the Camp Junior Vice Commander

Purpose: The purpose of the office of Junior Vice Commander is to assist with the recruitment and retention of members.

Activities: Camp Junior Vice Commander. The activities of the Camp Junior Vice Commander should include:

- (1) Contacting prospective members whose names are supplied to the Camp by the Department Junior Vice Commander.
- (2) Supplying prospective members with membership materials including two membership applications, a copy of a SUVCW organization descriptive leaflet, and an invitation to the next Camp meeting.
- (3) Keeping track of applicants' progress in completing membership applications.
- (4) Encouraging delinquent Brothers to remain in the Order.
- (5) Presiding at Camp meetings in the absence of both the Camp Commander and Senior Vice Camp Commander.
- (6) Carrying out other responsibilities delegated to the office by the Camp Bylaws, Camp and Camp Commander.

So reads the Camp JVC's job description. Many of our Camps will be electing and installing new officers for the coming year, which means many of the Camp officers will have to learn a new job. While all of the Camp Officer jobs are important, the elected officers' jobs are especially vital. These jobs do not start with the Camp meeting and end with the fall of the closing gavel; they continue on throughout the year whether the Camp is in session or not.

The job of the Camp Junior Vice Commander is vital to the growth of the Camp and retention of the current membership. The JVC needs to give attention to the duties of his job by devoting a minimum of one or two hours per week to it. To be effective, he needs to act as soon as possible whenever he receives a possible membership referral. These referrals can be from many sources: a phone call, verbal reference from a current member, a letter, or e-mail. Whatever way they are received, the potential new member deserves a timely reply. Nothing is more frustrating to someone interested in joining an organization than to be ignored or put off until sometime down the road when it is convenient for them to answer him.

Not only does the JVC need to comply with the six parts of the job description as noted above, he should be directing his Camp in recruiting efforts at local civic events, wherever possible. The Department has a tent and fly, a banner that reads "Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Department of Michigan" and a box of recruiting materials which is available to any Camp requesting it. The tent, banner and materials may be reserved for a specific date or dates by notifying me. I will reserve their use for your Camp on that date, and make arrangements for delivery and return. Please be sure to put in your reservation at least one or two months in advance; reservations are on a first come, first served basis.

One of the items the Department stocks in the box of recruiting materials to give to interested prospects is a stack of Membership Applications, along with a quantity of eight page, two part brochures. The first part of the brochure tells a little bit about the SUVCW, its history and the criteria for becoming a Member, Associate or Junior in the Order. The second part lists all of the Camps within the Department by their meeting place (town) in alphabetical order. Under each Camp's name, it lists the meeting time, dates and address, where practical. The final listing for the Camp is its JVC, his phone number and e-mail address (or Camp member's address receiving e-mail for the JVC). This information should necessarily be reviewed periodically and kept up to date by the Camp JVC. If any changes are made in this information, such as a change in the Camp JVC, the time date or place of meetings or an e-mail address, it should be promptly reported to the Junior Vice Department Commander. Don't wait for the Camp Secretary to report the changes to the Department Secretary. His report will be as much as three months after the fact, when he makes his quarterly report. It is the responsibility of the Camp JVC to keep this information current, not the Camp Secretary.

Remember to update your Camp's web pages information by reporting all new Camp officers to the Department web master.

Another item the Camp JVC should be reviewing periodically is the Camp's web page. The web page is a form of advertisement and should therefore fall under the JVC's job description. Brother Charles TenBrink (Department web master) is responsible for only for putting the information supplied to him on your Camp's page. It is the JVC's job to make sure the information on the page is correct and is kept up to date. If you do not have internet access, ask someone in your Camp if you can get online and check out the web page yourself. If no one in your Camp can get you online, try your local library. Many libraries now have internet access and will help you get online. The URL (internet address) for the Department of Michigan is: <http://suvchw.org/mi/deptmi.htm>

From the Department page, just click on Camps/Membership and scroll down to the listing of Camps. Then click on your Camp name/number. You will find the information that your Camp provided to Brother TenBrink on this web page. Any corrections or additions to your Camp's web page may be reported to either Chuck (cjt1@midway.uchicago.edu) or me (address on page 2). While you are online, you might want to click on some of the other Camp's pages to get some ideas on what to add to your Camp's pages. Flint's Gov. Crapo Camp 145 web pages are especially informative and the Camp is to be commended for their efforts. Other Camps having more than

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30TH MICHIGAN, SONS OF VETERANS RESERVE

by Gary F. Ralston

RENEWED BEGINNINGS

There are many of the Brothers here in Michigan that have been wondering about what is happening with the 30th Michigan. Frankly, not as much as would be desired at this point but that is about to change. I made mention at the Department Encampment in June that I wanted the SVR in Michigan to survive and to prosper and was handed the file box of records to take home to look through and get up to date. It seems that the records ended in March 1997 and were at best either incomplete or at least severely outdated so as to be almost impracticable to use to set up a data base. I tried, it didn't work. I must now turn to the Brothers to help me in this endeavor. If you have paid dues to anyone for 1998 Please write to me at the address at the end of this article and inform me of the details so I can create an updated data base. If any of you have been wanting to send in your membership please send it to me and I will make sure that your records are updated and included in the new data base.

I have tried on at least two occasions to set up a place where we could meet and possibly run through some drills but these have been unsuccessful. I would like to see us be able to have a meeting sometime in October or early November and will continue to try to make the arrangements. If any of you know of or have a place where we could meet please let me know. To build the 30th back to where it should be is going to take some effort from all of us.

I am hopeful that as many brothers as possible will be able to attend the annual events at Gettysburg this November. I have

asked to have that time off so that I can be in attendance and hope to be able to go. A bit farther in time, plans are underway to renew the **School of the Soldier** during the spring as well as participation in other events and parades during the year. Of course plans for meetings and practice drills are also being made. If any of you have any input you would like me to have please feel free. This is your organization and together all of us can rebuild it into something we can hold our heads high about and be proud.

One last thought is that many of you may not recognize my name but have met me in passing at various functions or the Department Encampment. I have served as an officer of the Gilluly-Kingsley Camp 120 (currently Commander) for the past 4 1/2 years and have been instrumental in establishing the Camp Guard which appears regularly in local parades. I have also served as a Department officer for the past two years plus the current year. I have wanted to be a part of the SVR for over a year but the circumstances in the organization had precluded that. I am not interested in any personal gain in working as Adjutant for the 30th Michigan, but only in making sure that something worth having survives and grows. I look forward to meeting those members whom I do not know and renewing the friendship of those that I do. My address is:

Gary F. Ralston
1775 Valley View Lane
Milford, Mi. 48381

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

(Continued from page 5)

just basic information on their web pages are Camps 1, 7, 9, 17, 22, 58, 147, 160 and 427.

As was mentioned in this column in August's *Michigan's Messenger*, it is very important to have someone in each Camp that can receive and send e-mail for the JVC if he doesn't have e-mail. Keep in mind though, it is JVC's job to receive and send the messages, so don't try to make the "Good Samaritan" do it all. An added benefit to a Camp having e-mail is that it is easy to send messages back and forth to other Camps and the Department Officers, keeping abreast of events and happenings within the Department. Having this instant communication available does no good though, if the "mail box" is not opened frequently. Check your e-mail for incoming messages at least three times each week, if at all possible.

On another note: As of this writing, 37 membership prospects have been referred to various Camps since June 6th, usually to the Camp closest to the person's home. In some cases they were

referred to more than one Camp. Most of the prospects were forwarded by Camps that had gotten them from personal contact at events where they had set up a display or the recruiting tent. There were several more local (to the host Camp) prospects that were handled directly by the Camp. In addition, four persons sent their completed applications directly to me that they had downloaded off the internet. These were forwarded to the Camps closest to their home address.

Junior Vice C-in-C Al Peterson is requesting a head count from all Departments on members that have joined our organization since June of 1998, whose first contact was through the internet. If any new members of your Camp meet this criteria, please let me know so that I can forward the information to him. This information lets us know just how effective our web sites are.

DEPARTMENT ORDERS

(Continued from page 3)

is to allow for an accurate duplicate to be made, should the need ever arise. Our Brothers of the rejuvenated **George W. Howe Camp No. 9** voted to have a facsimile of their Camp's original Charter reissued, after attempts to locate the original document failed. Rather than have a new Charter (with their names) issued, they wanted to honor those who formed the Camp on October 24, 1953. On September 24, it was my pleasure to personally deliver a true and accurate duplicate of Camp No. 9's original Charter, to the assembled Brothers in Port Huron. [My thanks to Chief-of-Staff Pangburn for lending his "pen & ink talents."] Please be advised that because of poor written records, the only way that we knew what to put on the duplicate, was due to the fact that the National Secretary found a photograph of the original Charter in his files.

12. Please be advised that the newer "Ritual and Ceremonials" booklet, just revised in August of 1997 was rejected at the National Encampment. The amount of misspellings and omissions reported, were judged to make this example not worthy of the membership. Camps are respectfully asked to make photocopies of the older handbook available to their new members until a corrected version can be brought to press.

13. A positive sidelight to my trip out to the National Encampment, was to visit the gallery of "Civil War Artist," Dale Gallon in Gettysburg. Mr. & Mrs. Gallon granted my request for a donation of a *Men of Iron* print, which we will be raffling as a fundraiser after the first-of-the-year.

14. My thanks to all Camps that have taken part in some function or other, at which they could display information about the S.U.V.C.W. for informational and recruiting purposes. I am able to attest the *first-rate* job done by members of Camp No. 17 and No. 7, respectively, at the Hastings and Jackson Civil War Re-enactments. I look forward to seeing all other accounts, in the Camp News section of this newsletter.

15. So far, it's been my pleasure to attend a meeting of Camps 1, 7, 9, 14, 17, 22, 28, 58, 70, 101, 120, and 145. I look forward to joining the rest of you in the months to come. Due to the fact that the hours of my "paying job" are from 3:00 to 11:30 PM, I have to space-out requests for time off from work in order to visit Camps that have their meeting on a weeknight.

16. I have sent condolences on behalf of the Department of Michigan, to the surviving nieces of Mrs. Daisy G. Anderson, who passed away on September 19th. I had the privilege to meet Mrs. Anderson on July 1, 1997, when she met the "Last Confederate Widow" at the burial services for the *Unknown Soldier* at Gettysburg National Cemetery.

17. As reported in the last issue of *Michigan's Messenger*, our 1998 Department Encampment voted approval to host a Central Region Conference in the fall of 1999. After writing twice to the Central Region Commander, I took advantage of the opportunity to speak with him directly at the National

Encampment. I was informed that the decision would have to wait until their October 3rd gathering which, at the time of this writing, has not occurred yet.

18. Please keep an eye open for citizens (not businesses) in your locale who faithfully and **correctly** display our nation's flag every day of the year. I have asked our Department Patriotic Instructor to craft a suitable award to recognize these folks with. Something such as this, used to be available from the National Patriotic Instructor but the practice was unfortunately not maintained adequately. I've also sent examples of various "U.S. Flag Etiquette" handouts to our P.I., asking that something similar be crafted for the S.U.V.C.W. to make available and thereby spread recognition of the organization.

19. If you don't already subscribe to *Michigan History Magazine*, I encourage you to purchase a copy of their just released "Civil War Collector's Issue." This is a "must-have" for anyone interested in the many roles that men from Michigan had in Saving-the-Union. I commend Brother Glesner of Camp No. 7 and Brother Petz of Camp No. 101 for their contribution. One of the several Civil War Memorials shown or referred to, is the sculpture that honors the "Houghton Company." Our Brothers of Camp No. 266 had an active part in the rededication of this monument at Houghton, on Memorial Day this year. The City of Houghton, with the support of all veterans' groups paid to have the monument relocated from an obscure location, in order for it to become the center-piece of a new Veterans' Park (see article elsewhere). It is my hope that from our G.A.R. records, a special article can be published in this magazine someday, sharing with its readers a look at the G.A.R. in Michigan and the emergence of the S.U.V.C.W. here.

20. Gary Gibson, Keith Harrison and John Nash are recognized as Aides to the Department of Michigan for kindly presenting regards of the Commander, at functions he was not able to attend.

21. It was my privilege to recently represent our organization at a meeting of the "Commanders' Group." For the benefit of those who are not familiar with this body, it is just as the name implies — a group of the commanders of the various veterans' organizations in our state. I enjoyed meeting many of my counterparts and addressing those assembled, about the care and upkeep of veterans' memorials. I passed out copies of the updated legislation that provides for and protects veterans' grave markers and heard from several commanders that that was the first time they had heard of the law. I was pleased to see that one of their ongoing matters of legislative support is to see the return of Memorial Day to May 30th. When this was reviewed, I took advantage of the opportunity to thank them for their support and to mention to those not aware, that our organization is the Legal Heir to the body-of-vets who were responsible for originating Memorial Day — the G.A.R.

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DEPARTMENT ORDERS

(Continued from page 7)

22. Approval signatures have been given by the Commander-in-Chief and National Secretary to our Department Bylaws, adopted June 6, 1998. The signed document has been returned to us and copies will soon be distributed to all Camps in Michigan. If space allows, the Bylaws may also soon be available on the Dept. website, for those with computer access.

23. Camps drafting new Bylaws or making changes to existing documents are respectfully reminded to submit two originals to the Department Secretary. One original will be kept on file and the other will be signed by the Dept. Commander & Secretary, after approval of the Counselor, and returned to the Camp for its records and distribution to its membership.

24. For those Camps which meet monthly, please advise me at which meeting you would like to have your newly elected officers installed. Thank you. Secretary Lee will be distributing Form No. 22's for your reporting requirement.

25. Please note the new deadline dates and publication months for *Michigan's Messenger* next year (ref. Page 2 of this issue). The first printing will shift from February to January - for which the submission deadline is December 20, 1998.

26. Along with all of those other 135th anniversary observances of Civil War events, taking place this year, please take time to reflect at your dinner table on Thanksgiving Day, that this year marks its 135th official observance. As some of you already know, President Abraham Lincoln decreed on October 3, 1863, that the last Thursday in each November should be a national thanksgiving day. What isn't widely known is the fact that having such a "national celebration" was argued in letters and editorials, beginning in 1821, by a lady named Sarah Josepha Hale. It was her published plea in September, 1863 that is credited as having gotten President Lincoln's attention... So, as Paul Harvey says, "now you know the rest of the story."

27. My sincere Best Wishes to you and yours, for the holidays ahead.

By Order of:

Kent Armstrong

Department Commander

Attest:

Richard Lee

Department Secretary

COUNCIL

Richard Williams, Council Chairman

During the past three months the Department Council made decisions that required extra expenditures from the Department Treasury.

First, we obtained the Men of Iron print from Dale Gallon (a donation) and purchased the matting and frame which will be used for another raffle for the Department. Details on the raffle are still being developed and will be presented to the Department in the January issue of the Messenger. The cost of the matting and framing was \$182.00. The Department made approximately \$2,000.00 the last time we raffled off a Dale Gallon print.

Second, we placed an add in the Civil War News that will run the last three months of this year. The cost for the ad came to \$134.64.

Third, we purchased an 8' x 3' water proof red banner to be displayed with the Department tent. It has our emblem and the words "Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Department of Michigan" in yellow. It can be used at any Camp or Department function, with our without the Department tent. The banner was purchased for \$170.30.

MICHIGAN BROTHERS HOLDING NATIONAL OFFICES

Elected and Appointed Officers and Committee Assignments	
Kent L. Armstrong	<i>Civil War Memorials Officer</i>
	<i>Civil War Memorials Committee</i>
	<i>G.A.R. Memorial Foundation</i>
Gary L. Gibson	<i>Council of Administration</i>
	<i>1999 G.A.R. Commemoration</i>
Richard Greene	<i>Assistant Camp & Department Organizer</i>
Keith G. Harrison	<i>Webmaster</i>
	<i>Proceedings Editor</i>
	<i>Banner Printing Committee</i>
	<i>Communications & Technology Committee</i>
Gregory D. Hayes	<i>Aide, Graves Registration Committee</i>
James T. Lyons	<i>Digest Committee</i>
Michael W. McMillan	<i>Legal Staff</i>
James B. Pahl	<i>Treasurer</i>
	<i>Constitution & Regulations (C&R) Committee</i>
	<i>Counselor</i>
	<i>Digest Committee</i>
	<i>Legal Staff</i>
J. Douglas Park	<i>Program and Policy Committee</i>
Kim D. Shaw	<i>Legal Staff</i>
Richard A. Williams	<i>Membership List Coordinator</i>
	<i>Banner Printing Committee</i>
	<i>Communications & Technology Committee</i>
	<i>Aide, Graves Registration Committee</i>

CAMP NEWS

AUSTIN BLAIR ~ CAMP 7

by Bill Lowe

Jackson — This summer two notable events took place, the first being an annual event, *The Jackson Cascades Muster*. This year's Muster set the pace, which will hopefully be repeated every year; I'm speaking of course of the participation of a number of our Brothers from throughout the Department of Michigan. We had Brothers from our new Camp in Berrien County in the west, Bay City in the north, Howell on the east and several camps in between. Helping out were veteran Civil War enthusiasts such as Kent Armstrong, Department Commander, down to new members of less than a year. The Auxiliary to Camp 7 was present the entire time, they told the public of their activities as well as met with ladies from two of the Camps in Michigan which are also to starting an Auxiliary. Additionally, both days several of the Daughters from Detroit drove out and joined us.

Cooperation was outstanding in our combined efforts to tell of the mission of the SUVCW and Allied Orders. The Jackson Muster increasingly impacts all of Lower Michigan and hopefully more of our Camps will have representatives present along with pictures, memorabilia and etc., telling of the work in their respective cities. Viewers, that is the public, came from all over and it could be so beneficial to have a broader base of Brothers and Sisters present to tell them what is going on where they live, not just Jackson. Our location was a definite plus this year, a special thanks to the Host Committee for the site we occupied.

As covered elsewhere in this edition you will see about the Special Tribute paid to Thayne LaBanta, PDC, and his father Dean LaBanta, who served with an Illinois infantry regiment during the Civil War. Thayne was Department Commander more than 50 years ago and has been a member of the SUVCW for 70 years this past spring. As Camp Commander, it was an honor for me to stand alongside Thayne and Department Commander Armstrong as the Union troops saluted him at the close of the Sunday afternoon "battle". As an observer it was quite impressive to see the number of men, marching by honoring him and his father, breaking ranks to salute him or speak to him. It was quite an experience.

This past summer also saw the completion of registering all of the monuments, statues, plaques and etc., for the counties assigned to us under the S.O.S. program. Between Jackson and Washtenaw counties there were more than fifty locations to evaluate, measure and photograph. This was accomplished 99% by one Brother, Gary Woodman, PCC. In the research it was discovered that the U. of M. has removed several markers placed in memory of Civil War veterans that were on the walls of the university for nearly 100 years. We have an idea where they are, attention must be given to ensure that they are not "misplaced" but rather returned to a place of prominence. This

past week in Jackson the decision was made to place a medical facility on the site of the home of Austin Blair, wartime governor of Michigan. The proper authorities will be notified that we have an interest in the site and the marker noting its significance, and to make certain the marker is not lost or destroyed during the construction process and that it is properly restored to a prominent location.

ALBERT AND JAMES LYON ~ CAMP 266

by Patrick Kennedy

Upper Peninsula — Five members of Lyon Camp 266, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War took part in festivities at the dedication of the new Veteran's Park in Houghton. Brothers Melvin Jones, Patrick Kennedy, Paul Nelson, Philip Parks and Larry Peterson participated in the solemn ceremony. The festivities began with a parade which started a Franklin Park and proceeded down Sheldon Avenue in downtown Houghton to the new Veteran's Park. The 1912 Civil War Monument honoring the Houghton Company, with an eight foot brass statue of a Civil War soldier was moved to the park last fall. Several speeches were given honoring all the Veterans from Houghton County who died in America's wars (i.e., Civil War, Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War and the Vietnam War). Bro. Paul Nelson gave the speech concerning the Civil War, and read the names of the 73 soldiers from Houghton County who died during the Civil War. The featured speaker at the dedication was Congressman Bart Stupak.

The purpose of the Veteran's Park is to promote patriotism and to provide a quiet place to contemplate and honor the sacrifice made by all veterans to preserve our freedom. Park benches, walkways and a wall containing plaques bearing the names of Houghton's war dead have been provided for visitors to the park.

REMINDER

Camp Dues for 1999 should be paid

CYBERSPACE NEWS & REVIEWS

by Dan Doyle
Camp 7 Signals Officer

Because there are many members just getting on to the Internet, for the next few issues I will repeat the two most important web sites every member of our organization should have in their list of bookmarks. They are the S.U.V.C.W. National Home Page <http://suvcw.org/id.htm> maintained by webmaster Keith Harrison and S.U.V.C.W. Department of Michigan Home Page <http://suvcw.org/mi/deptmi.htm> maintained by webmaster Chuck Ten Brink. However it is not a good idea to have either of these sites as your default opening page when you sign on to the Internet because every time you access them, you are counted, which gives the webmasters an inaccurate account of the actual hits.

An interesting site to visit is "Causes of the Civil War" at <http://members.aol.com/jfepperson/causes.html> There is lots of controversial information here.

For those interested in the Civil War calendar of all the events taking place each year throughout the country along with other items of interest visit "The Civil War News" at <http://www.civilwarnews.com>

Good reference sites are "The Library of Congress" at <http://lcweb.loc.gov> and "The Smithsonian" at <http://www.si.edu/newstart.htm>

For the genealogy buffs there is "The Genealogy Home Page" which is a commercial site sponsored by The Family Tree Maker Online at <http://www.genhomepage.com>

Again for you genealogy buffs the fun pick for this issue is "The Genealogy Genie" This humorous site can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/~hoseahouse/genealogy/index.html>

Hope you enjoy these URL's and if you are looking for something special, send an E-mail to me at ceedan@cwix.com I just may be able to help. Good surfing.

EDITOR

by John (my middle name is now Mud) Mann

Oops! I goofed! In the August issue of Michigan's Messenger on page 12, the Central Region Conference article, your editor accidentally promoted Brother Robert Grim of the Department of Ohio to Commander of that Department. As noted at the end of the article, he is the Commander of the Central Region Conference, not the Department of Ohio as printed at the beginning of the article. My apologies to Brother Mark Eckley, the *real* Department of Ohio Commander, and to Brother Grim for his bogus promotion. (Great while it lasted, eh, Bob?)

A TIME TO GIVE PRAISE REMEMBER TO HONOR THE EAGLES

by Gary F. Ralston
B.S.A. Coordinator

It's not often in the life of a boy that an opportunity presents itself to give them praise for something they have accomplished. When a young man reaches the rank of Eagle Scout that is perhaps one of the best times to praise him for his achievement. In actuality only three percent of all boys who enter the Boy Scouts of America program successfully reach the rank of Eagle. It is also little understood that the Eagle rank is an award that must be both earned by the boy and given to him by others after an Eagle Board approves his candidacy. One **No** vote by any member of the board means that the Eagle rank will not be awarded and that denial can come for any number of reasons including attitude. A young man becoming Eagle will have completed many requirements, among them having given leadership to his peers and adults alike and is expected to have a certain amount of responsibility, maturity, and bearing to qualify for the Eagle Award.

We have the opportunity to extend to these special young men our recognition of their achievements through the giving of the **S.U.V.C.W. Eagle Recognition Certificate**, preferably in person at their Court of Honor. These certificates can be ordered from national or you can get them from me at this address:

Gary F. Ralston
1775 Valley View Lane
Milford, MI 48381

If you get them from me and you supply me with the name of the young man and the date of his Court of Honor I can print them up for you at no cost to the Camp. Please try to give me at least fifteen or more days to get them done and returned to you, if possible.

I am planning to get out more information to the Camps concerning contacting the Scout Councils and their boundaries at the Mid-winter conference.

MEMBERSHIP AND NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT BADGES

OF THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC 1866 - 1949
BY KENNETH JOHNSON AND JEFFERY FLOYD, 1997

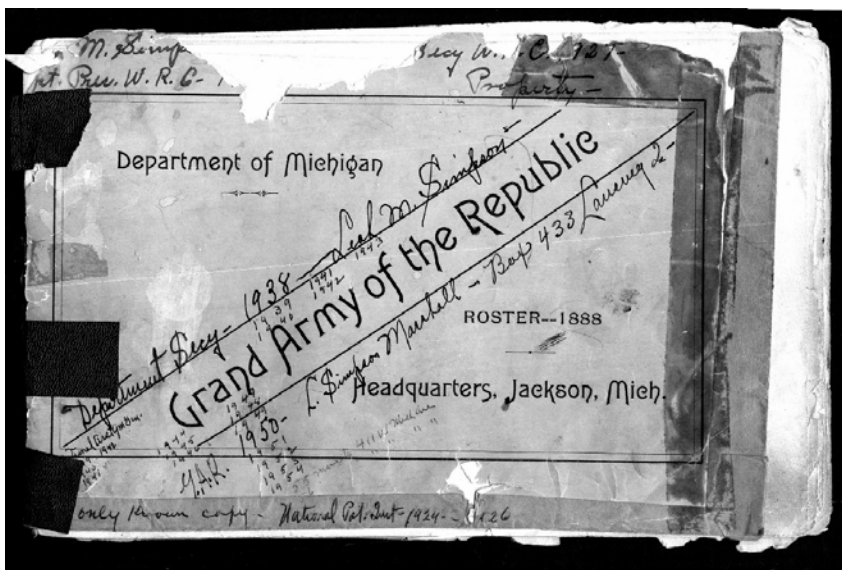
This soft cover book illustrates all of the 5 major varieties of the G.A.R. membership badges starting with the "3BN" badge of 1866. Also shown and described are the National Delegate (Representative) Badges, starting with the first ever issued for the 17th National Encampment of 1883 (very rare) and ending

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN ROSTER

by Roger L. Heiple

e-mail: mistergar@voyager.net

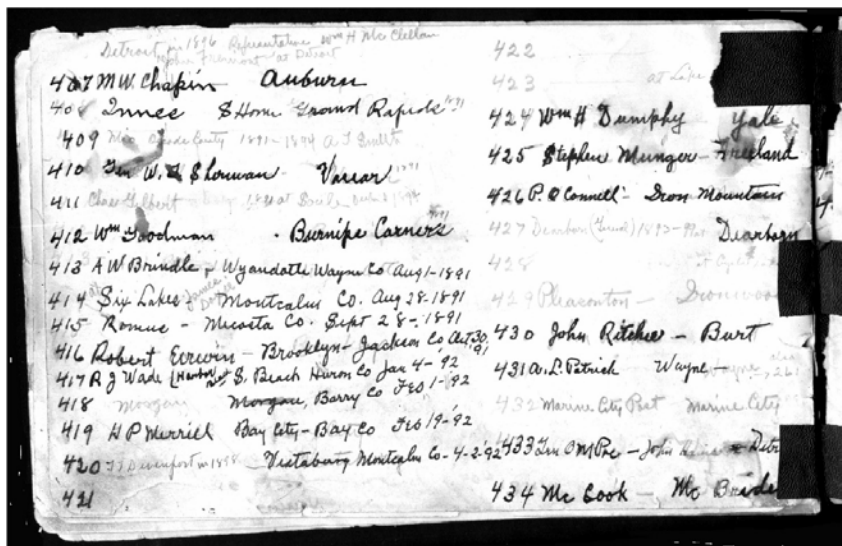
What at first appeared to be only a worn Department of Michigan Roster 1888, turned out to be a very special artifact from the Department. Written on the cover is the name of the Department Secretary, Leah M. Simpson. Also, written her hand, are a number of dates, which at first didn't make sense. On closer inspection these dates referred to the hand written changes and additions she made to the 1888 roster. As I turned the pages, hand written notes explained a number of questions I have had regarding many of the Michigan posts. For instance, Post 55 was always a mystery to me, but the notation she made indicated that Post 55 was the H. Barrow Post of Armada, chartered in 1895 and closing in 1927. As I turned the well worn pages, I realized I had aquired a very special piece of Michigan GAR history. This was the personal copy of Leah Simpson, who was the Department Secretary of the Department of Michigan GAR. A roster that she added each post until the Department closed. The dates stop at 1954.



Cover of Department of Michigan Roster of Leah Simpson

Across the bottom of the cover is written "only known copy". Turning the cover, the reverse has a list of Michigan posts in 1869 pasted to the back of the cover. These early post numbers changed when the Department reorganized in the mid 1870's.

So, what appeared to be only a poor copy of the 1888 Michigan roster, turned out to be one of the most important pieces of Michigan GAR history.



Hand written additions by Leah Simpson

SV 1886 BYLAWS

by John Mann

I recently purchased a Sons of Veterans Constitution, Rules and Regulations, and Camp Bylaws booklet dated February 10, 1886. I thought I would reprint the Camp Bylaws portion of it, as I found it interesting and thought you might also. While reading it, try to keep in mind that the average laborer was only paid about \$2.00 a day for a 10 to 12 hour workday.

Bylaws of Akron Camp, No. 27, Sons of Veterans, Division of Ohio, United States of America.

Article I. – Title.

Section 1. – This Association shall be known as Akron Camp No. 27, Sons of Veterans of the Division of Ohio, United States of America; locate at Akron, Ohio.

Article II. – Meetings.

Section 1. – The regular stated meetings of this Camp shall be held each Thursday evening during the months of September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April and May, and each first and third Thursday evenings during the months of June, July and August.

Section 2. – Special Meetings may be held when called in accordance with Chapter II, Article V, Section 2 of the Camp Constitution.

Section 3. – Each stated meeting shall be called promptly at 8 o'clock P. M.

Article III. – Admission Fees, Dues and Fines.

Section 1. – The Admission Fee of an applicant for membership shall be Two Dollars, the full amount of which shall accompany the application.

Section 2. – The annual dues of each member shall be Three Dollars, payable as follows: Seventy-five cents each first stated meeting in the months of January, April, July, and October.

Section 3. – One quarter of the annual dues shall be set aside as a *Relief Fund*, to be used for no other purpose.

Section 4. – All officers and members of the staff of this Camp, who, without special permission from the Camp Commander to the contrary, shall fail to answer the roll call and shall have no legal excuse therefor shall be fined twenty-five cents for each offense.

Section 5. – Any member of a standing or special committee who shall accept an appointment to serve and shall then neglect any of the duties of his appointment and have no legal excuse

therefor, shall be fined fifty cents for each offense.

Section 6. – Any officer, honorary member or member of the Camp, who shall fail to turn out with the Camp on Memorial Day shall be fined one dollar for each offense.

Section 7. – Any officer, honorary member or member of the Camp failing to attend the funeral of a member, after being duly notified, shall be fined fifty cents for each offense.

Section 8. – In case the Camp Commander shall fail to enforce any of the above or other fines imposed he shall himself be fined fifty cents for each offense.

Section 9. – Any member who may be in good standing shall be subject to a fine of twenty-five cents for each offense unless he is present at roll call one or more regular stated meetings each month.

Section 10. – All excuses shall be rendered in person or in writing at the first stated meeting after the offense and if not made then no excuse will be accepted.

Section 11. – A legal excuse shall be: 1, Sickness of the officer or member. 2, Serious sickness in his family. 3, Unavoidable absence from the city. 4th, Legitimate business.

Article IV. – Benefits.

Section 1. – Every member of this Camp in good standing, who has been a contributing member for six months shall be entitled, in case of sickness, to be paid weekly benefits.

Section 2. – Wherein a sick or disabled brother of this camp shall need persons to watch with him and he be unable to secure such person, it shall be the duty of the Captain commanding or in his absence the Orderly Sergeant to secure the service of a nurse or nurses as the occasion may require to take care of the brother as long as necessary, said services to be paid out of funds of this Camp raised by assessment for that purpose.

Article V.

Section 1. – No alteration, addition or amendment shall be made to these Bylaws, except the same be submitted in writing, signed by at least two members in good standing. The same shall be laid on the table and be read at two stated meetings, prior to discussion, when two-thirds of the valid votes cast concurring, the proposed changes shall be adopted.

A TRIBUTE TO
THAYNE CHAMBERLAIN LABANTA

*A TRUE SON OF A UNION VETERAN OF THE CIVIL WAR
 AND THE MEMORY OF HIS FATHER*



DERICK DEAN LABANTA

As many of you know, our senior Past Department Commander, 94 year-young Thayne C. LaBanta, marks his 70th anniversary as a member of the SUVCW this year. A card-file in the Dept. Archive records Bro. LaBanta as joining the **Governor Austin Blair Camp No. 7** in Jackson, on June 19, 1928. Throughout the years, Thayne has held many offices at the local and state level, serving as Commander of the Department of Michigan from 1946 to 1947. [Visiting an "Old Book Store," Dept. Sec. Lee recently found copies of the published programs of Department Encampments at which Thayne was Department Secretary and also for the year he served as Commander. Our thanks to Bro. Dick Williams for scanning the photo of Thayne, from those days, which appears elsewhere in this issue.]

Thayne's father, who preferred being called by his middle name, enlisted at the age of 18 in Company F of the 76th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which mustered into U.S. Service in August of 1862. (The photo above was taken at Cairo, IL when he was a "new recruit"). In those days, the family name was Banta (the "La" was added in 1877).

The 76th Illinois saw most of its action in the many conflicts and maneuvers adjacent to the Mississippi River. This continued on, after the surrender of Vicksburg, where they held the far left of the Federal siege lines, "close under the Rebel guns."

In February of 1865, the regiment traveled along the Gulf Coast to Pensacola, Florida. There, they joined forces with units that would be part of an expedition to capture the Confederate Forts near Mobile, Alabama. On April 9, the 76th Illinois helped capture the entire Rebel garrison at Fort Blakely, their colors being the first over the enemy's works. The regiment was disbanded at Chicago on August 4, 1865.

Dean Banta then settled into a life as a chemist in Chicago but lost nearly everything in the "great fire" of 1871. He eventually relocated to New York where he helped form a militia, first serving as a company commander and later in overall command as Colonel. Dean answered the call-of-matrimony in 1896 and moved his new family to Jackson, MI three years later. There, he became very active in the local G.A.R. Post (Edward Pomeroy, No. 48) as well as the Department of Michigan, G.A.R.

Thayne is the youngest of four offspring, his father being 60 when Thayne was born in 1904. Thayne was 22 when his father passed away, and so, he had been able to drive Dean to several Veterans' Reunions, where Thayne learned about the Civil War from the eye-witness accounts of the "old soldiers" who befriended him.

Thayne reviewing the troops at the Jackson Cascade's

(Continued on page 14)

TRIBUTE

(Continued from page 15)



Civil War Muster.

soldier marched by with their eyes on Thayne, many putting out their hand to him.

August 30th was indeed a special day for many in Jackson to show pride in one of their own residents. It was my honor to present Bro. LaBanta with a *Special Tribute* from Governor John Engler and the SUVCW was proud to add a little to the occasion too. A *Certificate of Recognition* from the Department of Michigan was presented to Thayne — in observance of his 70th year as a member of the Order, in gratitude for his faithful service in many offices, and in recognition of his being a “*True Son*” of a Union Veteran of the Civil War.

In January of this year, Brother Eric Martens of Camp No. 58 brought up the idea of a special ceremony at which the few surviving “true sons” of Union and Confederate Veterans of the Civil War could meet in fellowship and honor the memory of their fathers. Unfortunately, due to concerns for logistics and unknown potential costs, the proposal did not meet with approval at the National Encampment this year. While this is disappointing and out-of-our-hands nationally, it has **not** prevented us from honoring Thayne and the memory of his father, who served to *Save-the-Union*.

With the influence of PC-in-C Harrison, permission was granted by the promoters and host units of this year’s “Civil War Muster” at Jackson, for a special salute to honor Private Banta and his son. As many of you know, this reenactment’s mock-battles are usually attended by 2,000 or more participants and viewed by upwards of 15,000 spectators. It’s become a tradition for the “troops” to march in review before the crowd, at the close of each day’s main battle. After Sunday’s battle this year, event organizers drove Brother LaBanta in a golf-cart, out to the battlefield in front of the spectators. Well known Civil War historian Dave Finney, who narrates the battles, lent his voice over the Public Address System to share background information on Thayne and his father’s experience as a Civil War soldier. Two battalions of “tired-but-true” Union reenactors then took time to Present Arms, honoring both LaBantas, to the applause of the crowd. All those who honor the memory of the Union



Like many I am proud to know Brother LaBanta.

Kent Armstrong, *Commander*
Department of Michigan - SUVCW

COMING EVENTS

1998

OCTOBER

31st & 1st — Saturday & Sunday **Kalamazoo, MI**
Antique Arms and History Fair at the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds. Hours, 9:00am to 5:00pm Saturday and 9:00am to 4:00pm Sunday.

NOVEMBER

11th — Veteran's Day
Remember our Veteran's of all wars!

19th — Remembrance Day **Michigan**

21st — Remembrance Day **Gettysburg, PA**
Parade, ceremony and evening ball. Details in *The Banner*.

26th — Thanksgiving Day
The 135th anniversary of President Lincoln's proclamation that the last Thursday of November be observed nationally as a Day of Thanksgiving. Happy Thanksgiving!

DECEMBER

20th — Sunday **Newsletter Contributors**
Deadline for articles for the January 1999 issue of Michigan's Messenger. Articles must be *received* by this date.



Season's Greetings
to You and Yours

1999

JANUARY

11th — Monday **Camp Officers**
Quarterly Reports (Form 27-28) and per capita payment are due in the Department Secretary's office by this date. *Make sure your Camp is not delinquent!*

16th & 17th — Saturday & Sunday **Wyoming, MI**
Civil War Show at the Grand Valley Armory, 1200 44th Street SW. Hours are 9:00am to 4:00pm Saturday and 10:00am to 4:00pm Sunday. Reproduction and original guns, relics, documents and photos. Drill demonstrations, genealogy workshops, dance demonstrations, civilian fashion shows and door prize drawings. Admission \$2.00. For further information, contact Kerry Snider at (616) 891-9292.

FEBRUARY

13th — Saturday **Lansing, MI**
Mid-Winter Conference at the Best Western Midway Motel. A larger room has been booked this year to better accommodate the ever growing numbers of Brothers attending this popular conference. More details to follow in the January issue of *Michigan's Messenger*.

MARCH

20th — Saturday **Newsletter Contributors**
Deadline for articles for the April issue of Michigan's Messenger. Articles must be *received* by this date.

APRIL

20th — Monday **Camp Officers**
Quarterly Reports (Form 27-28) and per capita payment are due in the Department Secretary's office by this date. *Make sure your Camp is not delinquent!*

MAY

1st — Saturday **Lansing, MI**
110th Encampment of the Department of Michigan, SUVCW, at the Best Western Midway Motel.

AUGUST

20th & 21st — Friday & Saturday **Indianapolis, IN**
118th National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. This is also the 50th Anniversary of the final Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic.



The Michigan Delegation with Commander-in-Chief Richard D. Orr at the 1998 National Encampment, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Front row (from left): PDC Jim Pahl, PDC Gary Gibson, Dept. Commander Kent Armstrong, PC-in-C Keith Harrison, PDC Thayne LaBanta, Commander-in-Chief Richard Orr, Department Secretary Richard Lee

Back row (from left): Dept. Council Chair Dick Williams, Dept. Treasurer Dave T. Wallace, PCC Jim Williams, CC Bill Lowe, Max Miller, Jr. Vice Dept. Commander John Mann

(PDC Douglas Park was in attendance but was busy elsewhere when the photo was taken)

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Michigan's Messenger
1917 TEEL AVENUE
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