



MICHIGAN'S MESSENGER

CO. K, 1ST MICHIGAN SHARPSHOOTERS HIGHWAY DEDICATION

After many years of efforts to name a portion of M-22 in Leelanau County after the noble Native American warriors of Company K, 1st Michigan Sharpshooters, that dream finally came true. Spearheaded by Scott Schwander, the descendant of two Company K Veterans – Marcus and Solomon Otto – Scott has diligently pursued this project with former State Representative Jack O'Malley for many years. On 27 May 2026, the day to dedicate that naming of a section of highway and the associated highway signage came to fruition through the added efforts and approval of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians (GTB).

The GTB hosted the memorial highway dedication at the Leelanau Sands bringing the community together to honor these Veterans (many of them local residents) and celebrate their service to the



Nation. The dedication ceremony saw many Ogichidaa or Ogichidaag (Anishinaabe Veteran or Veterans) participating.

Brothers of several Camps across the Department were in attendance, with Camp 14 providing one of the Color Guards and Co. A, 14th Michigan Infantry SVR serving as the Honor Guard firing the traditional three volleys.



ABOVE: One of the Company K, 1st Michigan Sharpshooters Civil War Memorial Highway signs. (Source: Scott Schwander)

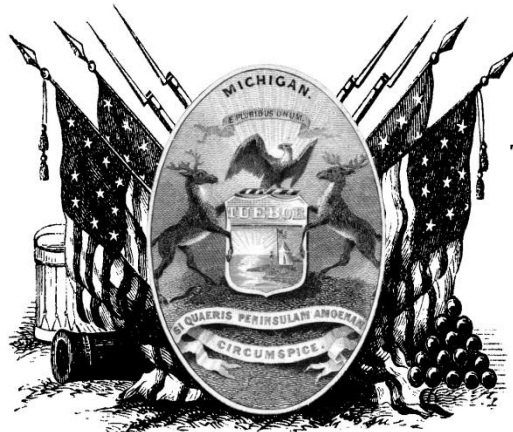
LEFT: Keynote Speaker and Tribal Elder, Scott Schwander, gives the keynote address to the crowd.

The highway is believed to be the only one that is dedicated to

continued on page 12

“TO HER MARTYRS &
HEROES WHO FOUGHT IN
DEFENCE OF LIBERTY AND
UNION”

TUEBOR



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

SONS OF UNION VETERANS
OF THE CIVIL WAR

VOLUME XXXIV, ISSUE IV
SUMMER 2026

142ND DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT

Camps from across the Department of Michigan assembled in Okemos for the 142nd Michigan Department Encampment on 25 April 2026. Department Commander David Kimble led the Brothers through a very successful Encampment. Almost all Elected Officers were reelected to 1 year terms (one change in Council) along with the exception of Secretary and Treasurer that are currently serving 3 year terms. Department Commander Kimble reappointed all Appointed Officers and committees. The Officers were installed by Michigan's own Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief Robert Payne, PDC.

Several awards were given out during the Encampment. Curtenius Guard Camp #17 won big in the membership award category winning the Governor Austin Blair Award and the Orlando LeValley Award for most new members and highest percentage membership growth respectively. The Abraham Lincoln Certificate of Appreciation Award, the highest award bestowed by the Department of Michigan, was conferred on Dale L. Aurand, PDC of General Orlando M. Poe Camp 444 and Gene Taylor of Gov. Crapo Camp #145. The J. Richard Greene Award for the Best Newsletter in the Department was given to Robert Finch Camp 14 for *The Sharpshooter* (Editor: Kenny Jones).

Department Commander David Kimble was honored by the Department of Michigan – Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War for his outstanding efforts in supporting the Auxiliary throughout the years. Department President Connie Horning presented Department Kimble with the Major Augustus P. Davis Award.

The 143rd Department Encampment will be held on 24 April 2026 in Kalamazoo. More information will be forthcoming. *continued on page 11*

MUSINGS OF THE DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

Submitted by Dick Denney, PCC – Department Secretary

Well Brothers,

The pace has finally slowed. The Form 35 Annual Department of Michigan report has been filed with the National Headquarters. The Encampment proceedings have been transcribed and sent over to the editor (Thanks Jim). As previously noted in Department Order #12 Series 2025-2026, Brother John Bennett has been appointed Assistant Department Secretary. When emailing me please include John's email address when sending. His Department address is assistantsecretary@sucvwm.org.

Now back to an old subject. I am still receiving handwritten forms. I received several the other day that required 3 pair of eyes and a secret decoder ring to decipher. Brothers, National Headquarters will not put up with it, and I must agree with them. We can and must do better. Please keep the forms mailed in a timely manner. Have a safe and blessed Summer.

Respectfully in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty.

Dick Denney, PCC

Secretary, Department of Michigan



FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN

Submitted by Rev. Charles Buckhahn, PCC, Dept. Chaplain

In my possession are copies of letters to my father, LaVerne R. Buckhahn, from his older brother, LeRoy, which were written during World War II. LeRoy, or "Lee" as he was called, was drafted into the Army on August 13, 1942. Prior to being drafted, he was an apprentice pharmacist and was thus trained as an Army medic at Camp Berkeley, Abilene, Texas. His letters are full of details on his training and life in the Army. In one letter, Lee scolds Dad, telling him not to marry, as Dad was soon to enlist in the Army. The gal Dad wants to marry goes unnamed in the letter. I can only say that she had better be my Mom! In another letter, Lee predicts that Dad will love the new M-1 Garand rifle. They were both hunters and Dad's nickname in high school was "Buckshot."

Lee's last letter to Dad was dated January 9, 1943, from Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts. Dad responded, but his letter was returned for Lee had shipped out on January 23, 1943, from New York City harbor on the USS Dorchester, headed for the southern tip of the snow and ice-covered island of Greenland. As he boarded the ship, he was greeted by four Army chaplains: Lieutenants George Fox, Clark Poling, John Washington, and Alexander Goode. Fox and Poling were Protestant ministers, Washington was a Catholic Father, and Goode was a Jewish Rabbi.

Lt. George Fox was a veteran of World War I, where he was an Army medic in the 2nd Division. For his service, he was awarded the Silver Star, several Purple Hearts, and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm — awarded to him by French field marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Supreme Allied Commander on the Western Front. Instead of returning to his family and an abusive father, Fox came home to a family that had written him during his overseas service. Through them, George Fox came to faith in Christ Jesus. Like many converts, his newfound faith led him into the ministry. When World War II started Fox rejoined the Army, not to heal physical wounds, but to heal spiritual wounds.

Clark Poling was a preacher's kid. His father went to Europe on a morale building mission for the War Department during World War I. His ship was attacked four times by German submarines and barely made it to safely. While near the front, he was gassed by the Germans. Clark attended Hope College, here in Michigan, then transferred to Rutgers University in New Jersey, and then to Yale Divinity School. A successful preacher, the attack on Pearl Harbor, led him to go into the Army Chaplaincy. His father warned him that, during World War I, the chaplaincy had one of the highest casualty rates among the services. Clark promised that he would return, but asked for prayers that he would have courage in the face of danger.

Father John Washington grew up in New Jersey, played in and with neighborhood youth gangs, and later ministered to them. After December 7, 1941, he decided to follow his friends from his youth and serve them thru military chaplaincy service.

Alexander Goode believed that Judaism and Christianity could help lead the world into a new era of "community ruled in the spirit of democracy." Being from a family of Reformed Jewish rabbis, he became one to preach the hope of this possible, new world. The hatred of the Nazi government towards Jews compelled him to join the fight as a Jewish chaplain.

Fox, Poling, and Goode trained as chaplains together. Washington joined them at Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts, the same Camp Uncle Lee was at.

These four chaplains, Uncle Lee, and 899 other servicemen and civilians were on the Dorchester when, on February 3, 1943, she was torpedoed by a German U-Boat, just south of the southern tip of Greenland. The chaplains made it to the deck of the Dorchester and began to pass out life jackets, calm the

Continued on page 4



FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN CONT'D

hysterical, encourage the fearful, and give order to the chaos of a sinking ship. They gave up their own life jackets when there were no more. As the ship went down, they locked arms and prayed for the men with them. They and 670 others, including my Uncle Lee, died.

Attempts to award the chaplains the Medal of Honor failed, for their heroic actions happened after enemy action, not during it. After the War, Congress created a new military award, the Medal of Valor, made it equal to the Medal of Honor, gave it to the chaplains posthumously, and then permanently retired it. During the War, the chaplains were awarded, posthumously, the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart. Pvt. LeRoy F. "Lee" Buckhahn, US Army Medical Corps, was also awarded, posthumously, the Purple Heart. His medal, along with his letters to Dad, are now with my older brother, Warren Lee Buckhahn. On Memorial Day, our family remembers and honors Uncle LeRoy, and the Four Chaplains. (See Dan Kurzman's book, *No Greater Glory: The Four Immortal Chaplains and the Sinking of the Dorchester in World War II*, Random House, New York, 2004.)

GEORGE W. ANDERSON CAMP No. 58

Submitted by Todd Cordill, SVDC – Camp Commander

Greetings to the Brothers of the Department of Michigan from George W. Anderson Camp No. 58. George W. Anderson Camp No. 58 recognized the 30th Anniversary of its charter during 2025. The Camp still has several charter members on the roster. A recent development with the Camp is a new venue for its regular meetings. The new venue for regular Camp meetings is the historic Gunnisonville United Methodist Church in DeWitt Charter Township (Clinton County). Besides meeting in a new venue, Brothers of the Camp are planning some monument and cemetery restoration projects starting during the current calendar year.

The regular meetings of the Camp are held on the third Mondays of the months of January, March, May, July, and November. In the month of September, the regular meeting is scheduled for the fourth Monday of the month. All regular meetings begin at 7:00 pm.

GENERAL ISRAEL B. RICHARDSON CAMP No. 2

Submitted by Bruce Miller – Senior Vice Camp Commander



Camp 2 Active on Memorial Day 2026

The Brothers of General Israel B. Richardson Camp No. 2 had a busy and fulfilling Memorial Day 2026. The City of Birmingham, Michigan is home to the Oakland County Civil War monument and the camp is an active participant in that city's Memorial Day Service. SVC Bruce Miller presented the history of the monument and the Camp placed a memorial wreath as part of the presentation.



MARCH TO THE SEA CAMP 135

Submitted by Chuck Worley, PDC - Camp 135 Senior Vice Commander

May 2, 2026, Oak Grove Cemetery, Coldwater, Michigan- Members of March to the Sea Camp 135 and Co. A 14th Michigan, SVR recognized Frederick S. Sutter as the last Union Civil War Veteran of Branch County. Private Frederick Sutter enlisted into Co. E of the 178th OVI for one year and served in both Tennessee and North Carolina. After the War of the Rebellion, Sutter farmed in Branch County until the time of his death March 2, 1943.



ABOVE (L-R): Brothers of Camp 135 at the 142nd Department Encampment held in Okemos - Dept. Secretary Dick Denney, PCC, DGRO Chuck Worley, PDC, Department Commander David Kimble, Dept. Asst. Secretary John Bennett, CC, and Dept. Treasurer Bruce Gosling, PDC.



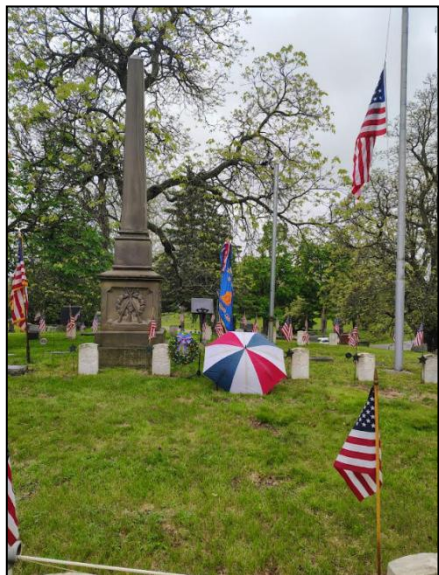
CURTENIUS GUARD CAMP #17

Submitted by Robert Payne, PDC – Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief

On May 23, Curtenius Guard Camp #17, Lansing, Sunfield held services at the Mt. Hope Cemetery Soldiers Plot. Located near the highest point in Mt Hope Cemetery, this area, with its' monument, was established in 1878 as a final resting place for Civil War Veterans who couldn't afford a proper burial. Curtenius Guard Camp 17 was joined by brothers from George Anderson Camp #58, Austin Blair Camp #7, and Gilluly-Kingsley Camp #120. Also joining us was Auxiliary Department President Connie Horning and a Representative of the Women's Relief Corps. Despite the rain, the Boys in Blue were remembered through Poems, ceremony, a rifle salute, and TAPS. Department Senior-Vice Commander Todd Cordill represented the Department with some well-thought remarks. The day continued with a city-lead service at Evergreen Cemetery where Camp 17 served by posting the Colors at Lansing's Little Arlington Veterans Memorial.

On Sunday, May 24, Camp brothers joined the Helen M. Edwins Tent 30 at the Sunfield United Brethren Church for their Memorial Day service.

On Monday, May 25, Brothers attended Memorial Day Ceremonies across our area, Eaton Rapids, Leslie, and Hastings. They participated in Parades, Salutes, and Ceremonies in each of their own cities to honor the fallen, not only of the Civil War, but of other wars and conflicts our Nation has been involved in.



AUSTIN BLAIR CAMP #7

Submitted by Ron Tyrl, PCC

The following is a pictorial summary of Austin Blair Camp #7 activities thus far in 2026:



9 February 2026 Camp Meeting Show & Tell

Paragon School Program 15 May 2026



Jackson Memorial Day 25 May 2026



President GAR Museum Service 21 February 2026

Department of Michigan Encampment 25 April 2026

Camden Cemetery Headstone Reinstall Memorial Day 2026



Spring Arbor Memorial Day 2026



GOV. CRAPO CAMP #145

Submitted by Terry McKinch, PDC – Camp 145 Commander

Governor Crapo Camp #145 and Governor Crapo Corps #23 helped the City of Vernon celebrate Memorial Day at their Veterans Memorial. Terry McKinch, PDC and Linda McKinch, President of Corps #23 were honored to speak and the 14th Michigan SVR led by Captain LD Lamphere Jr. raised the flag at the memorial. The memorial has an interesting dedication to Governor Crapo Camp for its assistance for over the past 30 years in finding the Civil War Veterans graves. Started by Jennelle Steele, Brother Gale Steele's daughter, the cemetery has done even more research to find more grave locations.



Governor Crapo Camp # 145 and Governor Crapo WRC #23 helped the National Society of Daughters of the Union (NSDU) celebrate America's 250 Commemorative Celebration Event for Pvt. Reuben Robinson Jr. Reuben enlisted in April 1776 and served in various Continental units before he moved from his home in Connecticut. The private moved to NY in 1794 and finally to Genesee County, Michigan in 1840. His remains have moved a couple times before finally resting in Avondale Cemetery.

Linda McKinch President of #23 WRC was invited to speak at the recognition and rededication to honor PVT. Reuben Robinson Jr. Both the WRC and the and the NSDU spoke at the dedication. The 14th Michigan SVR fired a salute and played taps for the ceremony.

continued on page 9



GOV. CRAPO CAMP #145 CONT'D



Afterwards the group went next door to Aventine Cemetery to perform a Memorial Day honor for the 44 Civil War Veterans and the 28 other veterans buried there. Aventine Cemetery has been abandoned by the City of Flint for over 40 years. PDC Terry McKinch started taking care of the cemetery in 1988 using a push mower and a chain saw to clean up the cemetery. In 1992, Governor Crapo Camp #145 started to keep the Aventine clean and Brother Lloyd Lamphere, PCC makes sure it is clean before Memorial Day. The Avondale care takers help to keep it mowed and clean, so that our Camp mows and cleans it only a few times during the rest of the year.

LEFT: President Linda McKinch at the PVT. Reuben Robinson gravesite.



America's 250th Commemorative Pvt. Reuben Robinson Jr. Celebration

Opening Music: Ed Hanley, Flint Scottish Pipe Band

Call to Remembrance: (Ring of honor bell)
Opening Remarks: Susan Swan, Regent, DU Carrington Chapter

Greetings: Linda McKinch, President, Woman's Relief Corps #23

Invocation: Margie Neal, Chaplain, DU Carrington Chapter
Scripture: Psalm 145:4 *"One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."*
Prayer

Responsive Reading:
Leader: Carol Powers, Vice Regent, DU Carrington Chapter. Help us to be worthy of our noble heritage and those Patriots who have served and died for America's independence. Help us recognize that fidelity and integrity must guard always the heritage bequeathed by those who had everything to lose.

Member Response: *Our forefathers put their faith in Thee O Lord, and Thou didst deliver them to this land of plenty. "God Bless America."*

Leader: Carol Powers, Vice Regent, DU Carrington Chapter. We thank Thee for the life of this Revolutionary War Patriot, Pvt. Reuben Robinson Jr. whose service to country and heroic sacrifices aided the course of independence. Let us emulate his dedication and remember this heritage, so we may pass it on to future generations.

Member Response: *In honoring Pvt. Reuben Robinson Jr., we pay tribute today to all men and women who have served our country throughout the years with integrity and devotion. We dedicate ourselves anew to a faithful stewardship of the blessings we enjoy.*

Biography: Pvt. Reuben Robinson Jr., Genesee Co. Michigan
By Karla Christenson, Recording Secretary, DU Carrington Chapter
Director General of Insignia, NSDU 1861-65

Rededication of Marker:
Susan Swan, Regent, DU Carrington Chapter (Placing of flowers)
Playing of Amazing Grace: Ed Hanley, Flint Scottish Pipe Band

Benediction: Margie Neal, Chaplain, DU Carrington Chapter
Scripture: Psalm 16:5,6 *"The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; you support my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant place; indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me."*
Prayer

Closing Remarks: Susan Swan, Regent, DU Carrington Chapter
Closing Call to Remembrance: (Ring of honor bell)
Marching to Aventine led by Ed Hanley, Flint Scottish Pipe Band

American Revolution War Fact:
Did you know that no one will ever rank higher than George Washington in the U.S. Military.

In 1976, Washington was posthumously awarded the highest rank in the U.S. military – ever. According to Air Force Magazine: When Washington died, he was a lieutenant general. But as the centuries passed, this three-star rank did not seem commensurate with what he had accomplished. After all, Washington did more than defeat the British in battle. Along the way he established the framework for how American soldiers should organize themselves, how they should behave, and how they should relate to civilian leaders. Almost every big decision he made set a precedent. He was the father of the U.S. military as well as the U.S. itself. So, a law was passed to make Washington the highest-ranking U.S. officer of all time. General of the Armies of the United States. Nobody will ever outrank him.

Washington handed down a legacy of strength, integrity, and national purpose. Less than three years after leaving office, he died at his Virginia plantation, Mount Vernon at the age of 67.



SGT. JOHN S. COSBEY CAMP 427

Submitted by John McGill, CC – Camp 427 Commander

Camp 427 Participates in Dearborn's 100th Memorial Day Parade

On Memorial Day, members of the Sgt. John S. Cosby Camp 427, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, proudly participated in the 100th Anniversary of the Dearborn Memorial Day Parade. The historic event marked a century of honoring the nation's fallen service members and is recognized as Michigan's longest-running Memorial Day parade.



Camp 427 joined the celebration with a decorated truck displaying patriotic and Civil War-themed tributes, as well as members riding in vintage Model T automobiles. Their participation highlighted the Camp's ongoing commitment to preserving the memory of Union veterans and educating the public about the sacrifices made by those who served our nation.

As spectators lined Michigan Avenue, Camp 427 helped commemorate this significant milestone in Dearborn's



history while honoring the true meaning of Memorial Day—remembering the men and women who gave their lives in service to the United States.

Camp 427 Participates in Decoration Day Ceremony

On Saturday, May 30, members of Sgt. John S. Cosby Camp 427, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, participated in the annual Decoration Day Ceremony held at the McFadden-Ross House, part of the Dearborn Historical Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

Brothers of Camp 427 attended in Civil War uniforms and period attire to honor the military personnel who have died in the service of the United States. The ceremony was conducted in accordance with the traditional Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Memorial Day Program, which included opening remarks by the Camp Commander, an invocation by the Chaplain, readings, tributes, and a wreath ceremony featuring the laying of rose petals in remembrance of those who have served and continue to serve in the Armed Forces.

Participants reflected upon the sacrifices made by generations of American service members through the reading of memorial selections, including

The Unknown Dead by Elizabeth Robbins Berry and *The Blue and the Gray* by Francis Miles Finch. The ceremony concluded with a benediction and remarks encouraging all present to remember and honor America's veterans and their families.



continued on page 11



SGT. JOHN S. COSBEY CAMP 427 CONT'D



Camp 427 was honored to participate alongside members of the Colonel Joshua Howard Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), of Dearborn, and the Sarah M. W. Sterling Tent No. 3, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (DUVCW), of Detroit. Together, these patriotic organizations joined in preserving the traditions of Decoration Day and paying tribute to the men and women whose sacrifices have secured and preserved our nation's freedoms.

The event served as a meaningful reminder of the original purpose of Decoration Day and the continuing responsibility to keep alive the memory of those who gave their lives in service to their country.

142ND DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT CONT'D



ABOVE LEFT: JVCinC Payne installing the 2026-2027 Department of Michigan Officers.

ABOVE CENTER: August P. Davis Award presented to Department Commander David Kimble by the ASUVCW.

ABOVE RIGHT: Brother Austin Ingall of Nash-Hodges Camp 43 receiving a scholarship from the Department of Michigan. Department Treasurer Bruce Gosling, PDC presenter.



142ND DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT CONT'D



ABOVE LEFT: Department Commander Kimble presenting the Governor Austin Blair and Orlando LeValley Awards to Curtenius Guard #17 Camp Commander Stephen Carr.



ABOVE CENTER: Department Commander Kimble presenting the Abraham Lincoln Award to Gene Taylor of Gov. Crapo Camp #145.



ABOVE RIGHT: Department Commander Kimble presenting the Abraham Lincoln Award to Dale L. Aurand, PDC of General Orlando M. Poe Camp 444.

CO. K, HIGHWAY DEDICATION CONT'D

Native American Veterans of the Civil War.

The event has drawn considerable attention with Scott Schwander being interviewed by media sources locally, nationally, and even internationally.

For more information and to see the entire dedication ceremony, go to [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search on the creator pages of Native News Online and Past Preservation.

LEFT: Highway dedication flyer

BELOW: Frances Finch Auxiliary 9, ASUVCW members with Scott Schwander after the dedication ceremony. Left to Right: PAP Dorothy Rongey, Dept. Council Lisa Smith, PAP, Scott Schwander and grandson Joshua, and Dept. VP Lorraine Aurand, AP.

**COMPANY K INDIAN VETERANS
1ST MICHIGAN SHARPSHOOTERS
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY**

**COMPANY K SHARP SHOOTERS
MEMORIAL HIGHWAY DEDICATION**
LEELANAU SANDS CASINO SHOWROOM
MAY 27, 2026 * CEREMONY BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 1:00 P.M.
Preserving the legacy of service and sacrifice

CEREMONY AGENDA

- 1:00 p.m. FLYOVER Outdoors - U.S. Coast Guard Fly Over - South end of building
- 1:15 p.m. OPENING REMARKS - Master of Ceremonies, Mayra Beltran, Veteran
- POSTING OF FLAGS - Eagletown Post 120 and Visiting Veterans Posts
- VETERANS HONOR SONG - Community Singers
- INVOCATION OPENING PRAYER - Gerald Luskey, Tribal Elder & Veteran
- WELCOME ADDRESS - Sandra L. Witherspoon, Tribal Chairwoman
- KEYNOTE ADDRESS - Scott Schwander, GTB Tribal Citizen, Historical Researcher, and Cemetery Volunteer
- DIGNITARY RECOGNITION
- LIST OF COMPANY K VETERANS
- GUN SALUTE
 - Cherryland Honor Guard Post
 - Sons of Civil War Veterans Honor Guard
 - Sons of Veterans Reserve (SVR)
- TAPS
- CLOSING PRAYER
- RETIREMENT OF FLAGS - Eagletown Post 120 and Visiting Veterans Posts
- DRUM - SOLDIER BOY - Community Singers

QUESTIONS
For questions or additional information - please contact the Tribal Chairwoman's Office at (231) 534-7216.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Thank you for joining us as we honor the courage, service and sacrifice of Company K.

IMPORTANT VISITOR INFORMATION

FLYOVER
1:00 p.m. Flyover
We will gather outside at the south end of Leelanau Sands Casino and then head into the showroom.

LOCATION
Leelanau Sands Casino Showroom
2521 N. West Bay Shore Drive
Peshawbestown, MI 49682

PARKING & SHUTTLE SERVICE
Shuttle Service from Leelanau Sands Casino Parking

ACCESSIBILITY
The showroom and facilities are wheelchair accessible.

WEATHER CONSIDERATIONS
The flyover will take place outside. Please dress appropriately for the weather.

**Company K Indian Veterans
1st Michigan Sharpshooters
Civil War Memorial Highway**

**The Grand Traverse Band
of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
Ancestral Reservation Area**



GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444

Submitted by David S. Smith, PDC – Camp 444 Commander

The past several months have been incredibly busy for the Brothers of General Orlando M. Poe Camp 444. In April, Camp 444 sent a contingency of Brothers to attend the 142nd Department Encampment. The Brothers were able to witness SVC/Secretary Dale Aurand, PDC receive the Abraham Lincoln Award, the highest award bestowed by the Department of Michigan, for his long-time extraordinary and meritorious work on behalf of the Department. Several Camp 444 Brothers were elected or appointed to Department Office, including Council Chair Dick Denney, PCC continues to serve as Department Secretary, SVC/Secretary Dale Aurand, PDC was elected to the Department Council, Camp 444 Honorary Member Ron Shull, PCC was reelected to Junior Vice Department Commander, and Commander David Smith, PDC was reelected to Department Council Chair and reappointed to Department Chief of Staff, Department Camp Organizer, and Department Newsletter Editor.



ABOVE: Camp 444 Brothers at the Department Encampment from left to right – Commander Smith, Council Walker, Brother C. Walker, Brother B. Walker, Honorary Member R. Shull, SVC/Secretary Aurand, and Council Chair Denney.

On 16 May 2026, Brothers of Camp 444 traveled once again to the Lansing area for the formal donation ceremony to the Save the Flags program at the Capitol. The Brothers adopted one of the National Colors of the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics, a regiment that is paid homage to by “The Engineers” of Camp 444.

Patriotic Instructor Adam Betz led the effort as the project lead for this effort, and his knowledge and expertise made this a highly successful initiative that was extremely rewarding for the Camp.

The donation ceremony was held in the Capitol Building and hosted by Save the Flags Director Matthew VanAcker. Family members of Camp 444 were in attendance along with a few Sisters of Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 made the trip to support the Camp. A short tour of the Capitol Building was conducted after the ceremony, and then a trip to the Michigan History Center to view several of the Michigan Battle Flags.



FAR LEFT: Dept. VP Lorraine Aurand, AP and Dept. Council Lisa Smith, PAP of Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 at the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics Monument on the Capitol Grounds.

NEAR LEFT: PI Adam Betz receiving the Executive Tribute and photograph of the adopted 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics flag from Save the Flags Director Matthew VanAcker.



GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444 CONT'D



LEFT: Executive Tribute, Photograph of the adopted 1st Michigan E&M National Colors, and the Certificate of Appreciation from the Michigan National Guard.

BELOW LEFT: The adopted flag of the 1st Michigan Engineers & Mechanics. L-R: Br. Carl Noonan, Commander David Smith, PDC, Sister Lisa Smith, D. Coun., PAP, Br. C. Walker, Sister Lorraine Aurand, AP, DVP, Br. Bradley Walker, SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, PDC, Br. Q. Walker, Council Jeff Walker, JVDC Ron Shull, PCC, Sr. Writer Mark Hoffman, PCC, and PI Adam Betz.

BELOW RIGHT: Mr. Matthew VanAcker, Save the Flags Director, receives the General Orlando M. Poe Award from Commander Smith. The General Orlando M. Poe Award is Camp 444's highest award, and Mr. VanAcker holds the high honor of being the first person that is not a SUVCW Brother to be bestowed the award.



LEFT: L-R: Br. Bradley Walker, Sr. Writer Mark Hoffman, PCC, Council Jeff Walker, Br. C. Walker, Br. Q. Walker, JVDC Ron Shull, PCC, SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, PDC, Commander David Smith, PDC, Br. Carl Noonan, and PI Adam Betz in front of the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics Monument on the Michigan Capitol Grounds.

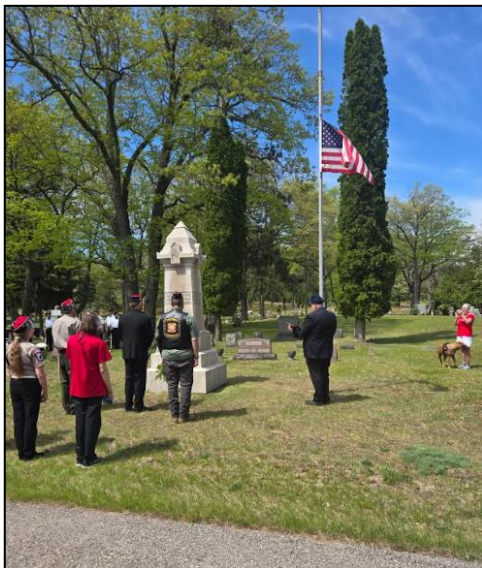


GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444 CONT'D



FAR LEFT: Senior Writer Mark Hoffman, PCC, receives The Unsung Pioneer CoA (2025) and The Engineer Award (2024) on Saturday from Commander Smith. Brother Hoffman is the preeminent expert in the world on the 1st Michigan Engineers and Mechanics. He is the author of "My Brave Mechanics" and the editor of "Among the Enemy: A Michigan Soldier's Civil War Journal".

NEAR LEFT: Brother Carl Noonan and SVC/Secretary Dale Aurand, PDC at the GAR Monument at Maple Grove Cemetery after the conclusion of the Memorial Day Ceremonies in Harrison



ABOVE LEFT: Commander Smith reading General Orders No. 11 as issued by General John A. Logan, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic establishing Decoration Day at Maple Grove Cemetery with VFW Post 1075 and American Legion Post 404 Honor Guard.

ABOVE RIGHT: Members of VFW Post 1075 and the VFW Auxiliary and SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, PDC and Commander Smith, PDC.

On Memorial Day, Commander Smith, SVC/Sec. Aurand, and Brother Noonan traveled to Harrison to attend the Memorial Day Services at the Veterans Freedom Park with conclusion at Maple Grove Cemetery. Harrison's Veterans organizations provide excellent memorial services to honor the fallen, and they are well attended by the community. After the services at the Veterans Freedom Park concluded, various community members, VFW Post 1075 and VFW Auxiliary, and American Legion Post 404 travel to the Bradley GAR Post 221 monument at Maple Grove Cemetery for final ceremonies including Ritual, firing volleys, and Taps. Camp 444 was extremely honored and humbled that VFW Post 1075 let the Camp read General Orders No. 11 by General John A. Logan, CinC of the GAR to begin the ceremony.



OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN
2026 – 2027

| | |
|---|--|
| DEPT. COMMANDER | David Kimble, PCC |
| SR. VICE DEPT. COMMANDER | Todd Cordill |
| JR. VICE DEPT. COMMANDER | Ronald Shull, PCC |
| DEPT. SECRETARY | Richard Denney, PCC |
| DEPT. TREASURER | Bruce S. A. Gosling, PDC |
| DEPT. COUNCIL | David S. Smith, PDC (Chair) Dale L. Aurand, PDC Steven Martin, PDC |
| DEPT. CHIEF OF STAFF | David S. Smith, PDC |
| DEPT. COUNSELOR | James B. Pahl, PCinC |
| DEPT. CHAPLAIN | Charles Buckhahn, PCC |
| DEPT. PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR | Terrance McKinch, PDC |
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