

THE UNION INFORMER

Monthly Newsletter of the Indian Nations Camp No. 3
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Federal reenactors fire a salute at the Honey Springs memorial ceremony on July 16, marking the date of the battle (July 17) and its 150th Anniversary. (Photograph by Steven Meadows)

July Camp Meeting

Cdr. Steven Tolbert advises, "At camp meeting, I will be doing a presentation this month on Ezekiel Proctor/ Shotting at Hildebrand Mill/ Going Snake Massacre. Everyone involved is literally related to me." Sounds intriguing. Let's all be there to hear the story. (See Page 2 for Cdr. Steven's cemetery photo.)

The camp meeting will be held this Thursday at the Parkview Baptist Church at 58th and Sheridan Road at 6:30 p.m. Use the entrance closest to the flag pole.

June Camp Meeting

DC Clint Anderson presented a program on the Dalton Gang which met its match when it tried to rob two banks at the same time in Coffeyville, KS, after the war. The two banks were the First National and the Condon. The story goes that the plan unraveled when one of the townspeople recognized one of the bandits and began spreading the word. By the time the gang exited the banks, the locals were armed and waiting for them. A deadly shootout ensued, and only one gang member lived to tell the tale.

Clint was well acquainted with the area and its history, which made his presentation all the more interesting. With great authenticity, the town reenacts the robbery annually, which always attracts a crowd.

Most of our June camp meeting was devoted to a lively discussion of various items of camp interest. Dept. Cdr. Clint Anderson outlined prospects for a meeting with a large number of individuals with good prospects for member recruitment.



One of the interpretive markers along the trail at the Honey Springs Battlefield.

Honey Springs Cleanup Day

It was a hot one, but we 'got 'er done!' Our crew was assigned the trail looping through the forest from the monuments to the site of the Elk Creek bridge back to the main park road.

The actual bridge across the creek no longer exists – just the piers on either side. Our crew had thin ranks: DC Clint Anderson, CC Steven Tolbert (our man in charge), Scott Preston, and me, Carl Fallen. We came equipped for bear. Clint brought a small lawn cart which proved to be just the thing for our equipment items. We had no information about how many “signs” we might be cleaning, or how long the trails might be, so we were over equipped for our assignment. “Be Prepared” as the Boy Scout motto goes.

The signs were the typical battlefield markers you might find in a national battlefield park, perhaps 3' X 3' placed at a slight angle for guests to read. These markers explained what happened and which units were involved at significant points on the battlefield.

Their slight angle prevents water from standing on the surfaces. However, the watertight plastic panels covering them would accumulate dust and mildew over time, and need to be periodically cleaned. We brought spray bottles and shop towels for that.

The main work involved trimming back the vegetation encroaching on the trail, which was wide enough to handle one-way motor vehicles. Vines, overhanging limbs and weeds were the main offenders, although we spent a good bit of time cutting the pesky green briars that can quickly climb into the trees and create quite a mess along a trail. We had brought industrial strength loppers for this work.

Start time was 10 a.m., Saturday June 25, and we finished around noon. Checking in at the Visitor Center, we met some young ladies, including five from the International Order of Rainbow for Girls, who had also participated in the project. The Park Director, Adam Lynn, expressed his appreciation for our help and took a group picture.

Commander's Comments



Cdr. Tolbert at Ezekiel Proctor's grave.
(Photo by Steven Tolbert)

Brothers,

I hope you all are doing well and staying cool during this heatwave. As many as you already know I am trying to visit every known G.A.R. monument in

Oklahoma. As far as I know I have completed this task or pretty close to it. If anyone knows of a G.A.R monument that is pretty close to the Oklahoma State line, would you let me know. If I happen to be in the area, I would love to stop by and see it.

I hope to see everyone this week at camp meeting.

Cdr. Tolbert

Honey Springs Battlefield Marks 159th Anniversary

On Saturday, July 16, the annual anniversary of the Battle of Honey Springs was honored at the Visitor Center. The ceremony began at 10:30 a.m. on the lawn surrounding the new Visitors Center. Site manager Adam Lynn conducted the ceremony. Dr. James Finck from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma was the principal speaker.

The ceremony was followed by the annual meeting of The Friends of Honey Springs Battlefield, and special Civil War demonstrations and guided tours of the battlefield.

Some of our uniformed OKC Brothers from the Jeremiah Smith Camp #1 and the Sons of Veterans Reserve participated in the ceremony.

National Encampment – Grand Rapids, MI

This year's National Encampment will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and headquartered at the DoubleTree, by Hilton Grand Rapids Airport located at 4747 28th Street SE. The encampment room rate of \$109 will be honored from August 7 to the 17th, based upon availability. This will be the seventh National Encampment hosted by the city.

Two optional tours are offered. A motor-coach tour will include stops at the Meyer-May House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and the Greenwood Cemetery.

Another tram/walking tour of Meijer Gardens highlights a unique garden of sculptures and botanical plants.



National Encampment Badge for 2022, honoring the
legendary Iron Brigade.
(Photo courtesy Dept. of Michigan)

See the Department of Michigan website for further details about the Encampment:
webmaster@suvcwmi.org

Registration Forms for attending the Encampment or for ordering merchandise may be found at this website as well.

Union Ancestor of Brother **Joe Fears**
Pvt. William A. Fears,
Co. A, 1st Arkansas Vol. Cavalry



Col. Scott Preston transfers command to his successor on July 8. (Photo from website)

On July 8, an impressive Change of Command ceremony, attended by up to three hundred people, was held in the ground floor auditorium of the City Plex towers. In this ceremony, Col. Scott Preston transferred command of the Tulsa District Corps of Engineers to his successor.

The Tulsa District is one of four districts that make up the Southwestern Division. Its civil works boundaries include Oklahoma, parts of southern Kansas, and northern Texas. The district's Civil Works mission is one of the largest in the Corps of Engineers; it includes 38 multipurpose lakes which include five lock and dams on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System.

District projects have prevented billions of dollars in flood damages, and the district's eight hydropower facilities provide about \$52 million in annual sales. The district has 240 parks with more campsites -- 6,000-- than any other district in the Corps.

Brother Preston is a member of the Indian Nations Camp #3, currently serves as Jr. Vice Cdr., and holds positions in the Department. Needless to say, Scott

has been a highly valued member of the camp, and if this change should suggest a change of station for him, he would certainly be greatly missed.

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Correction: Last month, it was stated that the wives of the late Brother Gene Turner and Brother Tucker McHugh were sisters. They are *cousins*.
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Camp Business

Terri, our webmaster and National Auxiliary, SUVCW, member has donated phone cards to the camp to be used as part of our next donation to The Coffee Bunker. These prepaid long-distance minutes will hopefully enable some veteran to visit with his relatives. Thanks, Terri.

Plans were made to send volunteers to help in the cleanup day at the Honey Springs Battlefield.

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.

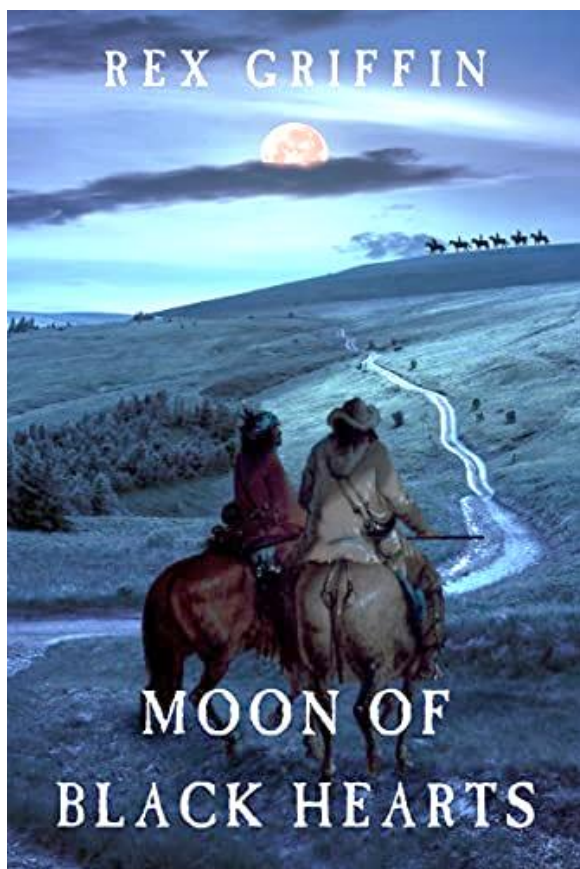
Brother Rex Griffin authors novel: *Moon of Black Hearts*

Our fellow camp member, Rex Griffin has his first novel on the market: *Moon of Black Hearts*. Copyright 2022, and 433 pages, it's an historical novel about events in Indian Territory. The story follows Shad, a teenage slave of a Muscogee Creek Indian family, during his flight to freedom.

The looming Civil War festers hatred across America, even within the tribes of Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). In the Muscogee/Creek Nation, Shad, a young slave on the cusp of manhood, is forced to flee when a childhood enemy returns as a slave trader. With the aid of sympathetic Seminoles, Shad helps rescue another runaway, a pretty girl called Delilah. Together they join hundreds of refugees chased by a hostile Confederate army bent on forcing their surrender. Facing the enemy in three bloody battles, Shad becomes the courageous warrior he never wanted

to be. When Delilah, traumatized by the abuse a pretty slave often suffers, takes tainted medicine, Shad risks his freedom to take her to the only one he trusts to save her—his brother, Ira, a slave doctor with the Confederate army.

Grounded in true events swept long ago into a forgotten corner of Civil War History, MOON OF BLACK HEARTS is a rousing adventure of courage, brutality, love, heartbreak, and devotion during the bloodiest fighting ever seen on the American frontier.



Brother Rex Griffin's new book available on Amazon.com

This is Rex's first published book, but probably not his last, for he's hard at work on another. We're honored to have an active author among our camp members.

Reviews:

"A riveting read that drops you onto the western frontier as the Civil War begins. Every word oozes authenticity. A fascinating book!" -Griff Hosker,

acclaimed author of 130 historical novels from Ancient Rome to World War II.

"I couldn't put it down!" -William Bernhardt, award-winning author of the bestselling Ben Kincaid and Daniel Pike novels.

This is your chance to get an autographed copy from Rex. It's available from Amazon both in Kindle and softcover formats. Rex is not like a lot of authors: he's not hawking his book to take advantage of his friends; you'll have to ask him for it. And you'll probably be glad you did.



The Enfield Rifle Musket

Adopted in the British Army in 1855, and its general infantry weapon until adoption of the breach-loader in 1867, this weapon weighed 9 pounds, 3 ounces, with bayonet, and had a bore diameter of .577 inch. It fired a bullet similar to the Minie, was very accurate at 800 yards, and fairly accurate at 1,100 yards.

Almost half a million were imported by the Union before production could meet requirements. It was perhaps the most popular gun in the Confederate service (after 1862) and one of the most effective.

Camp Calendar



- July 28 Camp Meeting – Parkview Baptist Church
- Aug. 11-14 SUVCW National Encampment – Grand Rapids, MI
- Aug. 25 Camp Meeting – Parkview Baptist Church

Editor: A. Carl Fallen – acfallen@sbcglobal.net
Camp Website:

<http://indiannationscamp3-suvcw.weebly.com>

Webmaster: Terri Walker – National Auxiliary to the SUVCW

