

THE UNION INFORMER

Monthly Newsletter of the Indian Nations Camp No. 3
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Tulsa, Oklahoma

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MARCH 2020



Commander Michael Rusk welcomes new member Steven Tolbert to the camp at the February meeting.

March Camp Meeting Cancelled

There was change in the air! Our camp meeting this month was to be held at the Golden Corral restaurant located at 71st and Mingo. Cdr. Rusk had contracted for us to use their separate dining room for our meeting. Spouses were invited and encouraged to attend. Their extensive dinner buffet (all you can eat) is \$15, with a dollar discount for seniors. Each person was to be responsible for his/her own food purchases.

Dinner was to begin at 6:30 followed by a brief meeting and a presentation. Dr. Clint Crowe, a professor at Tulsa Community College, had accepted our invitation to

speaking about his new book, *Caught in the Maelstrom: Indian Nations in the Civil War*. He gave this presentation at the Honey Springs Battlefield and Visitor Center in January. As some of you had requested, he was to autograph book copies for you after the dinner.

All that changed when the coronavirus swept into the country. You know the rest. The mayor shut down the bars and restaurants earlier this month, with people warned not to gather in groups, etc., to slow the spread of the virus. We conducted a headcount to find out how many members were planning to attend if the dinner meeting was held. Of those replying, only two members indicated they would come.

On March 20, Cdr. Rusk issued an e-mail to camp members:

I am cancelling our March camp meeting. The Union Informer newsletter will still be published next week on schedule. There you will find information on our department encampment scheduled for April 25.

Since the Tulsa libraries have cancelled all meeting room use through April our regular camp meeting on April 23 may need rescheduled. Camp officers will see that you are informed and kept up to date on all things related to our camp and department.

So yes, there was change in the air, just a far bigger one than we had in mind. Let's just hope that we all practice good hygiene habits, follow recommended guidelines for dealing with the pandemic, and come out of this thing as well as possible.

February Camp Meeting

Hooray! We had a great turnout for our February camp meeting. Attending were: Cdr. Mike Rusk; Mike Gates; Mike McGraw; Clint Anderson; Rex Griffin; Joe Fears; Charlie Walker; Jesse Walker; and Carl Fallen. Boosting our attendance figures were recent transfer Scott Preston, and new member Steven Tolbert.

PDC Rex Griffin provided an excellent program "Squatter Sovereignty and Bleeding Kansas." He told about many of the contentious activities in the northern states and the Kansas – Missouri area leading up to the Civil War. Some consider the violence over the slavery issue in the Kansas-Missouri area before 1861 to be the actual start of the Civil War. Rex explained actions involving prominent figures such as John Brown and his brothers, Joe Shelby, Union General Nathaniel Lyons, and Senator Jim Lane. Much of the contention centered on the Lecompton and Lawrence, Kansas areas where Missouri pro-slave forces opposed the Kansas free-staters. Thanks, Brother Rex for highlighting history close to home.

Editor's Note:

If you haven't been to these locations, it's certainly worth the trip. My wife, Marlys, and I made an enjoyable weekend trip to the Lawrence area several years ago and booked a room in the historic Eldridge hotel overnight. We scouted out the town as well as Lecompton, bought some books, and enjoyed the food in the local eateries. There's a lot of Civil War history there. Remember, this is where the Quantrill raid took place during the War. Senator Lane survived the raid by fleeing to a cornfield and hiding there.

Camp Business

All but four members have paid their 2020 member dues. Final notices have been mailed to those members. Including those, we have 17 camp members now.

Dr. Clint Crowe, professor at Tulsa Community College had accepted our invitation to speak at our dinner camp meeting to be held at the Golden Corral restaurant at 71st and Mingo on March 26. His topic was to be about the often overlooked experience of the five tribes during the Civil War. Now that that's been cancelled, he's graciously offered to present his program at a later date.



Dept. Cdr. Jesse Walker gave an update on preparations for the Department's Saturday, February 29th interim meeting in Stroud. Since there are several Department offices without announced candidates, he asked for volunteers to think about running for office this year. Cdr. Walker also said that he had located the missing station banners needed for the Encampment scheduled for April 25th. He said there was no word on the location or status of the second Department Commander badge that was ordered last year, but at the interim Department meeting on February 29, Treasurer Tucker McHugh said it was in his possession.

Cdr. Rusk gave a recap of the accomplishments of our camp to secure a meeting room at the Hardesty Regional Library for the Encampment and provide for other needed physical arrangements for the meeting. He has designed and ordered Encampment Badges, but the source is a Chinese company, which has been impacted by the outbreak of the coronavirus, therefore, a secondary supplier might prove necessary. Delegate

ribbons have been designed and an order placed. We expect a new supply of nametag holders to be needed.

Based on our membership numbers, Indian Nations Camp will be entitled to three delegates to the April Encampment. Cdr. Rusk announced that those delegates as well as Alternates will be elected at the next camp meeting. Certain officers and past officers are automatic delegates to the Encampment.

New member Steven Tolbert of Claremore attended the meeting and submitted his Membership Application Form and payment. JVC Clint Anderson checked his application and approved it. He was voted in and welcomed to the camp.

Cdr. Rusk challenged each member to come up with a camp program. He volunteered to provide one for our April camp meeting. Each of us has discoveries that would be interesting to the membership: for example, visiting a Civil War site; reading a book about some aspect of the War; or researching your Union ancestor. Bring that information to the camp and share it with others.

National Encampment – 2020



This year's National Encampment, our 139th, is scheduled to be held in Atlanta, GA, from August 13th to 16th. It will be hosted by the Departments of Georgia and South Carolina. The hotel rate is \$115 per night with a \$14 daily charge for self-parking.

Whether the Encampment will occur on the planned date is open to question, considering that the Lincoln Tomb Observance scheduled for April 10 was cancelled. The cancellation followed guidance from the Centers for Disease Control to cancel all gatherings of people greater than 10 people. What the COVID-19 situation in our country will be in August is anybody's guess.

For those planning to attend, there are Registration Forms available on the suvcw.org website.



PDC Rex Griffin addresses the camp while giving his presentation on 'bleeding Kansas.'

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Our condolences to Brother Mike McGraw who lost a family member recently. We know he must have gone through a rough time.

Brother Joe Fears and his wife are expecting their third child. Congratulations! We'll be waiting to hear when this little bundle arrives.

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2020 Camp Membership Payments are Due

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Update on OK Department Encampment

As noted in Cdr. Rusk's email, the Tulsa Library system closed its libraries on March 13 through April, which impacts our plans for our annual Department Encampment at the Hardesty Library. Camp officers are

now searching for an alternate venue, and camp officers would welcome suggestions.

On March 12, 2020, C-in-C, Edward C. Norris, issued G.O. #15 stating among other things that a Camp or Department may cancel or postpone their meeting. This applies even if the Camp or Department by-laws state that a meeting must take place at a certain time or location. G.O. #15 further states:

“The Department must obtain written permission from the Council of Administration to postpone and reschedule their Department Encampment. (Regulations, Chapter II, Article III, Section 1b) The request can be submitted even if the Department by-laws state that its Encampment must take place at a certain time or location. The rescheduled Department Encampment must take place before July 1, 2020. (Regulations, Chapter II, Article III, Section 1).”

The General Order went on reminding to coordinate with Allied Orders so that none would be surprised by a cancellation or postponement decision.



The Rock Cafe in Stroud, OK. (Internet photo)

Results of the OK Department Planning Meeting

The Oklahoma Department held a meeting at the Rock Café in Stroud on February 29th to make plans for the Department’s 19th Encampment.

Attending were: Commander Walker, SVC McKinley, JVC Kennedy, Secretary Andrews, Treasurer McHugh, Patriotic Instructor Rusk, Council Members Clapp and Rusk, Chaplain Andrews, Historian Andrews, Eagle Scout Coordinator (West) Andrews, JROTC

Coordinator (West) Andrews, War Medals Officer Crowe, PDC Griffin, SVC-in-Chief Pierson, PDC Fallen, and Brother White.

Secretary Andrews, in his usual efficient and prompt manner, published a draft of his minutes before the day was out. It is presumed that he will include those in the Department newsletter at a later date.

In a welcome development, the formation of a new camp in the Department is underway. Sec. Andrews report states: “A Form 51 for setting up the new Lawton Camp has been prepared by Brother Orebaugh; two copies will be sent to Sec. Andrews. Five prospective Brothers are needed and eight have been identified (not including Associate or Junior Members). When all of the relevant forms have been filed, the filing date of Form 55 (Application for Camp Charter) will be the date of establishment for that camp. Prospective members of the new Lawton Camp should be invited to attend the Department Encampment. While waiting for that camp to be established, those prospective brothers could apply to be members of Camp #1 and later transfer to the new camp. Sec. Andrews will look up the name(s) and number(s) of any G.A.R. Camps that were in that area, but it will be up to those prospective camp members to pick their camp name and select their provisional Camp Commander and Secretary-Treasurer.”

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George W. Hillman’s Union Ancestor:
Cpl. Eli H. Dotty
Co. A, 100th Illinois Infantry
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Camp Calendar

- April 23 Camp Meeting – Location to be Announced
- April 25 OK Dept. Encampment – Location to be Announced
- May 23 Place Grave Flags at Rose Hill Cemetery
- May 25 Memorial Day

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