

# 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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Department Commander Rex Griffin confers with Commander in Chief's representative, Brian Pierson, during the 17<sup>th</sup> Oklahoma Department Encampment in the Stone Barracks at Historic Fort Gibson. (Photo by Carl Fallen)

## April Camp Meeting – Oklahoma Forts – at Schusterman Library

Our discussion topic at this month's camp meeting will be Oklahoma Forts. During the days of the Indian Territory, the U.S. Government constructed frontier forts at strategic locations. There were several purposes for these forts: safety of the local tribes; enforcement of laws, particularly liquor laws; distribution of supplies; keeping non-Indians out of the area; etc. While most of these forts were constructed

prior to the Civil War, those which were still staffed became important points of defense when the War began.

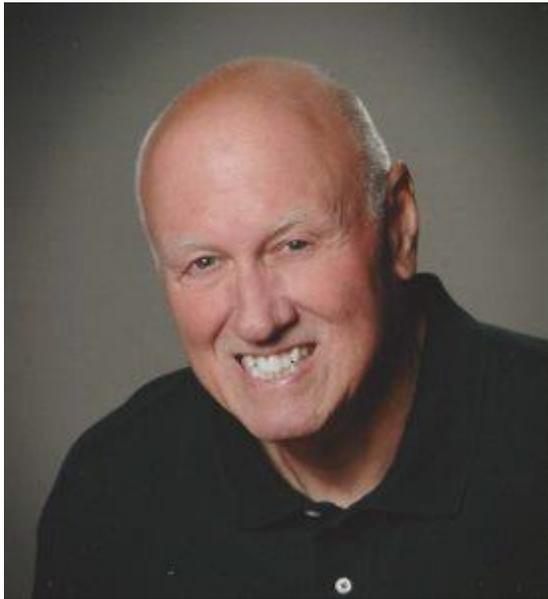
So, you are encouraged to do some research on these forts and come to camp meeting with something to contribute to the discussion about them. We will also choose a discussion subject for our May camp meeting.

Cdr. Rusk has reserved a meeting room at the [Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place](#) (one

block east of Harvard) for our meeting beginning at 6:30. Please plan to attend, and bring a friend.

## March Camp Meeting

Following our earlier plan, the discussion at the March camp meeting centered around the Texas Road. Going around the room, each Brother shared what he had learned about the road, which was an important factor in the Civil War in this part of the country, as it was an avenue for moving war supplies and troops to the locations where they were needed. Prior to that, the road entered Indian Territory near the town of Carthage, Missouri and roughly followed what is now U.S. Highway 69 south to Texas. The road also followed the route of the Katy (Missouri-Kansas-Texas) Railroad south to Texas. Originally, it was an Indian tribal trail, and later used to drive Texas cattle to northern markets.



### Gene D. Turner

**Birth Date:** August 16, 1946

**Death Date:** March 30, 2018

Gene DeVoy Turner, age 71, passed away at home on Good Friday, March 30, 2018. Born August 16, 1946 in Phoenix, AZ and moved to OK at age 2. His parents were Frank and Alice Turner, now deceased. Gene attended Barnard and Lanier schools, Wilson Jr. High and Rogers High School before moving to Tyler, TX, where he graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in 1964. Gene was active in Boy Scouting and a member of Boston Avenue Troop 20. Wally Wozencraft was his scout leader and wonderful influence on his life. While

attaining the rank of Eagle Scout at age 14, he won trophies in marksmanship.

Gene lived in Tulsa for over 50 years and is a retired TPS English-History teacher and football and baseball coach. He taught at Edison Jr. High School, St. John Psychiatric Ward, Pershing Alternative School and Laureate Psychiatric Clinic on the Eating Disorder Unit for 6 years and served as School Supervisor at that facility for five years, retiring in 2005.

Gene's education included an Associate Degree from Tyler Junior College in 1966, BS in Education from University of Oklahoma in 1968, and MEd 1976 from Northeastern State University in Native American Studies. Further Graduate work from OCU in International Affairs and OSU in Psychiatric Counseling.

Gene was a Veteran and his military service included U.S. Army Sp5, active duty in 1971, and Oklahoma Army National Guard until 1976. Gene has been interested in the Civil War since 9<sup>th</sup> grade and since has traveled extensively to battlefields. It was always his favorite war to study and research. He has many Civil War ancestors on both sides of the war. He worked hard for 2 years to raise funds to build and erect a beautiful GAR monument located at Rose Hill Cemetery. He is a member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Sons of Confederate Veterans of the Civil War, Military Order of the Stars and Bars, and Descendants of the Mexican War Veterans.

It was while Gene taught school that he furthered his interests in bird hunting. For 40 some years he raised and trained Brittany Spaniels, English and Llewelin Setters. He loved all his dogs and developed a special bond with each of them. He also hunted pheasants in KS with a special group of friends for over 40 years.

Fishing was another great love of Gene's. He fished OK ponds and streams for bass and crappie with many friends. He frequently hiked the Osage in search of trophy bass. But another true enjoyment was fly-fishing. He and his wife Sally traveled all over the West exploring streams and lakes together. He even admitted she had a smoother cast than his own. He continued this sport until his health declined.

Gene is survived by his wife, Sally Turner, of Tulsa; daughter Jacquelyn Guthrie and husband Jeff, along with their children Hannah, Jack and Hadley of Frisco, TX; daughter Stacy Ryle Landon and husband Joe of South Grand Lake; sister Cynthia Ward of St. John, USVI; brother Col. John Turner, USMC Ret. and wife Gail of Pendleton, OR.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to Gene's favorite charities that he supported for years. Oaks Indian Mission, P.O. Box 130, Oaks, OK 74359 or Civil War Preservation Trust, 1156 15<sup>TH</sup> St. NW, Ste. 900, Washington, DC 20005 or a charity of your choice.

Gene's Memorial Service was Friday, April 13, 2018, 2:00 p.m., at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 5635 E. 71<sup>st</sup> Street in Tulsa.

One only has to look back over past issues of *The Union Informer* to understand what an impact Gene has had on the Indian Nations Camp and the Oklahoma Department in general. He was a strong leader in so

many undertakings. As his health began to fail, we all realized what a void would be left, and how much he had done for us. Always helpful, sincere, and cheerful. Department Commander Rex Griffin explored ways to honor Brother Turner. This year's Department Encampment was named to honor him. He was recommended to the National Organization for the Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star, which was unanimously approved. The Commander in Chief's General Order awarding the Gold Star is printed on Page 4 of this newsletter. In addition, at this year's Department Encampment, an award named the Turner/Williams Award was approved in honor of him and deceased Brother John Williams. It is intended to be given to those who further the SUVCW motto of Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty, and the expansion of the Department. The frequency, qualifications, and other guidelines for it have not yet been worked out.

## 2018 Department Encampment

Seventeenth Annual Spring Encampment  
Honors Brother Gene Turner.



The Stone Barracks at Fort Gibson: site of our Oklahoma Department Encampment for 2018. (Internet photo)

The 17<sup>th</sup> Oklahoma Department Encampment was called to order by DC Rex Griffin at 11 a.m. April 14, 2018. A moment of silence was observed in memory of our late Brother Gene DeVoy Turner.

The Encampment established an Awards Committee to be staffed by a member from each camp. Its function has not been further described, but it will probably set standards and guidelines, and make recommendations for Department awards.

Brother Norman Crowe was commended for donating a bronze-headed tomahawk that he had personally made for service as the Department's official gavel.



Brother Norman Crowe, of Cherokee decent, presents a tomahawk to Dept. Cdr. Rex Griffin to be used as the Department's official gavel. (Photo by Carl Fallen)

Brother Crowe had also designed a logo that he proposed for adoption as the Department's official logo. At the center, it contains the logo of the SUVCW. Therefore, the Department will check with the National Organization before final action on the proposal, but otherwise the design was met with approval. Brother Kennedy added a minor design alteration.

The Department Encampment badge was approved for attendees to wear at this year's National Encampment at Framington, MA. Attendees from the OK Dept. known at this time are Brothers Pierson and White.

Officers elected to serve for the coming year were:

Dept. Commander	Jim Baxter
Senior Vice Cdr.	Jesse Walker
Junior Vice Cdr.	Mike Gates
Secretary	William Andrews
Treasurer	Tucker McHugh
Councilman # 3	Johnny Manley



## Camp Calendar

April 26	Camp Meeting – Schusterman Library
May 24	Camp Meeting – Kaiser Library
May 28	Memorial Day – Oaklawn Cem.
Aug 9-12	National Encampment – MA

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**General Order # 27**  
**SERIES 2017-2018**  
**11 April 2018**

The Commander in Chief and Council of Administration, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, take great pleasure in presenting the Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star, posthumously, to Gene Turner PDC.

Brother Turner, a life member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and Charter Member of the Department of Oklahoma, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War was a dedicated and inspirational leader. Brother Turner was the driving force behind the Department of Oklahoma's efforts regarding the Grand Army of the Republic Monument at Rose Hill Cemetery in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Leading a two-year long effort to raise the necessary funding, Brother Turner's persistence in obtaining grant money culminated in the dedication of a monument in 2008. Brother Turner served as the Department of Oklahoma Historian 2002 -2006, during which time he discovered and brought into the Order, Real Son, Charles Cox. He then served as Department Commander from 2006 – 2007 and beginning in 2007 Department Counselor until his declining health recently forced him to give up that important duty.

At the Camp level Brother Turner was a charter member of Indian Nations Camp #3 in Tulsa Oklahoma where he served as Camp Commander 2003 - 2004 and Secretary 2004 - 2015. He was also a Charter Member of Sgt. Jacob Overturf Camp #4 in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma where he served as Camp Secretary / Treasurer 2012 – 2017. The faith shown in him by the Brothers of both his Department and Camps, in electing him to high office, make it evident he did great service and provided strong leadership over an extended period.

Brother Turner's service was not limited to his Department and Camp. Beginning in 2009 and continuing until December of 2017, he was the chairman of the National Scholarship Committee overseeing all aspects of the scholarship selection process. He was often sought out as a mentor by aspiring national leaders and his sage counsel provided stability and continuity to his Brothers at all levels of the Sons of Union Veterans.

Brother Turner's exceptional professionalism as well as his exemplification of the principles of Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty reflect great credit upon him and he is most highly deserving of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War's Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star.

Therefore, as Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, by the authority vested in me the National Constitution and Regulations and National Policies, it is ordered as follows:

The Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star is hereby posthumously awarded, to Gene Turner PDC.

Ordered this 11<sup>th</sup> Day of April 2018.

Mark R. Day

Commander-In-Chief  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Attested:

**Jonathan Davis**  
Secretary, National Order,  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War