

Mid-year meeting of the New York Department of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
October 16, 2021, The Loyal Order of the Eagles in Ithaca, NY

The meeting was called to order at 12:15 by Department Commander Brian Castler with 12 Brothers present.

Commander Castler reminded the assembled Brothers that the mid-year meeting is for informational and planning purposes only, that no money be spent and no binding resolutions can be entered into.

Planning for the 139<sup>th</sup> Annual Department Encampment is underway, now that we are reasonably certain that we can have an in-person encampment. The committee (Commander Castler, John Portanova, Leo McGuire, Jeff French) is looking at the Binghamton area.

Mid-year reports – Many Camps and Officers have not submitted mid-year reports....

Commander Castler discussed the Department raffle with the Brothers and with SVC French

Department Archives – All material is now located in the Oakwood Cemetery. A complete inventory has been done by Commander Castler and several other Brothers. A copy of the inventory was passed out to the assembled brothers. Much of the material will not be kept – it will be returned to the originating Camps, donated to museums or archives, sold for Department fundraising or discarded altogether. The remaining material will eventually need a proper, climate-controlled home. In the meantime, it will need new storage boxes and a metal storage rack.

On Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Commander Castler attended a ZOOM meeting with the new National CiC. The new CiC has 3 main goals for the year – to upgrade the SUVCW's information technology, more support behind the Memorial University, open lines of communication through the Department Commanders.

Remembrance Day in Gettysburg is still on.

There are 2 new Camps in Canada (one of them still in process). Many military facilities and streets are being re-named – if you have a suggestion for names, pass them to Commander Castler.

The National IRS list was last updated 4 years ago – the SUVCW is not yet on that list but we DO have our 501C3.

The National SUVCW Committee has decided that Department meetings MUST be in person, except during a “declared emergency”. Committees and Camps may hold meetings online, partially online or in person.

Some Departments and Camps have reported communications difficulties with the Scouts, but it doesn’t appear to be a problem in the Northeast. Scouting paperwork is being altered to be gender neutral.

Membership- National is looking at increasing the percentage allowed of Associate Members per Camp. National is also looking at extending the lineage allowed to a 1<sup>st</sup> cousin.

National is developing a promotional video to help “sell” the SUVCW.

National is developing a training program for all officers.

PDC McGuire asked about liability insurance. SVC French pointed out that National DOES now have liability insurance available for the Departments and Camps for meetings and re-enactments and ceremonial events involving gunpowder. You need to apply 45 days in advance to ensure it is in effect for the event.

Brother Duffy sent a list of items to discuss:

- Minor changes/cleanup to specific areas of the web site. DC Castler and Webmaster LeMay will look at them, should be an easy fix.
- Bonding requirements for Dep’t officers? National requires it, but it’s not widely practiced. Questions were raised about what bonding covers.
- Do away with the “Executive Summary” option when the Secretary or Ass’t Secretary is preparing the Minutes or the Proceedings. Ass’t Secretary Everdyke explained the different options and what they do. No changes for now.
- There’s a delay in processing new member checks – that’s on the National end of the process. SVC French will write up a streamlining proposal for the Department Encampment that can be voted on and brought to National.
- Dates of Form 22 and Form 27 completion – That’s from National, not under our control.
- Periodic reports from the Department Commander to National – Can they be posted to the Department or put on the web site? Discussed and thought to be redundant and unnecessary...
- Incorporation of Camps? A couple of Camps have, but there is still a question of whether it’s appropriate or allowed. It’s probably not necessary now that National has 501C3 status.
- Making “The Volunteer” a quarterly newsletter. There’s no conflict with the by-laws. The Editor agrees to it- there’s plenty of material available and the new “calendar”

section may function better. The next edition will be out on January 1<sup>st</sup>, then quarterly thereafter.

A Scholarship Committee was established at the last Encampment. We still need one more member, possibly from Central or Western NY. Contact DC Castler if you are interested.

The next National Encampment will be in Grand Rapids, Michigan, August 11-14. Start booking your hotel rooms now.

A professor from Indiana, Kenneth Byrd contacted several members in re. his ancestor's gravestone - Sgt. Edgar Demarest, Co. K, 115th NY Inf. He felt it needed to be cleaned and reset and rededicated. Commander Castler went to Gloversville (on Oct 19<sup>th</sup> – 3 days post meeting). Brother White, PDC McGuire and Commander Castler reset the headstone and cleaned it. We will now coordinate the Rededication with Mr. Byrd.

Commander Castler has been working on "The Last Survivor" in each County of NY. He has found last CW survivor in 36 of the 62 counties. If anyone has any information on last survivors in any County or wishes to help him in any capacity, please contact him.

Camp and Department by-law changes – Once voted on by Departments and Camps, they must go to the National Secretary.

New Department flag – still no movement. The company shut down for COVID and nothing further has been done.

Presentations from National – For outstanding service - Danny L. Wheeler

Chaplain Father William Corby award – Samuel Lundy

The Committee of Real Sons and Daughters - Jerry Orton

From Historian Jerry Orton – the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is coming up. Jerry described several things that will be happening around that date.

In 2022, it will also be the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of Grant's Tomb, as well as the 100<sup>th</sup> of the Lincoln Memorial.

PNC Danny wheeler – Department Council – The Department is doing well and he will do his best to help with any issues that come up.

Acting Chaplain Lundy closed with a Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45.