

HEADQUARTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER



DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Honoring the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic &
The Men from New York who saved the Union from 1861 to 1865

<http://nysuvcw.org>

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2025-2026 Department Commanders Annual Report

8 February 2026

CinC Kevin Tucker,

My report is as follows:

I attended the Headstone Dedications Ceremonies by Walter H French Camp #17, Homer Searle Camp #114, Col David Ireland Camp #137.

I visited Schuyler F. Smith Camp #193 for their first meeting. The camp is under reorganization and will be active once again. Their main project is the repair of the Halsey Valley GAR Hall. This will be a multi-year project as it needs extensive repairs to bring back to it's original state. Brother Todd Shillington is assigned to assist the camp's reorganization. Looking forward to their comeback.

As Department Commander I participated in the Sgt William C. Lilly Camp #66 meeting. Main message is recruitment, retention, and educational events. The camps are doing outstanding work which has resulted in gaining seven new members since they organized.

The DJVC and Department Treasurer are exploring better investment opportunities to grow our financial resources. The Department Treasurer has done an outstanding job in improvements on this front. Hopefully we can build on that success.

In August, at request of Scott Wilson from Fort Tribute in Madrid, NY, I attended a meeting to form a new camp. Scott had five others who are joining this effort. They have potentially 5-6

more interested in forming the camp. They wanted to wait till December to submit the Form 3s as they want to recruit more from the local area. The Sgt Judson E. Horsford Camp #106 will be the new camp's name. They have been approved by the Department and National for proceeding to form. This camp will have great potential once given a date of rank. They requested a pause doe now and will resume formation in near future.

Brother Stump is in progress in forming the Bradley S Osbon Camp 150. The formation is on track for their Charter in Spring/summer of this year.

We held the Department Mid-Year meeting via zoom on 5 October. It was a productive meeting covering the upcoming Department Encampment and our mission in the coming days.

It was with solemn duty that I attended Brother John Goodnough funeral. The Ireland Camp is currently going through the reorganization phase to keep the camp going. I have been in contact with the members and offered my assistance to help them keep their camp going. I look forward to working with the brother of Ireland Camp in their recruitment efforts.

The Camp Commander of the Tanner Camp requested assistance in recruitment efforts to bolster their camp. I am currently working on an action plan to assist them in this recruitment effort. I look forward to working with them in the coming year.

Recruitment and Retention is a constant focus for the Department and should be for the camps. The Department Officers have worked on some ideas to help the camps. They are as follows:

1. Brother Phillips and I developed a Public Relations guidebook to assist the camps in promoting, recruiting, and retention of the camp and members. We hope this will be of great value to all the camps. The PR Guidebook is posted on the department website.
2. Sent mass email asking for volunteers for the Department Blog, YouTube Channel, and Instagram account. These platforms will help the Department assist the camps in recruitment and retention efforts. A social media Policy has been developed, being 99% from National, and posted on the website. However, we have yet to get any volunteers. We need the brother's expertise and involvement to be successful. Please help us to help you.
3. Two resolutions are being presented and if approved added to the Department Bylaws. A Recruitment Medal is to be developed to encourage brothers to recruit new members. The second is the MG Newton Martin Curtis Medal which encourages more involvement within our order. We believe these two added medals will incentivize recruitment and engagement in the Order.

4. At our Department Encampment if time permits, we will conduct a recruitment and retention brainstorming session with the camps and department officers.

RECOMMENDATION: The Department of NY recommend National look into maximizing our Forms to be sent digitally. For example, the Camps are sending their Form 27s digitally and the checks by mail with a hard copy and Department the same. We are asking National to develop a procedure where we eliminate mailing Forms and send via email and those Forms requiring money, there is a method to send electronically to National. We are looking into how we can do the same between the camps and the department. This will save on paper, envelopes, and postage.

Our department is opening the Campfire event on 1- April to the public part of Celebrating America's 250th anniversary. The local Chamber of Commerce is supporting by helping advertise the event. Local media have already been contacted to promote the event. Our goal is to get our name out there and for recruitment opportunities for the local camps and tents within our department.

The Walter H French Camp #17 has wide community support to make their Memorial Day part of Celebrating America's Anniversary on 25 May. An interview to promote this event has been scheduled for 21 May with the local TV station. The SAR, Copenhagen Central School Band and Honor Society, American Legion, Copenhagen CARES, DUVCW, and ASUVCW are working together to make this a huge successful event.

The Sgt Judson Hicks Camp #111 is installing a new monument mirroring the one in Gettysburg of the 111th dedication as part of Celebrating America's Anniversary with huge community support. A Public Relations specialist has been hired to promote this event not just locally, but for National media coverage. The event is scheduled for 22 August 2026, and all our brothers and sisters are welcome to join us. The event has been submitted to the Banner.

I'm confident more camps in our department will do the same to take opportunity to use the America's 250th Anniversary to promote our order and for recruitment.

Our department will continue to perform the mission in keeping the Memories of the Boys in Blue and improving our department and camps involvement for future missions.

It is a great pleasure and honor to work with such committed and dedicated brothers in the Department of NY. I intend to visit more camps in the coming months if reelected in Aprils Encampment.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jeffrey French". The ink is a reddish-brown color. The signature is written in a fluid, connected style with a prominent initial "J".

Jeffrey French, PDC (NY & CH)
Department Commander,
Department of New York.