

HEADQUARTERS OF THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER  
SPECIAL REQUEST MESSAGE No. 2



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://www.suvcw.org/ny/>

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**SPECIAL REQUEST MESSAGE No. 2**

**PRESS KIT FOR THE BELLS ACROSS NEW YORK FOR THE G.A.R.**

Dear Brothers, Sisters, & Friends,

As was announced in Department Order No. 15 of 7th November 2015, the G.A.R. Sesquicentennial and the "Bells Across New York for the G.A.R." Program is approaching. This program will take place at locations across the state on April 9th at noontime with the ringing of bells 15 times for the 150th anniversary of the founding of the G.A.R.

In order to make the Bells Across New York for the G.A.R. program a success throughout the state, the following items are provided for use by the Camps. These are meant to be aids and can be altered to meet the programming and marketing needs of each camp. The use of any of these aids is at the discretion of the Camps:

- Bells Across NY for the G.A.R. Logo
- Template for Press Release before ceremony
- Template for Press Release after event
- Template Invitation Letter for Participation from Local Sites
- Sample Ceremony
- A Brief History of the G.A.R.

We want this event to also act as an outreach to the community. It's a great opportunity to let the public see (and hear) what the SUVCW is about. Therefore, it is important to send out press releases. Also, we welcome our Sisters of the Allied Orders to participate.

Please document your camp's participation in this program. It is requested that your camp make mention of all of your camp's G.A.R. Sesquicentennial activities at the 133rd NY Dept. Encampment for the G.A.R. Sesquicentennial for the Month of April with a special report to the encampment.

This Request is so made on this 16th day of March 2016 in Fraternity, Charity, & Loyalty,

Raymond W. LeMay III, PCC  
Commander, Department of New York, SUVCW

Attest:

Robert L. Pugsley, PDC  
Secretary, Department of New York, SUVCW

BELLS ACROSS NEW YORK  
FOR THE G.A.R.  
LOGO



# TEMPLATE FOR PRESS RELEASE BEFORE CEREMONY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **Bells to Ring to Honor Civil War Veterans**

*[CITY]* - *[DATE]* - A ceremony will be held on Saturday, April 9, 2016, at noontime at *[LOCATION]* as part of Bells Across New York for the G.A.R., to honor Veterans of the Civil War.

The ceremony, conducted by the *[CAMP NAME]* of the New York Department of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), will include the bell at *[LOCATION]* being rung 15 times to represent the 150 years since the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic.

It was on April 6th, 1866 that the G.A.R. was formed by Benjamin F. Stephenson with membership limited to honorably discharged veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps or the Revenue Cutter Service who had served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865.

A mission of the SUVCW is to keep green the memory of the Union Veterans, the “Boys in Blue” of 1861-1865. All are welcome to attend this Sesquicentennial commemoration in order to honor these men that preserved the union and celebrate the anniversary of the formation of their organization, the Grand Army of the Republic.

Other ceremonies will be held across the state simultaneously as part of this program.

## ABOUT *[CAMP NAME]*

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War are the legal heirs to the G.A.R. The SUVCW works to keep green the memory of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. For more information about the local *[CAMP NAME]* of the SUVCW, visit *[WEBSITE]* or contact *[NAME & PHONE/EMAIL]*.

Contact:

*[NAME]*

*[EMAIL ADDRESS]*

*[MAILING ADDRESS]*

PH: *[PHONE NUMBER]*

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# TEMPLATE FOR PRESS RELEASE

## AFTER EVENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Bells Rang Out Across New York Honoring Civil War Union Veterans**

*[CITY]* - *[DATE]* - A bell was rung 15 times at a ceremony at *[LOCATION]* to honor Veterans of the Civil War as part of Bells Across New York for the G.A.R.

The ceremony, conducted by the *[CAMP NAME]* of the New York Department of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), commemorated the 150 years since the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Bells were rung simultaneously at several locations across the state by other SUVCW Camps also honoring the men of the G.A.R.

The Grand Army of the Republic was a veterans organization founded on April 6th, 1866 by Benjamin F. Stephenson, with its membership being composed of honorably discharged veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps or the Revenue Cutter Service who had served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865.

ABOUT *[CAMP NAME]*

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War are the legal heirs to the G.A.R. The SUVCW works to keep green the memory of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. For more information about the local *[CAMP NAME]* of the SUVCW, visit *[WEBSITE]* or contact *[NAME & PHONE/EMAIL]*.

Contact:

*[NAME]*

*[EMAIL ADDRESS]*

*[MAILING ADDRESS]*

PH: *[PHONE NUMBER]*

*[PHOTO ATTACHED]*

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# Sample Ceremony

*Welcoming*

*Posting of Colors*

*Pledge of Allegiance*

*National Anthem*

*Invocation*

*The American's Creed*

*Remarks & Introduction*

*Brief History of the GAR*

*Guest Speaker*

*The Ringing of the Bell(s)*

*Taps*

*Benediction*

*Retirement of Colors*

# Template Invitation Letter for Participation from Local Sites

[DATE]

[VENUE NAME]

[VENUE ADDRESS]

Dear [CONTACT PERSON],

In celebration of the sesquicentennial of the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), an organization of Union Civil War veterans, we at the [CAMP NAME] of the SUVCW are asking local venues with a bell to be a part of an event to honor these soldiers.

We are inviting you to participate in the Bells Across New York for the G.A.R. program by ringing your bell 15 times on April 9, 2016 at noontime to represent the 150 years since the founding of the G.A.R. Locations across the state will join to ring their bells simultaneously to honor these men who fought to preserve the Union.

The G.A.R. was formed on April 6th, 1866 by Benjamin F. Stephenson. Membership was limited to honorably discharged veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps or the Revenue Cutter Service who had served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865. The G.A.R. was Congressionally Chartered and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War are the legal heirs to this organization.

For further information about us, visit [WEBSITE]. If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact [NAME] at [PHONE / EMAIL].

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[CAMP NAME]

# Brief History of the G.A.R.

In early 1866 the United States of America now securely one nation again was waking to the reality of recovery from war. The soldiers who had fought this were still faced with financial, emotional, and physical struggles. Men who had lived together, fought together, foraged together and survived, had developed an unique bond that could not be broken. Groups of men began joining together — first for camaraderie and then for political power. Emerging most powerful among the various organizations would be the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), which by 1890 would number nearly 410,000 veterans of the “War of the Rebellion.”

Founded in Decatur, Illinois on April 6, 1866 by Benjamin F. Stephenson, membership was limited to honorably discharged veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps or the Revenue Cutter Service who had served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865. The community level organization was called a “Post” and each was numbered consecutively within each department.

The GAR founded soldiers’ homes, was active in relief work and in pension legislation. Five members were elected President of the United States and, for a time, it was impossible to be nominated on the Republican ticket without the endorsement of the GAR voting block.

In 1868, Commander-in-Chief John A. Logan issued General Order No. 11 calling for all Departments and Posts to set aside the 30th of May as a day for remembering the sacrifices of fallen comrades, thereby beginning the celebration of Memorial Day.

The final Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic was held in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1949 and the last member, Albert Woolson, died in 1956 at the age of 109 years.

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War went on as its legal heir to continue the work of honoring the memory of these men our direct ancestors. They now work in conjunction with the Allied Orders including the Womens Relief Corps, The Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War and the Auxiliary of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.