



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

DEPARTMENT OF INDIANA

FALL 2025 ENCAMPMENT MINUTES

November 1, 2025

From Dept. Secretary, Dennis Hutchinson, PDC



Location: Richmond Masonic Center
4090 South "A" Street, Richmond, IN 47374

1. **Presentation of Colors:** The 27th Indiana SVR presented the colors with Captain, Mick Beck-PDC and color bearers Stephon and Andrew Hagman.
2. **Opening:** Commander Travis opened the meeting at 9:10 am EST.
3. **Roll Call of Department Officers:** The Secretary called the roll as follows:

a. Commander,	Travis LeMaster	Present
b. Sr. Vice Commander,	David Hoesli	Present
c. Jr. Vice Commander,	Frederick Leickly	Present
d. Council Member #1,	Dennis Rigsby-PDC	Present
e. Council Member #2,	Thomas Schmitt-PDC	Present
f. Council Member #2,	Timothy Beckman-PDC	Present
g. Secretary,	Dennis Hutchinson-PDC	Present
h. Treasurer,	Ron Hyer	Present
i. Patriotic Instructor,	Jonathan Swartz	Present
j. Chaplain,	Alan Teller-PDC	Present
k. Graves Registration Officer,	David Hoesli	Present
l. Historian,	Bruce Kolb-PDC	Present
m. Civil War Memorials Officer,	Mike Beck-PDC	Present
n. Eagle Scout Coordinator,	Mike Beck-PDC	Present
o. Counselor,	Bruce Kolb-PDC	Present
p. GAR Highway Officer,	Bill Adams-PDC	Present
q. S.V.R.,	Bill Adams-PDC	Present
r. Camp Organizer,	Bill Adams-PDC	Present
s. Signals Officer,	Timothy Beckman-PDC	Present
t. Legion Editor,	Taylin Allen	Present
u. GAR Records Officer,	Bruce Kolb-PDC	Present
v. Color Bearer,	Randy McNally	Present
w. Guard,	Brian Mexin	Absent
x. Guide,	Ron Hyer	Present
4. **Divine Blessing:** Chaplain, Alan Teller gave the Blessing.
5. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The pledge was led by Commander Travis.
6. **Courtesies:** Commander Travis informed us that no National representative will be attending and asked us to take a moment of reflection for our lost Brothers, Eugene Stone and our Department Treasurer, Drew Godby.
7. **Approval of the April 2025 Encampment Minutes:** Alan Teller made a motion to approve the minutes and Fred Leickly seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.
8. **Reports of the Department Officers:** Each officer was asked if they had additions or corrections.
 - a. Chaplain, Alan Teller recognized our lost brothers Eugene Stone and Drew Godby and gave us some information about them.
 - b. Dennis Hutchinson gave the Treasurer's report in lieu of Treasurer, Drew Godby passing away.

- c. Historian, Bruce Kolb informed the group that he will be giving a history of the GAR to the Hamilton County Civil War Roundtable in January. He will be giving the address at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial on February 8th about the books that Abraham Lincoln read while living in Indiana.
- d. Mike Beck informed the group of the Civil War Nurses recognition project and that Fred Leickly will discuss this later. Also, the National Commander in Chief is asking for a ROTC Coordinator at each Department. Mike is asking for anyone interested to contact him.
- e. Tim Beckman asked if everyone is receiving the emails from him using the INDIANA_SUVCW Google group.

9. Reports from the Camps:

- a. **Orlando Somers Camp #2;** Randy McNally told the group that the Thraikill monument ceremony spurred the Township trustees into reworking the foundation of the monument and added a monument in front of it containing the history of the Thraikill monument.
- b. **William Benton Camp #28;** Dennis Rigsby informed the group that it has been a tough year for the Benton camp. Several of the officers were hospitalized at the same time and the Camp had to move their inventory to another location during this time. He requested advice from the group as to how to go forward. They had 73 boxes of books to move plus the other items mentioned in a 5-page inventory list. A discussion ensued with several suggestions. The conversation was picked back up later during the Encampment.
- c. **John Anderson Camp #223;** Fred Leickly was asked by a Sons of Confederate (SCV) group to see about re-vamping the “Morgan’s Raid” trail. Alan Teller pointed out that it would fall under the Indiana Historical Society’s jurisdiction. There is no restriction for the SUVCW to work with the SCV.

10. Committee Reports:

- a. **Visitation Committee;** Nothing new to report.
- b. **Hosting a National Encampment Committee;** Mike Beck informed the group that we have been working on the 2027 or 2028 National Encampment. A National Encampment Committee walk through of the possible Hotels may take place in late November or December. (Note: Later planned for January)
- c. **26th Indiana Vicksburg Monument;** Bill Adams informed us of the continued run-around that he has experienced. No progress has been made.
- d. **Records Storage;** Drew Godby was the lead on this and so this project is now in limbo.
- e. **Civil War Nurses Project;** Fred Leickly stated that the purpose of the project was to discover and honor any nurses who served in the Civil War and were born, lived, worked and buried here in Indiana. They will be honored with a medallion and possibly with a ceremony. Mike Beck has placed medallions on some nurse headstones, but will now wait until all the nurses have been identified. It is difficult to correctly identify nurses. David Hoesli has been given permission to put their names into the SUVCW database once a verified list is determined.
- f. **Department Bylaws;** Bruce Kolb informed us of the Bylaws committee work on revising the Bylaws where necessary. Copies will be sent to the Camp Commanders to distribute to the membership. There were 2 main issues, one being the Committee of Visitation to the Veterans Home in Lafayette, IN (Article VIII, Sec. 1) and the other about not allowing the Department to have members At-Large members (Article IV, Sec. 2). Another item has to do with the death of a Department Officer to appoint a Committee of Memorial (Article VIII, Sec. 2). Bruce looked at format consistency and grammar. A discussion of allowing At-Large members ensued from several attendees. Travis has been in contact with other Departments who do have At-Large members. He mentioned New York and Nebraska. An At-Large member will be the responsibility of the Department Secretary, he being the acting Commander. New York has 6 At-Large members out of 521 total members and Nebraska has 8 At-Large members which make up 10% of the total membership. Travis

mentioned that one person who lives in the Bloomington area felt it was a little too far to join a camp and wanted to join as an At-Large member.

11. Old Business:

- a. Evansville Memorial Coliseum:** David Hoesli reported that the Coliseum is presently undergoing renovations and that the GAR inventory articles are being stored at the Vanderburgh County Court House. The camp has access to those articles.
- b. Indiana Legion:** No further information.
- c. Upcoming SVR Events:** Bill Adams reported that the Wreaths Across America will be hosted by the Ben Harrison Camp #356 on December 13th at 11:00 am EST at the Williams Creek Cemetery in Indianapolis. The Last Union Veteran ceremony for Pike County was moved to April 11th at 1:00 pm EST.

12. New Business:

- a. Hosting a National Encampment Report:** Travis LeMaster summarized the Houston, Texas meeting that the Department of Indiana delegation had with the National Encampment Hosting committee. Travis described the gifts that he gave to the outgoing Commander in Chief, Kevin Martin.
- b. Comments about our experience at Houston:** Tom Schmitt described the situation with the information that was exchanged about Drew Godby's condition during the National Encampment in Houston, TX. The bottom line is that the Department Commander should be the person to communicate official information during a crisis like this.
- c. Hosting Camp for the Annual Department Encampment (April 2026):** The Orlando Somers Camp #1 has volunteered to host the 140th Department of Indiana Annual Encampment at the Commandant's Home in Lafayette, IN on April 18th, 2026 beginning at 9:00 am EST. Dennis Hutchinson brought up the fact that a video projector was brought to the present encampment, but that a screen to view it on was not brought to the encampment. An "After Action" review was suggested and a check list should be made prior to the next encampment.
- d. Cemetery Preservation Permit:** David Hoesli came across a situation whereby he was told that the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) required a permit to disturb the ground when performing headstone adjustment and installation. Bruce Kolb talked to the Preservation Specialist at the DNR about our work with headstones. After he discussed with them about what our group does, he was then informed that we do not need a permit as first indicated and the DNR now understands what our group does, so there is not a concern about what we do in our preservation work. The DNR was concerned about having headstones moved from one cemetery to another and also probing in Indian Burial grounds and things of that nature. The bottom line is that there are no required Permits. Bruce has also looked at the Indiana Code. The best thing to do is to contact whoever is in charge of the cemetery when replacing a headstone and to bury the old headstone.
- e. Supplemental Ancestor Application Fee Clarification:** Dennis Hutchinson informed the Encampment of the confusion with the Supplemental Ancestor application fee, which states on Form 3, "National Application Fee: **\$15.00**". Dennis was informed by the National Treasurer, Michael Beard that the \$15.00 does not go entirely to the National, but that it should be split up as follows; a Member sends \$15.00 to the Camp, the Camp keeps \$5.00 and sends \$10.00 to the Department, the Department keeps \$5.00 and sends \$5.00 to the National. This situation was brought to Dennis' attention when the Ben Harrison Camp #356 sent Form 3's for 3 members who each had 2 supplemental ancestor applications for a total fee of \$90.00. The full \$90.00 was originally sent to the National. The Ben Harrison Camp was reimbursed the overpayment of \$30.00 at the encampment for this transaction. Travis suggested that the Member write 3 separate checks, one to the Camp, one to the Department and one to the National. Dennis will send information about this to the Camp Commanders and Camp Secretaries.

- f. **Last Union Veteran Soldier Medallions:** Bruce Kolb asked if the Ben Harrison Camp should order more medallions, because the medallion dies will be destroyed after 3 years of non-use. Ordering more would reset the 3-year clock on the dies. No decision was made.
 - g. **Fundraising Committee:** Taylin Allen proposed creating a Fundraising Committee for the Department. Commander, Travis will set up a committee.
 - h. **Recognition Certificate:** Tom Schmitt asked to have a certificate made to recognize non SUVCW people for their hard work in helping a Camp. It was agreed that this is a good idea and was told that there is a certificate available that possibly could be used. Bruce Kolb and Tim Beckman will look into finding one or developing one.
 - i. **Commandant's Home Contribution:** Bill Adams looked into what has been done with the \$1,000.00 donation that the Department made for the care of the Commandant's Home. He contacted the Community Relations person and found out that the \$1,000.00 has been put into a fund for the home. Bill told the person that we would like to have the soldier statues repaired. The person thinks he can get them repaired. Bill will follow up on this.
 - j. **Oak Hill Cannon Carriage Replacement:** David Hoesli informed the Encampment that the Foster Camp was able to receive funding for the restoration. Much of the funding came from Camp membership. Future funding was discussed and Alan Teller brought up the Charitable Foundation as a source. The Foster Camp was originally granted funding from the Charitable Foundation but due to the deaths of the Treasurer and previous President passing away, payment of grants has stopped. Tom Schmitt explained the issue to the Encampment. A short slideshow presentation about the cannon project was shown. It showed the condition of the old carriages and the hauling of the new carriage parts from the Clarksville, TN foundry to David Hoesli's home. The slideshow showed the progress on one of the cannon carriages to the present date.
 - k. **Benton Camp Inventory and Solvency:** Taylin Allen brought up the Benton Camp inventory again and suggested helping them go through their inventory and distribute the books by various means. Mike Beck asked if there was anything that the Department could do to keep the Benton Camp solvent. Dennis Rigsby said that the biggest issue was the disposal of the inventory. Travis LeMaster plans to get back with the Benton Camp to work on the inventory situation. There may also be a way to generate funding from the sale of some items.
 - l. **Encampment Ribbons:** Dennis Hutchinson brought up the fact that he forgot to order Encampment participation ribbons. Dennis was given permission to order ribbons for this Encampment and distribute them to the attendees.
13. **Lunch Break:** Commander Travis stopped for a break at 12:27 am. Chaplain Alan Teller closed the Bible and the Encampment adjourned for lunch.
14. **Return from Lunch Break:** After the return of the Encampment attendees from Lunch, the Encampment was re-opened at 1:36 pm and Chaplain, Alan Teller re-opened the Bible.
15. **For the Good of the Order:** Brother, Fred Leickly, MD MPH presented a PowerPoint presentation about his new book, *Recollections of the Civil War – The life of a soldier in the Ohio 2nd Volunteer Cavalry 1861-1854*. Fred edited his great grandfather's recollections whose name is William Henry Harrison Polhamus. Fred discussed his own background. William unsuccessfully tried to publish his recollections book over 100 years ago and ended up giving it to a Historical Society.
16. **Closing of the Encampment:** There being no further business to come before the Encampment, Commander, Travis LeMaster proceeded to close the Encampment. Chaplain Alan Teller gave the closing Prayer and closed the Bible. The colors were retired by the 27 Indiana SVR, and Commander, Travis LeMaster closed the meeting at 2:26 pm.

I respectfully submit the Meeting Minutes of the Fall Encampment of the Department of Indiana held November 1st, 2025 in Richmond, Indiana. Attached to the end of this report is a list of attendees to the Encampment.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Dennis Hutchinson, PDC 

Secretary Dept. of Indiana SUVCW
Wednesday, January 21, 2026

Attendees: The following Brothers attended the Encampment.

NAME	CAMP NAME	NO.
Alan Teller	Orlando A. Somers	1
Andrew Hagman	Orlando A. Somers	1
Randy D. McNally	Orlando A. Somers	1
Stephon Hagman	Orlando A. Somers	1
Travis LeMaster	Orlando A. Somers	1
David Hoesli	John W. Foster	2
Dennis Hutchinson	John W. Foster	2
Bill Adams	John Auten	8
Jonathan Swarts	John Auten	8
Ron Hyer	John Auten	8
Gib Young	Champion Hill	17
Phil Dyer	Champion Hill	17
Tom Schmitt	Champion Hill	17
Dennis Rigsby	William P. Benton	28
Nathan Rigsby	William P. Benton	28
Fred Leickley	John B. Anderson	223
Taylin Allen	John B. Anderson	223
Bruce Kolb	Ben Harrison	356
Garry Walls	Ben Harrison	356
Joe Beckman	Ben Harrison	356
Michael W. Beck	Ben Harrison	356
Tim Beckman	Ben Harrison	356

A total of 22 Brothers attended the Encampment