

# Stoneman Dispatch

## Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Of the Inland Empire, Department of California and Pacific

Email: [camp18@suvpac.org](mailto:camp18@suvpac.org) Web: [www.suvpac.org/camp18.html](http://www.suvpac.org/camp18.html)

Volume 10, No.5, November, 2019

## Happy Thanksgiving

Please take a moment and bring to mind, say a prayer to keep out of harm's way, our Brothers and Sisters who may be affected by the roaring winds, wild fires and who have gone days without electricity, throughout the entire state of California. God bless the Firefighters and First Responders who battle every day to keep us safe. I hope everyone has a great Thanksgiving.

In Fraternity, Charity, & Loyalty,  
Rudy Velasco, Commander

Department of California & Pacific, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

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### Volunteers invited

Brother John Morris has cordially invited Camp 18 Brothers to join his crew of volunteers to place flags at Evergreen cemetery for Veterans Day on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:00 am.

The cemetery is located at 4414 14<sup>th</sup> St. in Riverside. If you are available I am sure the flag crew would enjoy your company.

For more information, you can email John at: [john.morris.6@us.af.mil](mailto:john.morris.6@us.af.mil)

### Wreaths Across America

Camp 18 will be participating in the Wreaths Across America ceremony at Evergreen cemetery, Riverside, again this year. This will be the second year that Brother John Morris has organized the program at Evergreen scheduled for December 14<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:00 am.

*Continued on page 2, see Wreaths...*

### Tentative Camp Calendar

**Saturday, Dec. 14** – Wreaths Across America ceremony at Evergreen cemetery. 9:00 am.

**Saturday, Dec. 21** – Camp meeting at the American Legion Hall, Corona. 10:00 am.

**Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020** – Southwest Civil War Symposium, Redlands, CA. For information visit website:

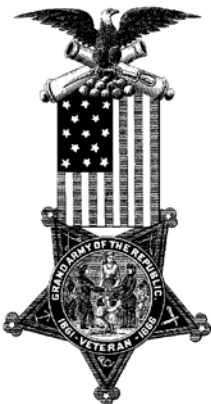
<https://www.southwestcivilwar.com/2020symposium>

**Saturday, Feb. 8** – Camp display at the Lincoln Memorial Shrine Open House in Redlands 11:00 am – 3:00 pm.

**Saturday, Feb. 15** – Camp meeting at the American Legion Hall, Corona. 10:00 am.

### Did You Know?

**Nov. 1, 1861** – President Lincoln named Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan General-in-Chief of the Union armies, succeeding Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott.



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*Dedicated to Preserving the Memory  
of the Grand Army of the Republic  
And the soldiers who Fought to Save the Union 1861 - 1865*

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## Wreaths, continued,...

Representatives from our Military Service branches, in full service dress uniforms, have been invited to place wreaths at their respective service branch flags at the G.A.R. circle at the cemetery. Camp 18's uniformed Honor Guard will be escorting the service men and women to the branch flags to place the wreaths and will be firing a three volley musket salute later in the program.

Wreaths will decorate the headstones at the GAR circle before the program begins to enhance the sincerity of the ceremony but most wreaths will be placed throughout the rest of the cemetery at the close of the program.

You are respectfully invited to come and observe the Wreaths ceremony, if you like.

Please contact Brother Morris at the email address listed on page 1 or the Editor should you like to participate in civil war uniform or to purchase/donate a wreath.

## Keep in your Prayers

Recently brought to the Camp's attention are Department Brothers who are ailing and in the spirit of Fraternity, could use some prayer.

Please keep in your prayers Camp 18 Brother Jim Crowell, who recently went through a surgery with some unpleasant side effects and longtime Sgt. Pittenger, Camp 21 newsletter Editor and Chaplain Dave Allyn who has spent some time in the hospital and still under the doctor's care.

Rosecrans Camp #2 Auxiliary Sister Susan Sweet has also had some surgery that will also need some looking after. Please keep these Brothers and Sister in your prayers for healing.

With a heavy heart, we announce the passing of Rosemary Lowe, wife of Pittenger Camp 21 Brother Bob Lowe, Department of California & Pacific Commander 2001 – 2002. A reminder for those who remember Rosemary, she helped start the Sgt. Pittenger Camp 21 Auxiliary in San Diego and donated books about the civil war from her late husband, Bob's civil war library to Camp 18 when the Camp was just forming in 2010, to raffle off for a startup bank account for the new Camp 18.

Thank you Rosemary, you will be missed.

## New Eagle Scout Commendations

Stoneman Camp 18 has recently mailed out 3 more Eagle Scout Commendation awards for a local

Eagle Scout Court of Honor to be held on Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup> in Mentone, California near Redlands.

Camp 18 Brother Steve Doyle PCC will be attending the Court of Honor to present the new Eagle Scouts with Certificates of Commendation for their achievements.

The following are the new Eagle Scouts;

i) Conner Matthew Neely, age 17 of Redlands, who designed and installed a garden for the kindergarten students at Simpson Elementary school in Rialto for his Eagle Scout project.

ii) Derek William Cranfill, age 17 of Redlands, whose Eagle Scout project was to locate all veteran gravesites in Hillside Memorial Park. This was done by walking the cemetery and identifying headstones. GPS coordinates, headstone photos and relevant information about the veteran were collected on the spot and directly input into a database at the City of Redlands. This project took a year to complete.

iii) Patrick Bruce Cranfill, age 17 of Redlands, whose Eagle Scout project was refurbishing trash can receptacles at a local city park by replacing rotten wood frames and old hardware with new Trex-like wood planks and new hardware.

I believe we will receive a report of this Court of Honor from Brother Doyle PCC for the next issue of the Stoneman Dispatch in January.

## Huntington Beach Civil War Reenactment, September 2019

For years, better than a decade, that this Editor can remember, Southern California camps have gathered together in Huntington Beach for the annual civil war reenactment in Central Park on the first weekend of September and this year was no exception.

The *living history* is always good at this reenactment, the battles resemble the days of a 150 years ago, but the *camaraderie* and *fellowship* of the Allied Orders, Brothers and Sisters that sit together at the Camp and Auxiliary displays is rewarding and beneficial. These are Comrades that share your passions and enjoy your acquaintance, remembering the Boys in Blue.

One benefit for myself attending the displays of this reenactment was meeting the Sons of Confederate Veterans, California Division Commander Robert Williams, member of *Captain Jame Iredell Waddell*, Camp 1770 of Orange County.

*See Huntington, page 3,*

**Huntington, continued,**

In the photo below, from the left are Jerry Sayre PDC – Pittenger Camp 21; Phil Caines PCC – Rosecrans Camp 2; Tim Reese PDC – Lincoln Camp 10; Terry Shaw, Sec-Tres – Sedgwick/Granger Camp 17; Glen Roosevelt PDC – Sedgwick/Granger Camp 17; and Dean Smith, Camp Commander – General Rosecrans Camp 2.



We went to visit the camp displays of General Rosecrans Camp 2 (Los Angeles) Generals Sedgwick-Granger Camp 17 (Orange County) and Sgt, Pittenger Camp 21 (San Diego) and our Sisters of Gen. Rosecrans Auxiliary No. 2. It was a great Saturday, spending time and talking with the Southern California Camp and Auxiliary representatives.

Camp 18 Brother Larry Duncan portraying Dr. Malarkey had his Field Hospital open and explaining the use of Ether during the Civil War to reluctant spectators.



*Photo above from left; Auxiliary President Susan Sweet, Sisters Maryanne Kilis, Jeanette Kilis and Auxiliary Past Department President Melinie Caines.*



**General George Stoneman Jr.  
Camp 18 Officers**

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Camp Commander, | Michael Bullard    |
| Sr. Vice Cmdr,  | Brian Stephens     |
| Jr. Vice Cmdr,  | Matt Crowder       |
| Sec/Treas,      | Rudy Velasco III   |
| Camp Council #1 | Michael Emmett     |
| Camp Council #2 | Rudolph Velasco IV |
| Camp Council #3 | John Morris        |

**Appointed**

- |                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Camp Chaplain                       | Bill Daley PCC   |
| Camp Historian                      | Burt Hogue       |
| Camp Guide                          | Bodie Crowder    |
| Camp Guard                          | Steve Doyle PCC  |
| Graves Registration                 | Michael Emmett   |
| Newsletter Editor                   | Rudy Velasco III |
| Patriotic Instructor                | Vacant           |
| Eagle Scout &<br>JROTC Coordinators | Rudy Velasco III |

*If* you have something of interest that you would like to add to this newsletter, something that our **Brothers** might enjoy like an article, a photo or a Civil War event, contact the Editor, Rudy Velasco for placement. [rev03@dc.rr.com](mailto:rev03@dc.rr.com)





### Camp 31 Charter Presentation

On Saturday, October 26, Department Commander Rudy Velasco drove to Henderson, Nevada to meet with Brothers of the Senator Edward Dickenson Baker Camp 31 and present the new Camp with their Charter.

With the addition of the Baker Camp 31, there are now 14 Camps in the Department of California and Pacific.

The Charter presentation meeting took place in the meeting room at Mimi's Café in Henderson and was attended by Camp Commander Donald Hotchkiss, Camp SVC Wayne Eder and wife Susette, Camp Secretary/Treasurer Al Conant and wife Lisa, Camp Councilors Vincent Vitale and Andrew Martin and Andrew's wife Lisa and member Steve Hauk along with Department Secretary/Treasurer & Camp Organizer Owen Stiles and Dept. Commander Rudy Velasco.



*Above, & from the left; Dept. Sec/Treas Owen Stiles, Dept. Cmdr. Rudy Velasco, Camp Cmdr. Donald Hotchkiss and Camp SVC Wayne Eder. S. Eder photo*

After a short business meeting for the Camp and the Charter presentation, the Department Commander installed the Officers of the new Baker Camp 31.

In 2011 when General Stoneman Camp 18 was presented its Charter, the Brothers of Generals Sedgwick-Granger Camp 17 of Orange County presented Camp 18 with a check in the amount \$300.00 dollars to get the camp started with a small bank account. At the Stoneman October Camp meeting, the Brothers voted to pay that start-up fund forward and present Baker Camp 31 with a check in the amount of \$300.

During the "Good of the Order" portion of the Camp 31 meeting, Camp 18 Secretary/Treasurer Rudy Velasco explained how Camp 17 had helped Camp 18 with a donation and wanted to pay that forward and presented a

very surprised Camp 31 with a much appreciated check for \$300.

We wish the Senator Edward Dickinson Baker Camp 31 much success.



*Above; Camp 18 Secretary Rudy Velasco presents a check to Commander Hotchkiss.*

*S. Eder photo*

#### *Added from Brother Wayne Eder;*

This camp formation is the culmination of efforts by the members dating back to its first organizational meeting on 10/6/18. The initial camp organizer, Michael Gravitt was instrumental in laying the foundation for the camp. Unfortunately, in early 2019, Michael was forced to step down and the camp was close to becoming nothing more than a dream. Camp 25 member, and SVR 6th Military District Chief of Staff Dr. Wayne L. Eder who lives in the Henderson area stepped in as Camp Organizer and began working closely with Department staff to make everything work. An organizational meeting was held on June 6, 2019, bylaws approved, officer's elected, and payment for the charter submitted. Now, a little over one year after the initial meeting, Camp 31 is official.



## Death of last Union soldiers ends Organization

Submitted by Brother Steve Doyle PCC  
from the San Bernardino Sun newspaper

The newspaper obituary pages today all too often list the deaths of the few remaining members of the Greatest Generation, especially the men who once wore military uniforms and saved the world in World War II.

Ironically, when those seniors were just young men fighting in Europe and in the Pacific, the rolls of another group of aged soldiers were also quickly declining.

Just days before the end of fighting in World War II, residents in Pomona lamented the death of 99-year-old Johnson Knight, the last remaining local resident who had fought in the Civil War.

The Pomona Progress-Bulletin on April 27, 1945, announced Knight's death from the night before, noting that it also closed the door on an organization known as the Grand Army of the Republic.

For almost six decades, the National GAR, with chapters in Pomona, San Bernardino and Ontario, had been where old Union veterans could get together, assist their fellow soldiers, and march every year in the annual Decoration Day parade in each city.

Knight at the time of his death was the commander and the only member of the Vicksburg Post No. 61 of the GAR, according to the article.

Two years earlier, the death of William C. Clark, 97, the last member of San Bernardino's Cornman Post No. 57 of the GAR was mourned. In 1937, the passing of Alois Podrasnik, 92, closed the roster of Civil War vets in Ontario Post No. 124.

All three were local leaders of the organization, founded in Springfield, Illinois shortly after the end of the Civil War. At its height, about 1890, there were more than 400,000 former Union soldiers in Posts through-out the Nation.

Both the San Bernardino and Pomona Posts were formed in 1884, while members of both assembled in 1886 to institute the Ontario Post. Most Posts had associated with it the Women's Relief Corps, a type of auxiliary that supported its activities.

The most prominent role taken by the GAR was the creation of what today is Memorial Day. It was originally designated as Decoration Day to decorate the graves of those who fought for the Union during the Civil War.

Many northern cities held parades on that date

usually highlighted by lines of Civil War veterans marching along, resplendent with their long beards and coats with medals and remembrances of their war time achievements.

But as years passed, the number of marchers dwindled. In 1933 only two of six members of the Cornman Post were able to walk the block long route in San Bernardino. In Pomona, in 1938, the few GAR members remaining only watched from a viewing stand.

The GAR and its affiliates helped create statues and monuments to the achievements of their members. On Decoration Day 1908, a memorial to Union Veterans and the GAR was created at what was then the entrance to Bellevue Cemetery in Ontario. It was sponsored by the Women's Relief Corps which held a number of events to raise money.

The rock memorial included a cannon as well as a copper Civil War Infantryman statue that has since been removed. The statue, victimized by vandals, was pulled off many years ago but will soon be part of the Civil War exhibit opened in the mausoleum at the cemetery.

In October 1930, Podrasnik of San Antonio Heights, reportedly the last remaining former Union officer living in Southern California, suggested to the GAR veterans in Ontario and Pomona that a "Last Man's Club" be created.

There were 12 original members, from Pomona, Ontario, Chino, Upland and San Antonio Heights, who agreed to meet each year and toast the members who had passed in the previous 12 months. The last surviving member would finally drink a toast to them all, using a special bottle of wine provided by Podrasnik.

By 1937 only Podrasnik and Pomona's David Ballinger remained to dine together on May 5. Four months later, Podrasnik died.

Ballinger, a veteran of the Battle of Gettysburg, was immediately asked when he would drink the long-awaited toast but he shockingly announced he would decline because he felt strongly that consuming liquor was wrong. News reports said that the final toast might be done "by proxy" but when or by whom is not known.

In the GAR's later years, associated groups with historical or genealogical interests to the Posts were formed and still exist as the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War. On Memorial Day in 1953,

*Continued on page 6,.....*

the Sons of Union Veterans helped clean up and repair the memorial at Bellevue in Ontario and held a rededication ceremony there.

Meanwhile, just about the last remaining hint that the GAR existed can be found in our oldest cemeteries where small metal stakes with "GAR" inside a star were originally placed next to the gravestones. After many decades, most of those stakes with the GAR star are missing, the victim of the elements, vandals or perhaps careless lawn mowing.



*General George Stoneman Jr. Camp 18  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
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