

CAMPS OF THE SUVCW

The backbone of the SUVCW is the individual Camp. Some may be as small as to have only the constitutionally required minimum, while many average over forty members. Camps determine when, where, and how often they meet, the membership governs the camp and decides the direction of which they grow.

Officers

Camp Officers are installed at the Annual Membership meeting in January. Elected officers are the Camp Commander, Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, Secretary, Treasurer, and three members of the Camp Council. Appointed officers include the Patriotic Instructor, Chaplain, Graves Registration Officer, Historian, Signals Officer, and others as needed. Job Descriptions for all Camp Officer positions can be found on the National Website.

Membership/Recruiting

Unlike many organizations, membership in the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is through the Camp rather than the National Organization. Regardless of where you submitted your application it found its way to the Camp. The membership Committee reviewed it to verify you met all the qualifications for membership and made a recommendation to the Camp. The Camp then voted to elect you to membership. Only after being elected could you be initiated. All who belong to the Order are referred to as ***Brothers***. Although they are often used interchangeably, there is a legal distinction between the term's "member" and "Brother". While all are Brothers, members are those with lineage to a Union Veteran and those elected to Honorary Membership by the National Encampment.

Recruiting is the responsibility of each member. We all have a circle of family, friends, acquaintances, co-workers, etc. which form a ready-made recruiting pool. If you know of someone who would make a good candidate, try to interest them in membership. Provide them with an application and point them to the National and Camp Websites. Applications can be downloaded from the National Website (use the standard application rather than the internet application). Those still trying to document their ancestor's service can join as an Associate and transition to a Regular Member when they obtain the requisite documentation. The Camp Junior Vice Commander oversees membership and recruiting.

Dues and Fees

Camp dues are set at the annual membership meeting in January. They are currently \$40.00 per year, due January 1st and payable by March 1st.

Your dues include dues due to the National Organization and the Department. The National portion of your dues includes an annual subscription to the **Banner**. Dues notices usually go out after the 1st of the year and reminders are made in the meeting announcements.

If your dues are not received by 1 March, you run the risk of being dropped for non-payment. This is because the Camp *must* send in the Department and National dues along with a roster of members in good standing with its annual report by the 15th of April. If there is a problem or oversight, please contact the Camp Commander or Treasurer so that arrangements can be made. Of course, it may be that you intend not to renew your membership. If that is the case, a heads-up is always appreciated. If your membership is terminated, you may be reinstated by vote of the Camp upon payment of the annual dues and a reinstatement fee.

The only fees imposed by the Camp are the Nationally mandated Application and Reinstatement fees. These are one-time fees and are currently \$10.00 each.

Transfer

If you move out of the area you are eligible for a transfer card which will be issued upon request. Transfer cards are valid for one year during which you remain a member of the order. If the transfer card is not deposited with a new camp within the year period, you will be discharged from the SUVCW.

Honorable Discharge

If you are in good standing and terminate your membership you are eligible for an Honorable Discharge Certificate. In accordance with the Constitution, this must be requested in writing (email is fine).

Address Change

Be sure to inform the Camp Commander or Secretary if you change your address, email or phone number. This ensures we have corrected information on the roster. We also send a notice to National so that your **Banner** subscription is uninterrupted.

Death/Illness

The death of a member is a very difficult time for the camp. It is at such time that the camp wishes to not only pay tribute to the memory of the departed Brother but to provide a source of support to his family. When a Brother dies the Camp memorializes him at the next meeting. As many Brothers as possible will attend the funeral. His name is also forwarded to the Department and National Chaplains and is listed in the **Banner**. Often the Camp does not learn of the death until long after the event. Please include notification of the Camp in your planning. We are also interested

in knowing of any serious illness. The SUVCW has a tradition of looking after the welfare of its Brothers. We will endeavor to provide what assistance we may if only to include you in our thoughts and prayers.

Life Membership

Throughout its history the SUVCW has established a number of Life membership programs. All Life memberships are through the National Organization, Departments and Camps are not allowed to create their own programs. The fees for the current Life Member program are:

FEE SCHEDULE

Under 40 1,000.00

41-50 700.00

51-60 500.00

61-70 300.00

71 plus 230.00

Life members are exempt from paying National dues. Department and Camp dues are not exempt. Life Member applications can be downloaded from the National Website at <http://suvchw.org/ftp/form09fi.pdf>

Dual Membership

Brothers are allowed to join more than one camp. This is known as dual membership. You must apply and be elected to each Camp. You must also pay the National, Department and Camp dues to each Camp.

Uniforms

For many years in its history the SUVCW, like the GAR, had a prescribed uniform. Basically, it was the current US Army uniform with appropriate SUV insignia. Today there is no prescribed SUV uniform. Many Camps adopt a uniform or uniform item. We have not. Brothers are free to wear uniforms or uniform items (caps, vests, etc.) as they wish. The Department of Michigan sells an SUV cap badge and a blazer crest. Order through their website at <http://www.suvcwmi.org/>.