

On Saturday, December 17, 2022, Camp #18 of the Department of Texas and Louisiana, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, participated in the Wreaths Across America Day program. Wreaths Across America is an American nonprofit organization established in 2007 by Morrill Worcester. The nonprofit organization commemorates the graves of US Veteran by distributing wreaths for placement on their graves in over 3,400 cemeteries across the nation. In December 2008, the United States Senate adopted a resolution designating December 13, 2008, as Wreaths Across America Day. Subsequently Wreaths Across America Days have been celebrated on the second or third Saturday of December.

Camp 18 members participated at two cemeteries this year. Brother Blair Rudy, PDC laid a wreath at the San Antonio National Cemetery, in an event, in part, sponsored by the Alamo Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. Brothers Rick Erder, DJVC, Don Gates, PDC and John Schneider Sr., PDC laid wreaths at Pecan Grove Cemetery in McKinney, in an event, sponsored by the John Abston Chapter of the NSDAR. Pecan Grove Cemetery is special to Camp 18, because it is believed that some if not all of the 13 Union Army and Navy veterans buried there, were members of GAR Post 18 of McKinney. Camp 18 chose its numeric designation to honor them. It is also significant because one of Camp 18's members is buried there. The Camp laid Brother Bill Fleming to rest with a graveside ceremony in 2012. Since then we have placed a flag and flowers on his grave, along with the other 13 union veterans, on Memorial Day. The Camp plans to do the same on Wreaths Across America Day in the future.

The event began with the gathering of all volunteers for a brief memorial service after which the volunteers each collect a wreath for a designated veteran's grave. At the grave to honor and remember the veteran, the wreath is placed on his grave and the volunteer says his name aloud as a final tribute to his service. Camp 18 so honored Brother Fleming and three other veterans.



Blair Rudy, PDC



L to R: Jill Schneider, John Schneider Sr., PDC, Don Gates, PDC, Rick Erder, DJVC and Lee Ann Erder, NSDAR



Don Gates, PDC