



**THE DEPARTMENT OF OHIO
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR**

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Subject: 144th Annual Department of Ohio Encampment 2026

This year's encampment was held at the Clintonville Woman's Club, Columbus Ohio on June 13, 2026.

The memorial service was held at 10:00 AM to remember our deceased brothers, Branstutter, Billy R.

Cobb, Jr., James D., Francis, Jr., Andrew D., Langdon, Kerry L., Lochary, James H., and Myers, Henry L. PDC Allan Howey played taps at the conclusion of the ceremony to honor the deceased.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Commander Rish opened the meeting and Chaplain McBrayer led the invocation as directed by the Ritual.

Attendance:

All officers were present, except for the GAR Records Officer (RA Davis), Buckeye Bugle Editor (Don Martin, PCinC), Signals Officer (Dave Moravek), and Buffington Island Representative (James Oiler).

The following camps were represented/present during the roll call:

Dennison, Lytle, McLaughlin, Kountz, Parrott, Enderlin, Earnshaw, Casey, Sherman, Townsend, Garfield.

Camps absent: Fearing, Brooks-Grant, McKinley, Vienna, Triem, and Cadot-Blessing

CinC Kevin Tucker was present as the special guest. He took this opportunity to address the Encampment with a well crafted speech highlighting the historic involvement of Ohio in the Civil War.

Bradly Tilton, Jim Crane, and Kent Dorr were appointed to the Credentials Committee, Jim Crane, Chair. Br. Tilton provided a first report of eligible voting members present.

John Edelmann was appointed to the Resolutions Committee; Don Darby was appointed the Parliamentarian. John Edelmann was also appointed as the Chair of the Officer Reports.

The motion to approve the 2025 143rd Department of Ohio Encampment Proceedings was passed, having been made by Br. Michael Spaulding, PDC, and seconded by Br. Peter Hritsko, PCinC.

Department Secretary John Edelmann reviewed the Officer and Camp reports on behalf of the several officers and Camps who submitted them. Of particular note, Townsend Camp 108

Commander Carl Jón Denbow made additions to their camp's submitted report, regarding the recently approved allocation of funds by the State of Ohio (\$375,000) to support the renovation of the FROST GAR Hall.

Subsequently, Committee Chairs reviewed their report submissions (none were submitted).

Two recommendations were approved by the Encampment, including a recommendation by the Eagle Scout Coordinator to encourage every camp to find at least one Boy Scout Troop, and to discuss the SUVCW Eagle Scout program with them. Br. Grant Bates made a motion to approve, seconded by Br. Ron Marvin, Jr.; the motion carried.

The 2nd recommendation was from the Signals Office, regarding allowing the Camps of the Department of Ohio to use available website slots within the current Bluehost web-hosting provider to host Camp-level websites, should any Camp wish to do so. A motion was made by Br. Grant Bates to approve, seconded by Br. John Huffman, PDC. The motion was approved.

While there were no submitted Resolutions, Don Darby read a resolution from the floor, requesting that the Encampment approve a Resolution to eliminate the physical hard copy of the National Newsletter (The Banner), and to replace it with suitable digital versions. A motion was made by Michael Spaulding, seconded by John Huffman. The motion passed with a majority vote, though there was at least one nay. The request was delegated to the Secretary for preparation and submission to the appropriate National committee.

In the absence of the Treasurer Thomas Edelmann, Assistant Treasurer James Crane, PDC, reviewed the financial reports and budget that were approved on June 7, 2026 by the Department Council for the record.

Following the agenda, there were no significant Old Business to pursue, however, for New Business, there followed a discussion raised by Don Darby, regarding the continued contribution by the Department, of \$150.00 towards the operating expenses of the Frost GAR Hall. The discussion centered around whether or not the Department should continue to contribute such a small amount of funding, when the amount required for renovation and possible relocation of the building was significantly higher. Following an extended discussion, no motion was made to alter the budgeted amount of \$150.00 and the matter was closed.

The meeting continued with the discussion of delegates to the National Encampment. CinC Tucker noted that in order to utilize any of the Department's *alternate delegates*, an equal number of regular delegates needed to be approved by the Encampment. Therefore, all available member attendees in Good Standing of the Department Encampment who were not automatically authorized to vote (DC or PDCs), were voted in as official delegates. Peter Hritsko made the motion and Grant Bates seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The Commander then entertained a motion to accept all other members of the Department as alternates; said motion was made by Peter Hritsko and seconded by Grant Bates. The motion carried.

Several items of note were mentioned for the Good of the Order – and then the Commander called a recess for Lunch (at 11:40 AM).

At the close of lunch, Auxiliary President Danielle Michaels, PNP, addressed the Encampment, and conveyed her enthusiasm of a new Auxiliary formed in Pennsylvania.

Following Lunch (at 12:00 PM), the Commander announced that several awards would be presented. First, Grant Bates presented the 2026 Fredric C. Lynch Award from Sherman Camp 93, to PDC Stephen W. Ball. Sr. Barbara Lynch, current Department of Ohio Auxiliary President was present with Br. Bates to present the award. Second, PDC James Crane introduced the presentation of the Department Sword to PCinC Peter Hritsko, presented by CinC Kevin Tucker.

Finally, Secretary and DJVC John Edelman was called to the floor to receive the Meritorious Service Award. The certificate was originally presented at the 140th National Encampment in St. Louis, MO by then CinC Brian Pierson, but it never found its way to the recipient. James Crane worked with CinC Kevin Tucker to rectify this oversight, by presenting the award at the 2026 Department Encampment. Edelman was originally recognized in 2021 for his exceptional support of the Camp's adopted cemetery (Old Greencastle, Dayton, Ohio), and for his achievement in obtaining grants in excess of \$15,000 to help maintain the landscape and remove dead ash trees that were both unsightly and a danger for visitors.

Following a final review of attendance from the Credentials Committee during which it was reported that there were present thirty-three (33) eligible voting members, the Commander called for nominations for the elected officer positions. Motion was made by Peter Hritsko to permit the casting of a single vote by the secretary in favor of a candidate, if the office receives only one (1) nominee. Grant Bates seconded this motion and the Encampment voted to approve.

Therefore, the following were duly elected as a result of having been the sole nominees to said office:

- a. Department Commander – Kelly Hopkins, DJVC and PCC
 - b. Department Senior Vice Commander – John Edelman, CC, DJVC, and Secretary
 - c. Department Junior Vice Commander – Robert Kidd, CC
 - d. Department Council – David Rish, nominated according to standard protocol of the immediate past Department Commander accepting a 3-year term on the Council once leaving office.
 - e. Department Secretary – John Edelman
 - f. Department Treasurer – Thomas Edelman (Camp Treasurer and Dept Treasurer) – nominated and elected in absentia.
- 2) Upon the successful conclusion of the elections, Department Commander Elect, Kelly Hopkins, stated his decision to select Kevin Tucker, CinC, as the installing officer. All other elected officers then joined in the solemn pledge to the faithful performance of their several duties. CinC Tucker then placed Commander Elect Hopkins in full control by placing into his care the Charter of the Department of Ohio and the other artifacts of the Order.

Following the presentation of the Past Department Commander's Badge to David Rish, Chaplain McBrayer gave the closing prayer and Department Commander Kelly Hopkins proceeded to close the Encampment.

Subsequently, the Secretary obtained signatures (installing officer, CinC Kevin Tucker, etc.) as required for the Department Officer Form (49). A copy has been forwarded to the Executive Director, David Demmy, as required by the C&R. Elected and appointed officers resulting from the Encampment are as follows:

Office	Officer
Department Commander:	Kelly Hopkins
Senior Vice Commander:	John Edelmann
Junior Vice Commander:	Robert Kidd
Council Member 1:	John Huffman, Jr.
Council Member 2:	Stephen Ball
Council Member 3:	David Rish
Secretary:	John Edelmann
Treasurer:	Thomas Edelmann
Patriotic Instructor:	R. Michael Mershon
Chaplain:	J. Thomas McBrayer
Graves Registration Officer:	Kent Dorr
GAR Records Officer:	R.A. Davis
Counselor:	Donald Darby
Eagle Scout Coordinator:	Michael Spaulding
GAR Highway Officer:	Peter Hritsko
Civil War Memorials Officer:	Ronald Marvin, Jr.
Guard:	Grant Bates
Assistant Secretary:	<i>vacant</i>
Signals Officer:	David Moravek / John Edelmann
Assistant Treasurer:	James Crane
Buffington Island Representative:	James Oiler

Yours in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,



John Edelmann
Secretary, Department of Ohio
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War