

## REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COLORADO & WYOMING'S 2025 ANNUAL ENCAMPMENT

22 June 2025

Commander-in-Chief Martin,

On Saturday, 21 June 2025, I attended the Department of Colorado & Wyoming's Annual Encampment at Historic Fort Caspar in Casper Wyoming.

The encampment was overall positive and harmonious; brothers exhibited a sincere fraternity and an enthusiasm for the SUVCW's mission.

The Dept as a whole remains active and focused on the mission of the SUVCW, and has continued to be a positive force in its territory. However, as shown by several Camp Commander reports below, the Dept has suffered from the series of unfortunate internal events over the past two years. On a very hopeful note, the Brothers at the Encampment were all resolved to put these behind them and look to the future, which I encouraged. Financially, the department remains in average health, and is meeting all of its obligations; however it was observed that the Dept needs more reserves to ensure stability.

### Proceedings:

Department Commander Bill Neu opened the Encampment at 1000 in accordance with the Rituals and Ceremonials of the Order. 14 Brothers attended in person, and a Zoom simulcast was made available for those unable to attend.

Sister Susanna Weart presented greetings on behalf of the ASUVCW NP Rosemary Martin.

It was my honor to represent Commander-in-Chief Kevin Martin and to pass along his greetings. I made a few opening remarks, on the following national topics:

- Ongoing discussions at the C of A to define "blood relative" as it pertains to eligible lineage
- Legal disclaimer for the Graves Registration Database.
- Encouraged them to attend the National Encampment in August at Houston.
- Reminded them of our country's approaching 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- The importance of Juneteenth holiday as a distinctive holiday to which we are historically tied, made possible by sacrifices of our Union ancestors

I informed them that there are still some unclaimed original "Minutemen of '61 medals which the Dept of Massachusetts and the MA National Guard are making available to descendants of those soldiers of the first eight Massachusetts regiments who responded to President Lincoln's call for troops in April 1861.

I relayed the report from Jerry Orton, PDC, Dept of NY, that there is one Real Son left, William Pool of Bolivar, Missouri, who celebrated his 100th birthday in January; many of the Brothers in the Dept are aware of him. I encouraged them to send him cards and greetings.

I explained why I value my membership in the SUVCW. Unlike some other hereditary groups, we are outward-focused and actively promote patriotism and good citizenship in our communities. We restore and clean graves, and monuments, we erect new monuments, we perform lots of educational and living history events, etc. And I commended the Dept for their continuing activity in this regard.

### Officers' Reports:

DC: Please see the attached report

SVC: The SVC was active throughout the Dept, attending Camp meetings via Zoom, writing articles for the Dept newsletter, sending get-well cards, researching bonds for Dept officers (See new business, below).

JVC: The JVC was likewise very active, resurrecting and managing the Dept's social media presence. He reported that the Dept has got several new members through social media. He recommended that all Camps to set up local FB pages. He also managed a vigorous JROTC medal program.

Secretary/Treasurer: He reported Dept strength as 118 members, 3 junior, 4 dual. He noted that there was a decline in membership due to the recent drama. The Dept's balance is \$2,970.61 before national per capita.

Chaplain: He reported that two brothers passed away this business year, and he sent sympathy cards to both families.

Historian: He is continuing to conduct a survey of GAR posts in Dept's territory, and has compiled a biography book of GAR Dept Commanders. He is likewise continuing to conduct a survey of SUVCW Camps. He also actively maintains the Dept scrapbook.

GAR Hwy Officer: He was very active this year and conducted a complete survey of all GAR highway signages in the Dept's territory, end-to-end. All signs were found to be in excellent or good condition. A photo survey of all signs was accomplished and the photos are posted on the Dept website. He presented three recommendations: (1) The Dept from time to time renew efforts w/ CO Legislature to erect signs at state borders (2) the Dept GAR Hwy Officer annual conduct annual survey to ensure properly maintained or replaced, (3) append report to minutes of Encampment. I recommended he send his report to the National GAR Highway Officer.

Eagle Scout Coordinator: He made each Camp Commander aware of all Scout troops in their respective areas and urged them to reach out to the troops. He noted that some troops have Eagle Scout Court-of-Honor packets and had successfully got SUVCW info included therein. I found this to be a great idea and recommend that it be forwarded to the National Eagle Scout coordinator for dissemination to all Depts and Camps.

Signals Officer: He is actively running the Dept website and coordinating with the National Signals Officer to ensure that all links accurately point to the Dept.

#### Camp Commander Reports:

##### Camp 1, Salt Lake City, UT

- The Camp is in good health and active throughout northern Utah, but suffered a significant membership loss this year due to the drama.
- The Camp participated in a memorial event at Utah State Capitol to honor Henry Wells Jackson, only Utahn to lose his life in the Civil War.
- The Camp held a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event.

##### Camp 2, Montana

- The Camp has struggled this year due to the drama. 10 members in MT left; 6 remain. The Camp leadership is actively trying to get the members back.

##### Camp 3, Wyoming

- The Camp is in good health and active throughout Wyoming, a huge geographic area.
- They have found 10 Union veteran graves in Mount Hope Cemetery, 25 in Cheyenne, and 7 on FE Warren AFB, and have noted these in the Dept Graves database. I advised the Camp to get with NGRO to make sure they are also documented in the national database.
- Presented a number of Eagle Scout and JROTC awards
- Participated in RootsTech

##### Camp 7, Grand Junction, CO

- The Camp is in good health and active in Grand Junction. Orchard Mesa cemetery remains the major focal point for the Camp.

- They placed flags in cemeteries in Grand Junction, Mesa, Fruita CO for Memorial Day. Throughout the year members assessed gravestone condition, cleaned several as required.

Camp 10, Cañon City, CO

- This is a recently chartered camp in southern CO (a rejuvenation of a defunct camp). The Camp is in good health and active and already participating in ceremonies and events in the local area.
- The Camp requested assistance to help Cañon City acquire the monument to Union Civil War veterans that had been removed from the state capitol in 2021 (consists of a statue and napoleon cannon). The monument is currently stored at the History Colorado (formerly Colorado Historical Society) which apparently desires to keep it in storage. This sparked a good discussion on the situation and possible way forward.

Camp 15, Utah

- No report submitted. This Camp was formed out of Camp 1 due to the drama.

Camp 43, Idaho Falls, ID

- The Camp has struggled this past year due to the drama, including the resignation of the Camp Commander. Most remaining members are in western ID and would prefer to establish a new Camp in Boise.
- Despite the challenges, the Camp has identified the last veterans in counties in southern ID and has applied for several VA gravestones. The Camp members also discovered GAR monuments in Sheridan MT, Odgen UT that are not in the national database. They were advised to fill out the Form 62 to document the monuments.

Camp 100, Denver CO area

- The Camp is in good health and active.

Unfinished business: None

New Business:

- Rootstech Convention report. The report was made to the Dept and will be included in the Department's annual report. Overall, this was a great success. The Dept submitted an after-action report to the National Marketing & Promotions Committee. 15,000 persons attended in person; several million online. There was excellent attendance at the SUVCW booth. A number of people made requests for membership info which were forwarded to JVCinC Murray who then forwarded them to Depts. Brothers were interviewed by SLC TV. Several Brothers were interviewed for podcasts.
  - o The Virtual Booth is still available online.
  - o Dept Recommendation: National to sponsor a booth at 2026 Rootstech. Moved and passed.
- Bonding for Camp Officers. SVC reported on his research on bonding, as well as quotes from two surety firms. I reminded them to refer to the CC&A regulations regarding bonding requirements. Some Camps will find it a financial burden to bond their officers; one Brother announced his intent to get a bond himself. (As a notable aside, the discussion also addressed the need for Camp and Dept Councils to exercise their check and balance role on their respective officers, especially those with financial responsibilities.)
  - o Motion that the Dept Council be appointed to study this topic in depth and report to the Dept Commander in 90 days. After much discussion, passed (as amended below)
  - o Amendment: Allow reps to Camps to participate as nonvoting members. Passed.
- Dept Dues. Currently at \$3 per year. Deemed by the Dept as limiting Dept activities.
  - o Motion to increase Dept dues to \$5. Tabled to allow Camps to discuss first.

DC Neu presented a number of awards:

- Certificate of Commendation: Monroe McBride, Ken Jacobsen in recognition for their work at RootsTech.

- Certificate of Commendation: Monroe McBride for his service as Dept Chaplain
- Challenge coin: Wally Weart for Dept website and newsletter
- Tokens of Appreciation (Dept of CO&WY coasters): to Dept officers
- Dept of CO&WY coasters to CinC Kevin Martin (accepted on his behalf by BP)

Officer Nominations, Elections & Installation:

Nominations for the elected officers of the Department. All were unopposed and elected by acclaim:

- Commander: Bill Neu
- Sr. Vice Commander: Lee Atkins
- Jr. Vice Commander: Ken Jacobsen
- Secretary/Treasurer: Jim Barker
- Council: Ross Gorman
- Council: David Doryland
- Council: Gene Cheney

Delegates to the National Encampment were elected as follows:

- Ken Jacobsen
- Dave Doryland

All Brothers of this Department in good standing at the time of the Encampment were elected as Alternates to the National Encampment.

The officers were duly installed according to the Rituals and Ceremonials of the Order.

The Encampment was closed in accordance with the Rituals and Ceremonials of the Order.

After the encampment, a docent conducted a guided tour of Fort Caspar for the members, which provided an excellent overview of Army life at a frontier fort.

Conclusion:

Despite the recent challenges they have endured, I find that the Brothers of the Department of CO&WY have remained active and dedicated to the goals and mission of the SUVCW. They are dedicated and freely and enthusiastically give of their time and efforts. The Dept is looking forward to celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2029.

DC Neu, the Dept officers and all of the Brothers at the Encampment are united in their vision to look to the future and focus on continuing the good works of the Order. This commitment convinces me that they will long continue to be a valuable part of the Order.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

BP

Brian C. Pierson, PCinC