

**Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
General Orders No. 1
Series 1994-1995
Keith G. Harrison, Commander-in-Chief
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1. I wish to express my appreciation to the delegates to the 113th National Encampment in Lansing, Michigan., for electing me as Commander-in-Chief. I look forward to an exciting and productive year.
2. I wish also to express the gratitude of the National Organization to all the Michigan Department Brothers who again out-did themselves in hosting an excellent National Encampment.
3. All correspondence to this office should be sent to the above address. For those Brothers who have E-mail or fax capabilities, you may also send your correspondence through these media. Requisitions for supplies should be mailed directly to the National Quartermaster, PC-in-C Elmer Atkinson. Address changes should be processed through your Camps and Departments and sent to National Secretary David Wallace.
4. Standing and Special National Committee appointments for 1994-95 have been made. This year will be different from previous years in that I am requesting that each committee chair keep me and, therefore, the Order informed of his committee's activities and progress on a quarterly basis rather than waiting until the end of the year to report. Committee quarterly progress reports are due by the following dates: 19 November 1994; 17 February 1995; 19 February 1995; and at the National Encampment in August 1995. The last quarterly report should summarize the preceding quarters plus provide information specific to the last quarter.
5. All too often in the past, I have seen Camps and Departments flounder for lack of consistent advice from the National Organization. Probably one of the most common problems which has occurred over the years has been a lack of consistent interpretations of the Order's Constitution and Regulations because of multiple Brothers providing their "opinions." The Order has a National Counselor and it is he who has this responsibility for the National Organization. I have requested that all interpretations prepared by the National Counselor be summarized periodically in the Banner this year for the benefit of all Brothers.
6. In a related matter, the time has come also for Brothers within our Order to stop offering advice without first checking to see what is said about the issue in the Order's Constitution and Regulations. We can no longer depend on how something was done five, ten, or twenty years ago. Our Constitution and Regulations are constantly changing; so too should our application of them. I would strongly advise all National, Department, and Camp officers to obtain and read the most recent copy of the Order's Constitution and Regulations. This document may be obtained through the office of the National Quartermaster, PC-in-C Elmer Atkinson.
7. Proposed amendments to Articles III, V, and VII of the National Constitution were passed at the 112th National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. The proposed amendments were ratified by a sufficient number of Departments pursuant to the National Constitution and become effective with the publication of these General Orders. The specific changes to Articles III, V, and VII of the National Constitution are presented below.

- Article III

Eligibility to Membership

- All male descendants, whether through lineal or collateral line of ages specified in Article VIII of this Constitution who are blood relatives of soldiers, sailors, marines or members of the Revenue Cutter Service, who were regularly mustered and served honorably in, were honorably discharged from, or died in the service of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Revenue Cutter Service of the United States of America or such State regiments as were called into active service and were subject to orders of the United States general officers, during the War of the Rebellion between April 12, 1861, and April 9, 1865; who have never been convicted of any infamous or heinous crime; and who have, or whose ancestors through whom membership is claimed have, never voluntarily borne arms against the Government of the United States of America shall have eligibility to membership.
- Article V
- Organization
 - Section 1. The several constituted bodies of the Order shall be as follows:
 - Fifth. Eligibles from states where no Department exists may become members-at-large attached to National Headquarters. Dues for such members shall not be less than five dollars (\$5.00) per annum more than the National per capita tax. Membership application fees for new members-at-large shall not be less than five dollars (\$5.00) which shall be placed in the Permanent Fund.
- Article VII
- Membership
- Section 1. Membership classes. There shall be three (3) classes of membership.
 - (a) Members. Males at least fourteen (14) years of age who meet the qualifications stipulated in Article III of this Constitution and Section 5 of the Articles of Incorporation. Members enjoy all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of membership.
 - (b) Life Members. Members who have paid the requisite Life Membership fee as established by the National Organization. Life Members are exempt from the National per capita tax and otherwise, enjoy all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership.
 - (c) Honorary Membership. The Commander-in-Chief, upon recommendation from a Camp, Department, or the National Council of Administration and with the approval of the National Council of Administration, may grant honorary memberships to persons of acknowledged eminence who are especially distinguished for conspicuous and consistent loyalty to the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, and who have been active and eminent in maintaining the supremacy of the same and are known not to be eligible for membership in our Order. The National Organization, Departments, and Camps shall not impose the per capita tax, fees, dues, or any other monetary assessment on Honorary Members. Honorary Members are entitled to a free subscription to the Banner.
- Section 2. Associates.
- There shall be one class of Associates. Associates are males at least fourteen (14) years of age who do not meet the qualifications stipulated in Article III of this Constitution and Section 5 of the Articles of Incorporation but otherwise meet the requirements for membership established by the National Organization. The number of Associates in any Camp shall not exceed one-third (1/3) of the total roster of the Camp at the time of election. At no time during a meeting of a Camp, a Department, or the National Organization shall business be transacted if the number of Associates in attendance exceeds forty-nine per cent (49%) of the total attendance then present at said meeting. Associates may not be elected, appointed, or otherwise assume the offices of Commander-in-Chief, Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, junior Vice Commander-in-Chief, National Secretary, National Treasurer or be appointed Commanding Officer of the Sons of Veterans Reserve. Associates shall not be counted toward the required number of members to establish a new camp. The names of Associates may not appear on the Camp charter nor may Associates be designated as Charter Members of the Camp. Associates otherwise enjoy all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of membership.
- Section 4. Establishment of Associates by Departments and Camps.

- Departments, at their own discretion, may establish Associates. Departments may impose further restrictions on Associates, provided that the rights established in Chapter V, Article VI of the National Regulations may not be altered, reduced, or vacated. If a Department specifically establishes Associates by amending its bylaws, Camps within said Department may amend the Camp by-laws and establish Associates. Camps may impose further restrictions in accordance with the provisions of the Department by-laws and provided that the rights established in Chapter V, Article VI of the National Regulations may not be altered, reduced, or vacated. If a Department does not establish Associates, Camps within the Department's jurisdiction may not establish Associates.
- Section 5. A member in good standing upon written application to his Camp shall be entitled to receive a Transfer Card or Honorable Discharge, and, if his Camp be disbanded or suspended shall be entitled to receive a Transfer Card from the Commander of the Department.

8. Departments and Camps-at-Large are hereby ordered to submit a copy of their most recent set of bylaws to National Counselor James B. Pahl no later than 1 January 1995. The bylaws will be reviewed for conformity to the most recent edition of the Order's Constitution and Regulations.

9. The 1993-94 National Committee on Program and Policy did not have an opportunity to finish its review of all of the Order's forms last year. As a consequence, I would request that the 1994-95 Committee review the remaining forms. In particular, I would request that the Committee look specifically at Forms 23 and 26 (Organizer's Report and Charter Application, respectively). The current process for establishing and chartering new camps is very cumbersome and requires adherence to many outdated and/or unnecessary procedures. I would request that the Committee propose a simplified and streamlined process which would be consistent with the Order's Constitution and Regulations. A single new form consolidating the procedures with clear and concise instructions (possibly a checklist) would be preferred. I am requesting that recommendations regarding the Camp organization forms be submitted by 17 February 1995.

10. Brothers are urged to contribute to the Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief's fund again this year. The Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief's fund is used to pay for recruitment advertising in national publications. This program has resulted, in part, in our Order's large membership increases in recent years. Donations should be sent to Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief David Medert, 16 Shawnee Drive, Chillicothe, Ohio 45601-1148. Your checks should be made payable to: "National Organization, SUVCW."

11. Brothers are also urged to send donations to National Patriotic Instructor Danny Wheeler for the Order's Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Memorial Fund. Monies from this fund help to pay for the Order's patriotic programs which perpetuate the memory of the GAR. Donations may be sent to Brother Wheeler at 501 Willow Ave., Ithaca, New York 14850. Again, your checks should be made payable to: "National Organization, SUVCW."

12. My itinerary for 1994 and 1995 has filled quickly. I would strongly encourage Departments who desire the presence of the Commander-in-Chief at their annual encampments to get their invitations in soon. For fairness reasons, I will book on a first-come, first-serve basis.

13. On behalf of the Order, I would like to extend congratulations to all the new Presidents of the four other Allied Orders of the GAR: Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Ladies of the GAR, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and the Women's Relief Corps. I look forward to working this year with all four organizations on behalf of our Order.

14. As we begin what I hope will be a highly productive year, I wish to outline a vision which I would like to see our Order promote. As an Order we have always tried to emulate the GAR in many of our actions and deeds. Unfortunately, I feel that we have been emulating the declining rather than the productive years of the GAR. I would submit that this is the wrong way to remember the GAR. Most of us were not around when the GAR was in full bloom and so never had the opportunity to observe firsthand the vigor and vitality of that

organization. Before the GAR ranks were filled with a few tired old veterans resigned to the fact that their organization was dying, the GAR was a large, highly visible, enthusiastic and energetic organization filled with young men with unconquerable dreams. If our Order is to fulfill what the GAR created it to fulfill, we must first change how we view ourselves as an Order. The SUVCW was created to be a perpetual organization, forever living on as successive generations of sons are born. It was intended to be vibrant, innovative, and, therefore, effective in its dealings. It was intended to be an organization which would emulate the GAR not during its waning years but during its height of influence. I, therefore, implore you to become active in your local communities and in your states. Get out and promote, on behalf of the SUVCW and the GAR, local Civil War-related or even non-Civil War-related community projects. Get involved in projects with our contemporary veterans' organizations. Promote the memory of the GAR and its members' deeds through our actions. With this kind of visibility and activity, we can and will succeed in keeping the significance and the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic alive and, most importantly, continually in the eyes of the American public.

15. Another area in which I would like to see our Order continue to excel is in the increased recruitment of younger members. For many years, our Order has been, literally, a retirement Order. This has changed during the last several years with the increase of younger members and the dropping of the average age of our membership. This kind of recruiting must be continued, for, as previously stated, this is a perpetual organization and must be constantly infused with younger members if it is going to remain viable.

16. The last major area of change I would like to see this year is an increased use of computers and electronic communications throughout our Order. It has been really only in the last three to four years that our Order has even begun to use computers to assist it in its operations; however, we have made great strides in these few years. I intend this year to advocate for even greater use of such tools in the Order's daily operation. I would strongly recommend that Departments and Camps begin to consider the same. Along these lines, I have appointed a limited-term special committee to develop guidelines to help ensure that we all remain compatible in terms of our software. I am requesting that this committee provide its recommendations by 17 February 1995.

17. Finally it is my hope that this year will be a highly productive year of even more progress and positive changes for the Order. I look forward to working with all Camp, Department and National office-holders in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty.

By Order of:
Keith G. Harrison
Commander-in-Chief

Attest:
David F. Wallace
National Secretary

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