



Kevin L. Martin
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Getting to Juneteenth – Challenges Then and Challenges Now

Tomorrow, June 19, marks that day in 1865 when Major General Gordon Granger ordered the final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas. Although well over two years after President Lincoln's issuance of that famed Executive Order in January of 1863, our brave ancestors had remained stalwart and steadfast to the very end of the bloody conflict. Their commitment to the Union cause showcased what I believe clearly defines the "American Spirit" - facing and overcoming challenges – no matter how daunting.

My Brothers, as an Organization committed to honoring the service of the courageous and valiant "Boys in Blue," we too face many formidable challenges. The ever-increasing economic, societal and familial demands placed on us in our communities are a reality which we must recognize as we develop strategies to not only recruit but also retain new members in our Order. To be successful, we must ensure that our approaches offer Brothers pursuits they feel worthy of their time and energy – things of value to them that they will willingly embrace and commit their time to.

Therefore, I ask you to take a fresh and close look at those endeavors your Camps currently conduct. Do they inspire active participation? Are our activities giving our Brothers a personal sense of accomplishment that they are proud to share with their neighbors and community? These and other questions are necessary elements in any legitimate assessment – and the answers to those questions must be earnestly embraced for us to successfully meet head-on the challenges of today and tomorrow. Frankly, the future of our Order depends on it.

So Ordered this 18 Day of June, 2025.

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Attest:

Alan L. Russ

Alan L. Russ, PDC
National Secretary
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War