



**Kevin L. Martin**  
**Commander in Chief**  
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## **Their Sense of Duty, Our Sense of Duty**

My Brothers, as my term of office as your Commander-in-Chief is rapidly coming to a conclusion, my thoughts have been drawn even closer to the history of our Order, the Grand Army of the Republic and more so, to the legacy and vestiges of all the men who fought for the Union cause. In doing so I remembered that tomorrow, Friday, July 18, marks the 162<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Regiment's fateful 1863 assault on Fort Wagner. Although repulsed, the attacking troops were heralded for their valor and received widespread praise. Highly-regarded historians credit this with encouraging many more African-Americans to enlist, allowing the Union to utilize manpower the Confederacy simply could not match. One fact is irrefutable - the bravery, heroism, courage and gallantry of that storied regiment was on full display that momentous day, but what strikes me most about them is illustrated by one phrase – their sense of duty.

That “sense of duty” endures today with the work of our Order. Although storming a well-defended position is not in the cards for us, our obligation to honor each and every defender of the Union cause is no less noble. This past year I have personally witnessed countless examples of Brothers going “above and beyond the call of duty” to achieve that very goal. Our ranks are blessed with those who have committed themselves to our Order, asking nothing in return. This, my Brothers, is that “sense of duty” of which I speak.

Every man who stood proudly in our nation's time of need mattered – regardless of rank. Brothers, in that same vein, it makes no difference your rank or position in our Order. Each of you bring tremendous value to our organization. Therefore, be it at the Camp, Department or National level, I appeal to you to join with your fellow Brothers by engaging and giving of yourself as much as you can. The ultimate success of our forefathers depended so much on their commitment and I am convinced our Order's future accomplishments rely on yours.

So Ordered this 17<sup>th</sup> Day of July, 2025.

*Kevin L. Martin*

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Attest:

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