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## **Suggestions For Making Camp Meetings Events That Brothers Won't Want To Miss**

Brothers,

One of the most important responsibilities you carry as Camp Commanders is to make your meetings something that your Camp Brothers look forward to attending. A well-run Camp meeting should inspire, educate, and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. To help you in this work, I offer the following strategies:

### **1. Balance Business with Brotherhood**

- Keep routine reports concise and circulate written summaries ahead of time.
- Dedicate meeting time to meaningful discussions and decisions.
- Build in space for fraternity—whether through refreshments, informal conversation, or shared meals.

### **2. Add Historical and Educational Value**

- Invite guest speakers such as historians, authors, or living historians.
- Encourage Brothers to share the stories of their Union ancestors.
- Consider holding meetings at historic sites, cemeteries, or museums tied to our Order's mission.

### **3. Create Opportunities for Engagement**

- Incorporate interactive elements—Q&A, trivia, or collaborative projects.
- Give newer Brothers meaningful roles to help them feel included and valued.
- Connect meetings to service: graves registration, monument preservation, or planning memorial observances.

### **4. Honor Tradition While Embracing Brotherhood**

- Open and close meetings with the SUVCW ritual, which lends dignity and continuity.

- Recognize Brothers for their contributions and milestones.
- Remember that recognition fosters loyalty and attendance.

## 5. Keep It Fresh

- Vary meeting formats: mix traditional business sessions with program-heavy or heritage-focused gatherings.
- Offer hybrid participation for Brothers unable to attend in person.
- Occasionally hold joint meetings with neighboring Camps to broaden fraternity.

Brothers, the goal of every Camp meeting is to ensure that each member leaves feeling three things:

1. *I learned something.*
2. *I contributed to something meaningful.*
3. *I enjoyed being with my fellow descendants of Union veterans.*

If you can create that experience, your Brothers will not want to miss a single gathering.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kevin P. Tucker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Kevin P. Tucker**

Commander-in-Chief, SUVCW

# Suggested Camp Meeting Formats

## 1. Business-Light with Program Focus (approx. 90 minutes)

(Good for regular monthly meetings)

### Opening (30 minutes)

- Ritual Opening for Camp Meetings
- Roll call, minutes, Secretary and Treasurer reports (brief summaries, circulate full written reports in advance)
- Report of sick Brothers or a Brother's family in distress.
- Reports of visiting committee.
- Reports of investigating committees.
- Reading of applications from candidates for membership and reference of same to investigating committees.
- Balloting for candidates for membership.
- Initiation of candidates for membership
- Committee reports
- Reading and disposing of orders, communications and bills.
- Unfinished business.
- New business.
- Election and installation of officers.
- Good of the Order. (announcements and reminders.)
- Patriotic Instructor Report.

### Business (10 minutes)

- Updates on ongoing projects (graves registration, ceremonies, outreach)
- Quick recognition of Brothers' contributions

### Program (30 minutes)

- Guest speaker (local historian, author, Civil War reenactor, genealogist) **or**
- Member spotlight on their Civil War ancestor's service
- Q&A discussion

### Fraternity (15 minutes)

- Coffee, snacks, and informal conversation
- Encourage Brothers to bring a piece of memorabilia (badge, photo, relic) for "show & tell"

### Closing (5 minutes)

- Ritual closing
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## **2. Heritage & Service Event Agenda** (approx. 90 minutes)

(Use quarterly or seasonally for variety)

### **Gathering** (10 minutes)

- Welcome & ritual opening
- Brief check-in and updates
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### **On-Site Activity** (45 minutes)

- Grave cleaning, wreath-laying, or flag replacement at a cemetery
- Monument rededication or historic marker tour

Joint event with another heritage group (DAR, VFW, Legion, reenactors, historical society)

### **Discussion/Reflection** (10 minutes)

- Short program on the site's significance
- Reading of names, roll of honor, or Civil War letter excerpts

### **Meal & Fraternity** (20+ minutes)

- Potluck picnic or dinner at a local restaurant afterward
- Informal Camp bonding time

### **Closing** (5 minutes)

- Ritual closing (can be abbreviated if outdoors)
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## **3. Hybrid/Virtual-Friendly Agenda**

(Good for winter months or when Brothers live far apart)

### **Opening** (30 minutes)

- Ritual Opening for Camp Meetings
- Roll call, minutes, Secretary and Treasurer reports (brief summaries, circulate full written reports in advance)
- Report of sick Brothers or a Brother's family in distress.
- Reports of visiting committee.
- Reports of investigating committees.
- Reading of applications from candidates for membership and reference of same to investigating committees.
- Balloting for candidates for membership.
- Initiation of candidates for membership Committee reports
- Reading and disposing of orders, communications and bills.
- Unfinished business.
- New business.
- Good of the Order. (announcements and reminders.)
- Patriotic Instructor Report.

**Interactive Program (30 minutes)**

- Virtual Civil War site tour (share screen)
- Trivia quiz or “ancestor spotlight” slideshow
- Genealogy workshop with Q&A

**Fraternity (15 minutes)**

- Announcements
- Open floor for casual conversation (helps virtual Brothers connect)

**Closing (5 minutes)**

- Ritual closing