



**Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War**

**Office of the Commander-in-Chief**

**Donald L. Martin**

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**General Order #8**

**SERIES 2016-2017**

**13 October 2016**

1. The 2016 National Encampment passed the following in regards to the extra postage required to mail the Banner to our Brothers in International Camps.

*From Committee on Constitution and Regulations- “ Page 30 Section 11: Once a brother becomes a member of an International Camp, **such brother shall pay his National Per Capita, plus an amount set by the Council of Administration to cover the additional Banner mailing costs, to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the same as if the brother was a member of a Camp of the Order. Such payment is to be forwarded to the National Organization, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War through the International Camp in the same fashion as a National Camp-at-Large. [ACTION: Executive Director]***

2. In compliance with the National Encampment the Council of Administration passed the following after much debate, compromise and over some dissension. A means to save our Brothers from paying the high amount of additional postage was provided.

*The Council of Administration establishes the following additional fees to cover the costs of mailing a hard copy edition of the Banner that apply only to brothers in International Camps: \$25 for Camps in Europe, \$21 for Camps in Asia, and \$12 for Camps in Canada. **In lieu of paying the additional fee for delivery of a hard copy edition of the Banner, on top of the full National Per Capita, members of International Camps may elect in writing, including electronic communications, to only receive access to an electronic version of the Banner. In no way does this action affect the cost or manner of receipt of the Banner for brothers who reside in the United States or who are in the Military overseas.***

3. After passage the argument was still maintained that the CofA could not authorize the sending of an electronic version of the Banner, so I asked an Opinion from the National Counselor. His following Opinion #2 reads as follows:

*I was asked by the Commander-in-Chief on 6 October 2016 to offer an Opinion regarding the vote of the CofA on emailing the BANNER to the members of the UK Camp. In that vote the CofA stated that the members of the UK Camp could receive the BANNER via email if they made a request in writing.*

*Those members, save one who is blind, have to a man made such a request. One question that has arisen is that the BANNER cannot be sent via email based on a vote of the National Encampment. I have gone back to each of the PROCEEDING from each of the Encampments beginning from 2000 (The word BANNER/banner is mentioned roughly 35 times per issue).*

*In the 2007 PROCEEDINGS, (Brother Pahl's administration Page 127 as numbered or 146 as the computer has it) PCinC Steve Michaels reporting as the BANNER editor reports that "last year the CofA requested advance copies of the BANNER be emailed saving money. He, PCinC Michaels, further reported that "Beginning with the Spring BANNER advance copies would be emailed to all but 3 CofA members. Three PCinC without email capability continue to receive their advance copy issued by 1st class mail.*

*In the 2010 PROCEEDINGS (PCinC Kennedy's administration page 212) Brother Mabie from the Department of California and Pacific made a motion to place the BANNER and all SUVCW Forms on the web site so that members could download them. After a long discussion Brother Mabie withdrew the BANNER portion of the motion and moved that the Forms be made available electronically.*

*There was also an increase of \$5.00 to the per capita dues at that Encampment. But the motion did not state that the money was to go toward the publication of the BANNER. Later in that same 2010 PROCEEDINGS (Page 277) after MUCH Discussion a motion was made "The BANNER be available on line. Any Brother wishing to have a printed copy of the BANNER will be paying for it with costs." This motion failed BECAUSE it would require the members to pay for their BANNER, IF they wished to have a hard copy rather than read it on the website.*

*I further checked the BANNER Policy written 20 March 2009 and approved by the CoA 4/18/2009 and NOWHERE is the any mention that the BANNER cannot be sent electronically.*

*Furthermore I went over both the Constitution and Regulations 4 times, checking not only BANNER/Banner/banner but anything linking that word to per capita. There is no mention that the BANNER could NOT be sent electronically. As the C&R is updated every year, if there was a vote stating the prohibition it would have appeared in a footnote.*

*Finally I also reviewed and searched BANNER/Banner/banner in the "Digest of the Order" (August 2004). There is no mention of the BANNER in this Digest so there is also no prohibition. For those of you that haven't read the Digest, it is full of a ton of historical information, and worth the read.*

*So I have given all the historical and legal votes of the Encampments as written in the approved PROCEEDS, It is my opinion that*

- 1. The C&R is mute on the subject of electronically transmitting the BANNER.*
- 2. There has not been a vote since 2000 at a National Encampment prohibiting electronically transmitting the BANNER.*
- 3. There was report on the 2007 Encampment permitting the electronic transmission of the BANNER to certain members as a way to save money, thus setting a precedent for such action that I will also state continues to happen to this day.*
- 4. The BANNER Policy of 2009, approved by the CofA does not forbid the electronic transmission of the BANNER. Thus it is my Opinion as National Counselor that the vote of the CofA regarding this matter is correct and is NOT in conflict with the C&R, The BANNER Policy, the vote of any Encampment in this century, and has been set by precedent.*

*Thus it is my Opinion as National Counselor that the vote of the CofA regarding this matter is correct and is NOT in conflict with the C&R, The BANNER Policy, the vote of any Encampment in this century, and has been set by precedent.*

*In F.C. & L*

*Donald E. Darby, PCinC*

*National Counselor*

4. There remains opinion and concern in disagreement with the National Counselor's ruling on the legality of the CofA's authorization to send an electronic version of the Banner instead of a hard copy. I have examined the points of disagreement and have found no new definitive information presented that forbids sending the Banner electronically or overrides the National Counselor's Opinion #2.

I am in total agreement with the National Counselor's Opinion #2. Furthermore, as the "*the CofA requested advance copies of the BANNER be emailed saving money*" It seems hypocritical to allow the CofA to request an electronic copy to save money but not allow our Brothers in overseas Camps the same option.

The motion passed by the CofA does not mandate that Brothers WILL receive the Banner electronically. It allows a Brother to CHOOSE his preferred way to receive the Banner and not have to pay additional postage for it. We are after all, a bottom up organization and Brothers should be able to make this choice.

The Constitution and Regulations are not clear on the subject of sending an electronic version of the Banner but they do give the Commander in Chief the ability to make rulings when he deems the C&R is not clear.

5. I hereby rule in agreement with the National Counselor that the vote of the CofA is NOT in conflict with the C&R and that the CofA is correct in stating “*In lieu of paying the additional fee for delivery of a hard copy edition of the Banner, on top of the full National Per Capita, members of International Camps may elect in writing, including electronic communications, to only receive an electronic version of the Banner.*”

The Banner Editor shall email Brothers in International Camps an electronic version of the Banner once a Brother has made his request as per the CofA requirements.

Ordered this 13th Day of October, 2016.

Donald L. Martin  
Commander-In-Chief  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Attested:  
**Jonathan Davis**  
Secretary, National Order,  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

***You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will.  
War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it...  
~ William Tecumseh Sherman***