

Brothers,

We once again met in fellowship to break bread together for Camp Mess on Tuesday, 8 September 2015, at 12:30 PM in Calhoun's on the Creek Restaurant in Maryville, TN. Attending were CC David McReynolds, PCC George Lane, guest Ollie Keller, Max Renfro, JVC Steve Wallace, DC Mike Downs, Treasurer Bob Wallace, Sam Wilson, Richard Holmes, and straggling in at the end PDC Craig Brown.

We were in a celebratory mood as the camp won two prestigious national awards and the department one more at the recent National Encampment of the SUVCW in Richmond, VA. The Department of Tennessee was awarded the Grant Cup as the department with the largest percentage growth in membership from 2013-2014 to 2014-2015. Our McTeer Camp won the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief's Award as the most outstanding camp in the SUVCW for 2014-2015. The camp was also presented the Horace Greeley Award for the most outstanding camp website in the SUVCW! Those of us in attendance were very honored and we could not have achieved these awards without the many contributions made by our members. Over the course of the year, 32 different individuals attended at least one meeting or event, many volunteering significant time to the growth of our camp and, more importantly, to our purpose to preserve the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic and the sacrifices made to save our great Union!

We discussed the upcoming quarterly meeting to be held at Dead End BBQ on Monday, 21 September 2015, starting at 6:30 PM. Dr. Aaron Astor of Maryville College will be providing what will be a very interesting educational program. Let's do our best to get as many members as possible to attend. The meeting is also open to members of the Polly Toole Auxiliary No. 17 and to prospective new members of our camp and auxiliary. And all family members are welcome.

Despite the rain, we did make a few contacts at the East Tennessee History Day and Fair on 15 August 2015. CC McReynolds has sent an e-mail to the three people who expressed interest in the camp with the most recent newsletter attached. He gave a copy of the list to JVC Wallace for further follow-up. There was one person who expressed interest in the Auxiliary and she will be followed up with as the auxiliary sets up an organizational meeting very soon. There was also one person who expressed interest in the McTeer family and her contact information will be forwarded to camp member A. B. McTeer.

George Lane brought up the Battle of Blountville event. A couple of members expressed tentative interest in attending with George. We will have one or two members from upper East Tennessee participating as re-enactors. George asked for some kind of poster to promote our interest in members. If we could attract a few more, we may come up with a nucleus to start a new camp in the Tri-cities area. Max Renfro volunteered to work on a poster for the event.

We also plan to participate in the Fort Dickerson Living History Day activities on Saturday, 21 November 2015. We will need volunteers to man our tent and interact with the visitors at the event. George Lane will be cooking his red beans and rice for the re-enactors that night.

The Christmas parade is 5 December 2015. Roy Gamble will be providing the tractor to pull us and a trailer for us to ride on. We need to come up with whatever else. We will need our sign and those with uniforms should wear them. Flags too. We will discuss further at next month's lunch meeting.

The annual encampment is scheduled for Saturday, 7 November 2015, at the East Tennessee History Center and Museum on Gay Street in Knoxville starting at 1 PM. We will be meeting in conjunction with the Lucinda Heatherly Tent No. 10 of the Daughters of Union Veterans and our own Polly Toole Auxiliary No. 17. We will begin together for an educational presentation on the "Bridge Burners" by our own Tim Massey. We will then break up to meet in separate brief business meetings. Our focus will be to review our year and elect officers for 2016. CC McReynolds asked for volunteers for a Nominating Committee. George Lane and Mike Downs agreed to serve.

CC McReynolds announced the Camp Flag had arrived and will be debuted at the upcoming quarterly dinner meeting. It appears to be of excellent quality. We have ribbons for the two national awards to place with it on its pole for display. I think we will be very proud. We will order a matching US Flag that will also arrive by the time of the dinner which will bring us into full compliance with C&R on this issue. We have borrowed flags up until this time since our camp was chartered back in 2009.

CC McReynolds proposed sesquicentennial events for 2016 centered around Tennessee's readmission to the Union on 24 July 1866. We will make a proposal to SUCVW National to sanction our event. To do so we will relate it to the Presidential Proclamation by Tennessee's Andrew Johnson on 20 August 1866. It will also give us an opportunity to honor William Brownlow of Knoxville, who some have called Tennessee's Most Hated Governor, but who was responsible for getting Tennessee back into the Union as soon as possible and at least limiting the effect of Federal reconstruction efforts on the state. Mike Downs offered that the Department could participate as well making it a state wide event. George Lane asked for a brief description to take to the Sesquicentennial Commission to see if there are any funds left there to help.

PDC Charlie Engles asked that we consider adopting as a camp project the placement of a historical marker along highway 11 for Gertrude Janeway of Blaine, Tennessee who was the last widow of a Union soldier to die. Members present thought this to be a worthy project. We will develop a project plan and incorporate it into next year's activities. It is also something that the Daughters of Union Veterans and our auxiliary many be involved in as well.

Sam Gant made a great presentation about a monument to Southern Loyalists. This monument would be a major undertaking involving National and our Department as well as other Departments who represent states who contributed regiments to the Union armies. This monument would be located in Tennessee, likely East Tennessee, in recognition of the strong Union loyalty demonstrated by the citizens of the area and the many regiments raised to support the Union cause. Something to be excited about and something that we might help in attracting membership through the marketing efforts that will be required.

We finished the meeting by singing our Camp Song, "We are the Sons". CC McReynolds had posted an edited video on Facebook and our camp website, www.mcteer39.org, under the tab Camp Song. With practice, we can sing our song as we wave to the crowds during the Christmas Parade.

After continuing conversations and social interactions, the meeting broke up at 2 PM.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

David McReynolds

Commander, Major William A. McTeer Camp No. 39, SUCVW