

Stoneman Dispatch

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Of the Inland Empire, Department of California and Pacific

Email: camp18@suvpac.org Web: www.suvpac.org/camp18.html

Volume 17, No.1, January, 2026

Happy New Year - Welcome 2026

Attention Company!

A Message from the Camp Commander

Camp 18 Brothers,

Josie and I hope all of you and your families had a wonderful Christmas and New Year's Eve!

The start of 2026 will be quite busy for our Camp!

Rudy, my wife, Josie, and I have been invited to attend the inaugural meeting of the Sophronia Bucklin Tent in Riverside on Saturday, 10 January, which we both eagerly look forward to and hope to establish an active relationship with the members of their tent.

On Saturday, 7 February, we will set up our camp booth adjacent to the Lincoln Shrine to participate in the Annual Lincoln Shrine Open House event and educate the public about our Camp, our activities and the SUVCW as a whole.

On Friday-Saturday, 6-7 March is the 140th Department of California and Pacific Encampment in Bakersfield. I believe at least six camp members plan to attend (Josie and I are already registered). The Department will hold their annual elections during the meetings on Saturday.

Thursday, 9 April, is the 161st Anniversary of Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. Josie and I plan to place our camp wreath at the base of the GAR monument in the GAR/SAW Circle at Evergreen Cemetery to honor the

Continued of page 2, see Message, ...

Tentative Camp Calendar

Saturday, Feb. 7 – Camp Display at the Lincoln Memorial Shrine Open House, Redlands. 11:00 am – 3:00 pm.

Saturday, Feb. 21 – Camp Business meeting, American Legion Post 216, Corona, 10:00 am.

March 6-7, Friday & Saturday – 140th Annual Department Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans – Department of California & Pacific. More information on page 2, see **Encampment**.

Saturday, April 18 – Camp Business meeting, American Legion Post 216, Corona. 10:00 am.

Saturday, May 23 – Camp 18 Memorial Day Service and flag placement at Evergreen Cemetery, Riverside. More details to follow as we get closer to the date.

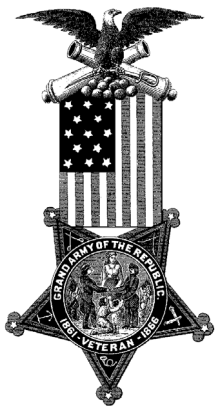
Annual Membership Dues

Brothers, we are close to the end of our annual membership renewal period, which ends on January 31st. We are waiting for only a few to remit.

Please return dues payment as soon as possible so Camp can return all membership paperwork to the Department and National by expected due date.

Let the Camp Secretary know if you have any issues or concerns.

Honoring the Boys in Blue.



*Dedicated to Preserving the Memory
of the Grand Army of the Republic
And the soldiers who Fought to Save the Union 1861 - 1865*



Message, continued,....

military service of our ancestors who helped bring an end to the war. We would be honored to have any available camp members join us! This will be a quick meeting starting 9:00 am and ending about 9:15 am.

On Saturday, 23 May, I will organize and lead the annual American flag detail at Evergreen Memorial, placing American flags on all the veteran graves in the cemetery. Afterwards is our Annual Camp 18 Memorial Day Ceremony.

VR,
Brother John

----- **Encampment** -----

We are all invited to attend the 140th Annual Encampment of the Department of California & Pacific – Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, to be held Friday & Saturday, March 6 – 7, 2026 at the **Four Points by Sheraton** in Bakersfield, CA.

As in most cases, the paperwork must be completed first. All necessary forms can be found on line at the SUVCW California and Pacific website under the headline “Encampment” or at the address below;

<https://suvpac.org/encampment/>

Quick Points;

Last date to make hotel room reservations at the Encampment discounted rate is 19 February, 5:00 pm.

“Early Bird” Encampment meeting registration of \$55.00 must be returned to Dept. Sr. Vice Commander by 24 January and Standard registration (\$65.00) after 24 January. Final deadline to submit registration and meal reservations is 20 February 2026.

All instructions are explained in the Announcement Letter which is included with the Encampment forms at the above highlighted web address.

If you haven't been to a Department Encampment, here is a typical schedule. Friday afternoons are open to sign in to the encampment registration and a few Dept. Officer meetings take place. The evenings turn into social hours in the lounge and dining areas where new friends are made and old friends catch up.

Saturday's Encampment meeting begins

between 8:00 and 9:00 am.

The lunch break begins between noon and 12:30 and is served in house. A few different sandwiches and salads are available and ordered on your registration form.

The meeting resumes about 1:30 and continues until about 4:00 pm or a little later.

Dinner is also served in house at 7:00 pm and your order is placed from a selection on the registration form

Dinner is usually followed with some form of entertainment and maybe a fundraiser auction or civil war related items for sale.

Usually, a great time is had by all. We hope to see you there.

**Institution of the
Sophronia Bucklin Tent 97
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War**

On Saturday, January 10th, Brother Rudy, and I, along with my wife Josie, attended the inaugural meeting of the Sophronia E. Bucklin Tent #97, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (our Sister unit) in Riverside.

Rudy represented Department Commander Owen Stiles, presenting greetings from both the Department of California and Pacific and from our Camp.

We invited Tent 97 to join us in our camp activities this year, to include the Lincoln Shrine event in February and our Annual Memorial Day Ceremony in late May.

Please join me in welcoming our new Sister unit, Sophronia E. Bucklin Tent #97 DUVCW, as we jointly honor the military service of our ancestors, the "Boys in Blue!"

VR,

John M. Morris
Commander, Camp 18

In Addition, other Daughters of Union Veterans guests attending;

Installation Officer **Lynn Robinson**, CA/NV
Department President,

Susan Zimmer, CA/NV Past Department
President & Tent 96 President,

Continued on page 3, see Tent 97,...

Tent 97 continued...

Sara Cochran, CA/NV Department Patriotic Instructor,
 Betsy Woodford, Tent 87 President & Jewel Van Loenen, Tent 90
 President.

A few more than 10 ladies transferred in as Charter Members
 of the Bucklin Tent #97 with one new member being Initiated and
 Meredith Teague installed as Tent President.

Congratulations to all!

In the photo below are Department and Tent Officers attending
 the Institution meeting. Photo Courtesy of Tent Sister Terrilee Wyatt
 pictured 5th from left. On the far right is Camp 18 Secretary Rudy
 Velasco PDC and 2nd from the right is Tent President Meredith
 Teague. Apologies, I was not introduced to all of the Sisters in the
 photo so I cannot name all therein.



2026 National Encampment

The 145th National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the
 Civil War and the Allied Orders will be held in Gettysburg, PA, July
 30 – August 2, 2026. More information is being added to the National
 website weekly. Please check on line for updates at;

<https://suvcw.org/national-encampment>

Holiday Meeting December 6, 2025

Camp 18's Holiday & Lunch meeting held at American Legion
 Post 216 in Corona was a great Success. Beside a bit of regular Camp
 business to attend to, our recently elected Camp Officers for 2026
 were installed by Past Department Commander Steve Doyle.

Continued on page 4, see Meeting...



**General George Stoneman Jr.
 Camp 18 Officers**

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Camp Commander, | John Morris |
| Sr. Vice Cmdr, | Steve Matthews |
| Jr. Vice Cmdr, | Gene Justin |
| Sec/Treas, | Rudy Velasco III |
| Camp Council #1 | Michael Emmett |
| Camp Council #2 | Rudolph Velasco IV |
| Camp Council #3 | Benny White |

Appointed

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Camp Chaplain | Matt Crowder PCC |
| Camp Historian | Burt Hogue |
| Camp Guide | vacant |
| Camp Guard | Steve Doyle PCC |
| Graves Registration | Michael Emmett |
| Newsletter Editor | Rudy Velasco III |
| Patriotic Instructor | Steve Doyle PDC |
| Eagle Scout & | |
| JROTC Coordinator | Rudy Velasco III |

If you have something of interest
 that you would like to add to this
 newsletter, something that our **Brothers**
 might enjoy like an article, a photo or a
 Civil War event, contact the Editor, Rudy
 Velasco for placement. rev03@dc.rr.com





Above from the left; Brother Burt Hogue, Post 216 Legioner, Matt Crowder PCC, Brian Stephen PCC, Brother Mike Emmett (kneeling), Brother Gene Justin, Riverside Fireman, Fireman, Fireman, Fireman, Rudy Velasco PDC (kneeling), Legioner, Legioner, Camp Cmdr John Morris & Steve Doyle PDC posing with the Toys for Tots that were picked by Riverside Fire Dept for distribution on 6 December 2025.

Meeting continued,

As in the past couple of years the Camp Brothers enjoyed an assortment of different sub sandwiches, cold salads, pies, cookies and other pastries. Lunch was very enjoyable.

The best part of the meeting was collecting the gifts for the Camp's "Spark of Love" Christmas toy collections. The Camp donated 30 unwrapped gifts to this year's toy drive. American Legion Post 216 members also collected and donated about 30 gifts.

Riverside Fire Department stopped by the Legion Hall to collect the donated gifts from the Legion Hall and Camp 18, hopefully helping make Christmas a bit happier for some local children,

Also at the meeting, Camp 18 Graves Registration Officer Mike Emmett was presented with a Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star from National SUVCW headquarters for outstanding work at finding and registering the final resting places of Union Civil War Soldiers. To date, Brother Emmett's total for 13 years of registering Union Soldier's graves is 8841. Part of that total, he added 667 graves to the SUVCW data base in 2025. Congratulations Brother Emmett!

A few words from Brother Mike Emmett November 2025

Hello All,

As the year is coming to an end, I wish to report on my activities to our Camp members.

Thanks to John Morris, in particular, as well as others,

I have been honored with a National award from Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. As of this writing, I have not received it, the Camp meeting takes place this coming Saturday, 6 December. I am looking forward to seeing many of you there. Currently, I have registered 8750 graves, nearly all Union soldiers, though I did early on register Confederates when I ran across them. I have submitted 589 Union soldiers this year and have another 30 waiting on my desk ready to register.

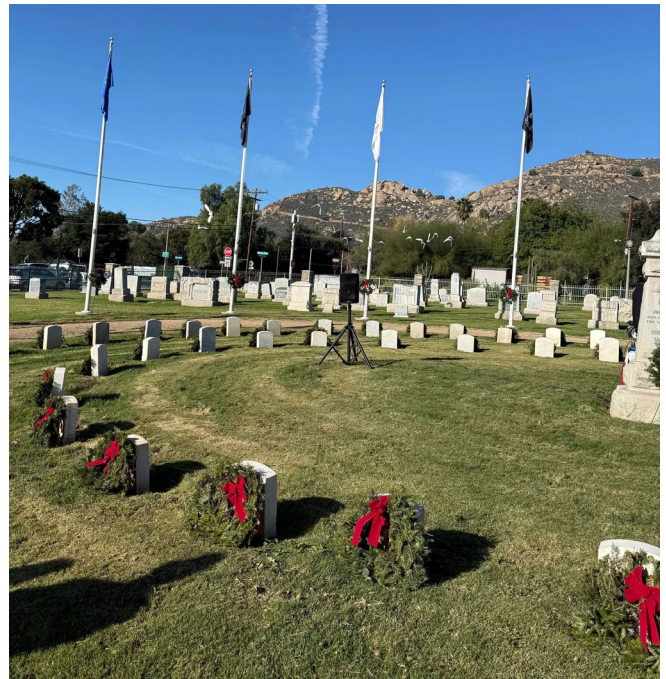
This past summer, as my wife and I generally do, we took a road trip. My son, Dr. Mike told me about a newly forming organization near Savannah, Georgia and asked me if I was interested... 4 young, noisy grandkids or a reasonably untouched battlefield? Well, we took for the day and when I got to South Carolina and I met the folks at the Honey Hill, South Carolina battlefield. I joined the organization and am now trying to wean my way into working within the organization from Montana as well as my annual visit to South Carolina. If any of you are interested, look up Friends of Honey Hill Battlefield on the web. They had some problems with the site early on but hopefully that is over. It is a small battlefield that was the scene of a small battle between some of Sherman's forces and local Confederate defenders. Any battlefield is a good battlefield in my book. I miss the Camp.

In F, C & L,

Mike Emmett



Above left; Brother Mike Emmett receives his National Award Certificate from Camp Cmdr. John Morris while Brother Brian Stephens PCC looks on.



ready for the ceremony to be held the following Saturday.

The ceremony began at 9:00 am in front of a crowd of close to 100 spectators who were also volunteering to place wreaths at the veteran's graves.

A few of the VIPs attending were Assembly woman Leticia Castillo representing California State Assembly District 58, Riverside City Ward 1 Council Member Phillip Falcone and Riverside City Ward 4 Council Member Chuck Coner.

Commander John opened the service with his introductions and moved the event along in typical fashion with key speakers of current military personal and cemetery officers.

Military personal presented wreaths to each of military flags flying over the GAR Circle escorted by Camp 18 Brothers.

Continued on page 6, see Wreaths,...

Wreaths Across America 13 December 2025

Plans for the 2025 Evergreen Memorial Park/Stoneman Camp 18 joint Wreaths Across America ceremony began probably at the end of last September.

The program began to get busy at the Camp's October 18th business meeting when Camp Cmdr. John Morris started passing out wreath sponsor forms. Participation was not mandatory. I believe November 28th was the last date to sponsor a wreath order. Evergreen Cemetery has 1075 veterans interred there.

It was a bit of a surprise when the sponsored wreath count was available on December 2nd and there were 1080 wreaths to be delivered to Evergreen Cemetery, all of the veterans would receive a wreath.

On Monday, 8 December Commander John, his wife Josie and Camp SVC Steve Matthews met at the cemetery to place flags at the veteran's graves.

On Tuesday, 9 December the delivery truck with the wreaths arrived at the cemetery and Commander John and cemetery personal unloaded 91 boxes of wreaths.

On Thursday, 11 December, cemetery staff placed wreaths at all of the headstones of the Civil War and Span Am veterans interred in the Grand Army of the Republic Circle there at Evergreen, getting the area



Camp participants from the left, Rick Luginbill, Rudy Velasco, Brian Stephens, Steve Matthews, Gene Justin, Matt Crowder, Bodie Crowder, Steve Doyle & CC John Morris.

Wreaths *continued*,

After closing remarks the Camp 18 musket squad fired three 3-round volleys followed by the playing of TAPs. A special ending was added this event with the Ceremonial releasing of white doves at the end of TAPs.

After the conclusion of the Service, Camp Commander John took charge of the volunteers placing wreaths making sure all were placed correctly.

Thank you to all Camp participants and volunteers and a special Thank you to the Camp Brothers who helped with sponsoring wreaths.

Veterans Day 2025

Camp 18's Veterans Day Service began on Friday 7 November with Camp Commander John and Josie Morris placing flags on veteran's graves at the G.A.R. Circle at Evergreen Memorial Park Cemetery,

The next morning, Saturday, Camp 18 members along with members of Pittenger Camp 21 carried out a joint Veterans Day ceremony.

Camp 18 Color Guard, Rudy Velasco, Benny White, Steve Matthews & Larry Duncan, presented the Colors during the playing of the National Anthem.

Matt Crowder PCC opened the ceremony with the Invocation followed with Opening remarks from Camp Commander Morris.

Camp 21 Brother Wayne Eder PCC read the poem "In Flander's Fields" and Camp 18 Brother Bodie Crowder reading the poem, "The Best on Earth."

Next, a joint presentation of the Camp 18 and Camp 21 wreaths to the Grand Army of the Republic monument by PDC Steve Doyle and PDC Jerry Sayre.

The Camp 18 Honor Guard, Rudy Velasco, Matt Crowder, Steve Matthews & Benny White, closed the ceremony with the firing of three 3-round volleys followed by the playing of TAPs.

Thanks to Bodie Crowder and all Camp 18 and Camp 21 Participants.

Photo right, Camp 21 Brothers Wayne Eder, left and Jerry Sayre on the right.


Camp Annual Calendar
 general idea/dates may change

2026 Calendar
January**February**

Saturday 7th - Lincoln Shrine Display, Redlands.

Saturday 21st - Camp Meeting. 10:00 am, Corona.

March

6th - 7th - **Friday & Saturday** - 140th Department Encampment, Bakersfield Calif. More info on line at; <https://suvpac.org/encampment/>

Wednesday, 25th - Medal of Honor Day - **no Camp event.**

April

Thursday 9th - 161st Anniversary of Lee's Surrender at Appomattox Court House.

Saturday 18th - Camp Meeting.

May

Saturday - 23rd, Memorial Day weekend Flag Detail and Service at Evergreen Cemetery, Riverside. More information to follow.

June

Saturday 20th - Camp Meeting

July**August**

July 30 - Aug. 2nd - 145th National Encampment of the SUVCW, Gettysburg, PA.

Saturday 15th - possible Camp meeting.

September**October**

Saturday 17th - Camp Meeting.

November

Veterans Day Service

December

Camp meeting - date to be announced

Wreaths Across America

