



Newsletter of Sgt. William Pittenger Camp #21

The General

Department of
California & Pacific



Sons of Union Veterans
of the Civil War

"Most Outstanding Camp in the Nation" ~ 2003

"Most Outstanding Brother in the Nation" ~ 2005

Volume XV Number 6

"Best Camp Newsletter in the Nation" ~ 2004 & 2006

Nov 26, 2009

Camp Commanders Corner ~ by Tom Helmantoler

As I come to the end of my two years as your Commander, let me first of all say that it has been my privilege and an honor to have served in this post. I went into it, as probably most do, with a serious amount of trepidation about how prepared I was to do the job, as well as my own abilities. I'd like to think that I grew into the office, became competent and that my accomplishments as Commander were worthy of your trust. I came to enjoy it immensely but like all such things, it's time to turn over the job to new, younger and fresh leadership to move the Camp forward. It will also be my honor to say I'm a Past Camp Commander! As we move to the end of the year and new elections, please remember that this is your Camp as well as mine. Such human organizations can only continue to exist by everyone's participation. When your turn comes up to serve, please take it. The responsibility and time commitments can be great but so are the rewards that come to you with knowing you did well a job for your

Brothers. Please give thoughtful consideration to assuming an office. My first office was as Guard, which was recommended to me by Brother Gene Armistead, who felt it would be a good place for me, "to get my feet wet." All offices are honorable and some require more work than others. Everyone can serve and should serve at sometime. Please contact Brother Jeff Malone for an office. He'll need the help and will appreciate it. If you have any questions about what an office entails, please contact me. If I can't answer all questions, I'll find the answer and get back to you. We badly need some brother to become Senior Vice Commander and another, Junior Vice Commander. The Senior Vice Commander's job is to arrange the meetings, including the site and the program. Junior Vice Commander's main task is membership. It is very valuable to do these jobs before becoming Commander because one gets to see what is involved in the job. These are elective



14 Nov, Mt. Hope, "Last Soldier" dedication, Barbara Mondt, DUVCW and Cmdr Tom Helmantoler relax just prior to the ceremony

(Continued on page 2)

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THE GENERAL is the official newsletter of Sgt. Wm. Pittenger Camp 21, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. It's published each odd-numbered month for Camp members. It's also available by newsletter exchange to other SUVCW or Allied Orders groups. Such groups are welcome to reprint articles from *The General* with attribution. Brief articles are invited: send to Newsletter Editor listed above: space limitations may require editing.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS should be mailed to Camp Secretary at address above. Failure to notify Camp of change of address will result in missed issues of *The General* and *The Banner*.

CAMP EMAIL DIRECTORY. If you wish to be included in the Camp Email Directory, send your permission & email address to Dave Allyn at: svrsuvcw@yahoo.com

SONS OF VETERANS RESERVE (SVR) is the uniformed contingent of the SUVCW. Uniforms are encouraged but not required. You need not be a reenactor to join. Annual dues are \$6.00. Interested SUVCW Brothers should contact the SVR Representative listed above.

Camp Commanders Corner ~ by Tom Helmantoler

(Continued from page 1)

positions, as are Secretary, Treasurer and three Camp Councilmen. All others are appointed by the Commander. Please consider taking an office, or a different one - if you are already an officer and would simply like a change. Our Camp will only survive if people step up and take the responsibility, just as the "Boys in Blue" did, back in the 1860s. Their memory can inspire us to this continuing service. Thank you in advance. Recently, the Camp participated in the Massing of the Colors ceremony at the Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park. There were many different groups represented at this fine observance, which is sponsored by the Military Order of the World Wars. It included some 80 color guards, as well as a US Marine Band. It was an impressive ceremony. This time of the year, as always, is an active time. We honored San Diego County's, "Last Soldier" with a ceremony at Mt. Hope Cemetery on November 14th at 11 AM. The featured speaker was Mrs. Barbara Mondt, DUVCW, who did the genealogical research on our Last Soldier, Thomas Chapman Shelly, who died in 1943, just shy of his 100th birthday. (see Pg. 5 for photos) We will be marching in El Cajon's "Mother Goose Parade" on November 22nd, and Fallbrook's Christmas Parade, December 5th. Please join us for these events either by attending or participating. Our next meeting will be at 1:00 pm on December 12th, with the main part of the meeting being the election and installation of new officers for the coming year. Again, thanks to all for supporting the Camp's endeavors and me as your Commander over the past two years.

It has been my pleasure to serve.

Tom Helmantoler
 Camp 21 Commander

This Day In Civil War History

Saturday Nov. 26 1864
 TERRIFIC TURKEYS TAKEN TOWARDS THANKSGIVING

Abraham Lincoln's original proclamation ordering a day of thanksgiving had been a somber document, full of religious references and imploring the people to give thanks to God for the blessings He had showered on America even in the midst of a bitter war. It did not take long at all for the usual American tendency to turn from the religious to the secular to assert itself. A soldier near Gen. Sherman's headquarters at Oconee River, Ga., wrote in his diary that "Thanksgiving Day was very generally observed in the army, the troops scorning chickens in the plenitude of turkeys with which they had supplied themselves...The soldiers gave thanks and were merry as only soldiers can be...Many obtain a delicious sirup made from sorghum, which is cultivated on all the plantations. There was nothing heard of 'hard tack'"

President Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation

In the middle of the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln, prompted by a series of editorials written by Sarah Josepha Hale, proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day, to be celebrated on the final Thursday in November 1863:

"The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God. In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union. Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle, or the ship; the axe had enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years, with large increase of freedom. No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing

with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and voice by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-eighth."

Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln, October 3, 1863.

Since 1863, Thanksgiving has been observed annually in the United States.

| Camp Calendar: Event, Location (* = SVR participation) | Time, Month, Day, Year | Contact Persons |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| * 63rd Annual "Mother Goose" Parade, Downtown El Cajon | 22 November <i>muster 10:00</i> | Tom Helmantoler, Jerry Sayre |
| Camp 21 extends wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving Day to all! | 26 November | Any and All Camp Brothers |
| * Christmas Parade, Downtown Fallbrook | 5 December <i>muster 4:30 Albertson's Pkg Lot</i> | Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch |
| Annual Social & Officer Elections Meeting, Camp 21, Location TBD | 12 December 1:00 Deane & Brenda Poole's | Tom Helmantoler, Jeff Malone |
| * Monthly Memorial Service, VMMC, Balboa Pk, SD | 11:30 AM, 19 December <i>muster at 11:00</i> | Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch |
| Camp 21 extends wishes for a Merry Christmas to all! | 25 December | Any and All Camp Brothers |
| Camp 21 extends wishes for a Happy New Year to all | 1 January 2010 | Any and All Camp Brothers |

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING October 10, 2009

Present: Brothers Dave Allyn, Gene Armistead, George Cavanagh, Mike Clover, Tom Helmantoler, Jeff Malone, John May, Deane Poole, Jerry Sayre, Dave Shaffer, Will Tisch, and guests Gay Allyn, Darlene Armistead, Julie Atzen, Matt Hall, Paul Hall, Roger Hall, Sandy Helmantoler, Charmaine Malone, Barbara Mondt, Heather Morgan, Brenda Poole, Janice Shaffer, Kim Sayre, and Eileen Tisch. The meeting was called to order by Commander Tom Helmantoler at 4:40pm at the home of Tom and Sandy Helmantoler, San Diego, California. The opening prayer was offered D. Poole and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by G. Cavanagh.

I. Honored Attendees

In attendance were Barbara Mondt, DUVCW, PDC Gene Armistead and wife Darlene, PDC Jerry Sayre and wife Kim, PCC Will Tisch and wife Eileen, prospective member Tim Means, and William Pittenger relatives, Paul, Matt, and Roger Hall.

II. Officers' Reports

- 1) No new members were inducted.
- 2) Treasurer J. May reported that a report is not available, but \$629 has been spent on the Last Soldier plaque.
- 3) Secretary J. May reported correspondence from a) CWPT, asking the Camp to increase its level of support, b) the Military Order of the Purple Heart, soliciting donations to manufacture and place signs along Interstate 5, designating it the "Purple Heart Trail", and c) the Gen. Joe Wheeler Chapter of the UDC and the Hannah A. Ropes Tent of the DUVCW, inviting the Camp to the annual Blue-Gray Luncheon.
- 4) Minutes of the last meeting were approved (Sayre/Poole).

III. Committee Reports

- 1) G. Armistead reported for the Minter's Ranch Project. Letters of support have been obtained from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and the San Diego Civil War Round Table. Application will be made to the

National Organization of the SUVCW for a \$500 grant. A good time to complete the project would be in the year 2011, as that would be the 150th anniversary of the event.

- 2) T. Helmantoler reported for the Last Soldiers Project. The ceremony will take place on Sat., Nov. 14 at Mt. Hope Cemetery. Details will be worked out by the committee.

IV. Upcoming Events

- 1) VMCM Service, 11/17; muster at 10am
- 2) Massing of the Colors; 10/31, 10am in Balboa Park
- 3) Veterans Day parade; 11/11 in San Diego
- 4) VANC Veterans Day event; 11/11, 10 am at Oceanside Elks Lodge
- 5) Last Soldier ceremony and Remembrance Day observation; 11/14, 11am at Mt. Hope Cemetery
- 6) Mother Goose Parade; 11/22 in El Cajon
- 7) DAR "Wreaths Across America" event; 12/12 at Ft. Rosecrans Natl Cemetery
- 8) Camp meeting; 12/12, 4:00pm (Note: change time to 1:00pm) at the home of Deane and Brenda Poole

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

- 1) J. Sayre presented D. Poole with a membership badge and directed the Secretary to file the appropriate forms to change Br. Poole's membership status from "Associate" to "Regular".
- 2) G. Armistead informed the Camp that 5 years of service as Camp Secretary makes J. May eligible to wear the Past Camp Commander badge. A motion (Armistead/Sayre) was passed to have the Secretary file the appropriate forms with the National Organization and to purchase a PCC badge.

VII. Raffle

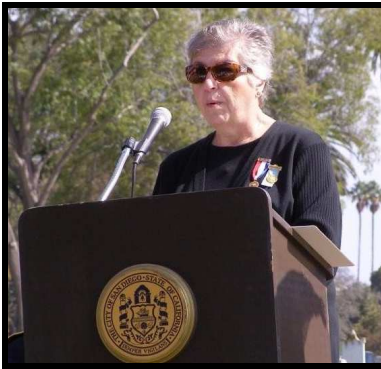
No raffle was held.

(Continued on page 7)

Report of Our Last Union Civil War Soldier Ceremony - *Tom Helmantoler*

On November 14, Camp 21 celebrated the culmination of a long project by honoring our San Diego County with the dedication of the monument to San Diego's last Union soldier, GAR Comrade Thomas Chapman Shelly, who died in 1943, just shy of his 100th birthday. After the opening ceremonies, the GAR/SUVCW ritual of celebrating the Last Soldier was used, beginning with prayer by Chaplain Deane Poole and the reading of the words of the sacrifice of Union soldiers by SVC Jeff Malone. It continued with keynote speaker, Mrs. Barbara Mondt, Past President of Nancy Hanks Lincoln Tent No. 10 DUVCW, with her fine description of the life of Thomas C. Shelly and his military career, which extended into the Indian Wars period after the Civil War. Regretfully, we were unable to secure descendants of Comrade Shelly to attend the ceremony.

This was followed by short comments by Commander Tom Helmantoler on Remembrance Day, of which the ceremony for same was combined with the Last Soldier Ceremony. The dedication of the flowers, musket volley and benediction closed a fine and fitting ceremony. It was attended by about 40 people and included Robin and Roy Adair of the UDC and SCV respectively, Sue Zimmer, President of Nancy Hanks Tent, Kay Hildenbrand, President of the new DUVCW Mary Jane Stafford Tent in Temecula, Dave Tooley, President of the SDCWRT, and David Lugo, Director of Mt. Hope Cemetery. Thanks to everyone who attended and special thanks to the organizing Committee and Mr. Lugo, who went "above and beyond" to facilitate this event for Camp 21. It is greatly appreciated by all of the brothers of Camp 21.



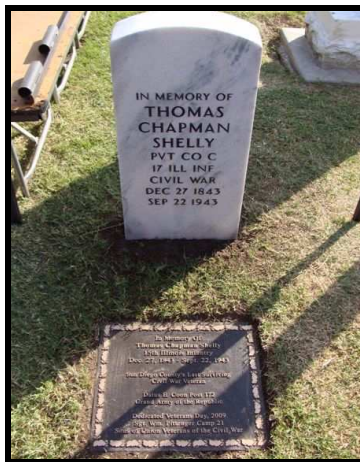
PITTENGER CAMP SCRAPBOOK



Above Left & Right, scenes from Balboa Park Massing of the Colors, 31 October:
Camp 4's Tad Campbell, PDC carried the National Flag



Below Left and Right, more photos from the Last Soldier ceremony at Mt. Hope with GAR Comrade Thomas Chapman Shelly's marker and plaque



Minutes of Last Meeting October 10 (Cont)

(Continued from page 4)

VIII. SVR Report

No SVR report.

IX. Members Minutes

- 1) D. Poole thanked J. Sayre for the research into his ancestry.
- 2) D. Allyn reported on a trip to Michigan and reminded us that Family is one of our most treasured assets.
- 3) J. Sayre went to the Fresno reenactment and reported that a Dept. meeting approved a change in by-laws to allow the inclusion of "Junior Associate" members.
- 4) T. Helmantoler reported on a) the National Encampment, in which the new C-I-C is Leo Kennedy from Rhode Island, Brad Schall was elected JVC, Tad Campbell was elected to the Council of Administration, and Jerry Sayre was appointed Color Bearer, b) the establishment of a new DUVCW Tent in Temecula, and c) a trip to Chicago and the gravesite of Gen. George Henry Thomas.

The closing prayer was offered by D. Poole and the meeting was adjourned at 5:40.

Respectfully submitted,
John May, Secretary

Camp 21 extends congratulations to our fellow Department of California and Pacific brothers of Keith Camp 12, Las Vegas, NV as recipients of the CinC Award as "Best Camp in the Nation" at the recent Louisville National Encampment
HUZZAH ! HUZZAH ! HUZZAH !

SUVCW Memorial University Course

The Memorial University is an online course developed by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War as an Officer Training Course for its members. This course was a vision of CinC David V. Medert and was achieved through the efforts of a Special National Committee on Education and Leadership established by the 127th SUVCW National Encampment. The course came on line in September of 2009 and currently has 13 graduates. The class is totally free for all members of the Order. It was developed by and is operated by our members and is a great way to learn about our Order. Even if you already know all about the order, I challenge you to sign up and see how you do. Please pass this information on to your Camps and share with other members.

<http://www.suvcw.org/memuniv/memorialuniv.htm>

Civil War Notable Quotes

"War is cruelty. There is no use trying to reform it. The crueller it is, the sooner it will be over."

General William T. Sherman shortly before beginning his March to the Sea



Welcome New Brother!

There are no new members to report as of publication date & time. Please remember to do some light recruiting among friends & neighbors ... after all, there are likely 100 million descendants of Union men alive today and somewhere near 50% are males!

"DECADERS"

William E. Howell 09-99

Congratulations on attaining 10 years of membership in the SUVCW

Thank you Brother for your continued commitment to the objectives of our Order !

The San Diego Civil War Roundtable meets the Third Wednesday of each month, 7 PM at Palisades Presbyterian Church 6301 Birchwood St., San Diego & is open to the public. For further information, contact Pres. Dave Tooley 858-672-2593 or on the Web at www.sdcwrt.org

OUR NEXT MEETING: Sat. Dec. 12, 2009 *NOTE Location, Date & Time!*

Dec. 12, 2009 1:00 PM

LOCATION

**The Poole's Home
4466 Mt. Herbert Ave.
San Diego, CA. 92117
858-278-9094**

Our Program

This is our annual potluck social & Officer Elections. Bring a dish to pass & whatever you care to drink - bring spouse & family members too !

Guests are Welcome!

DIRECTIONS TO MEETING LOCATION:

From the 805 Freeway North or South, exit Balboa Ave. and go West to Genesee Ave. Turn Right (N) on Genesee, go to the third Left turn, which is Mt. Herbert Ave. Turn Left (W) and go through four intersections to 4466. Park on area streets.

If you need help with directions from your location, call Deane or Brenda at

858-278-9094

The General

The General

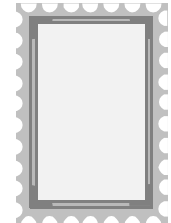


Sgt. William Pittenger Camp 21
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Preserving the memory of the G. A. R. & "The Boys in Blue"

"In God We Trust"

"One Nation Under God"



HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO OUR BROTHERS AND FAMILIES