



## SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

General Pleasonton Camp #24

### MINUTES OF THE CAMP MEETING

July 19, 2017

Meeting at the Albany City Library was called to order by Commander Ken Felton at 7:00 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Members in attendance: Brothers Brad Hatton, Ken Felton, John Gee, Steve Johnson, Jeffrey Vaillant, and Dale Smith.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Brother Johnson reported that as of June 30th, the camp has \$579, \$200 of which is in the Braden Schall Memorial Fund.

Brother Felton reported that he awarded the SUVCW commendation to an Eagle Scout in Palo Alto this month, as well one JROTC Award.

#### Discussion:

- Brother Ken Felton attended the 4th of July parade in Martinez and said there were no units representing Civil War soldiers. This may be an event we could participate in next year.
- Brother Brad Schall will represent our camp at the National Encampment in Michigan, August 11 - 13
- Brothers John Gee, Dale Smith, and Jeffrey Vaillant will represent the Sons at the Fort Point Civil War Day on August 19th
- Ken Felton will represent the SUVCW at the annual re-enactment in Fresno, in October
- It was moved, discussed, seconded, and voted on that we formally honorably discharge Bruce Hevelin from our camp due to personal issues at home.
- We will hold off the honorable discharge for Robert Mayer until we find out if he wants to transfer to another camp.

Our guest speaker for the evening was Ranger Rick Penn, who gave a talk about Colored Troops in the U.S. Army during the Civil War. The main points he presented were:

- There were 180,000 U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) who fought for the Union; they were first formed in May of 1863
- Native Americans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders were also included in the USCT regiments
- All regiments were commanded by white officers, though there were many black non-commissioned officers (mostly sergeants)
- Later some of these rose in ranks, such as Col. Thomas Wentworth Higgins and General M.P. Banks
- At first CT received less pay than the white soldiers (famously the 54th Mass. refused their pay as a protest, both black troops and white officers); by 1864 all USCT received the same pay as whites
- Initially most of their duties involved picket duty, muleteers, quartermaster and cooking, etc.
- When finally engaged in battle, over and over again they proved their valor
- Notable battles were Fort Wagner (40% casualties), the Battle of the Crater (Fredricksburg)

- USCT served in all units in the Army — infantry, cavalry, artillery; for example the *Corps d'Afrique* in Louisiana was composed of freemen, mixed-race, and refugees who eventually made up units of cavalry, heavy artillery, infantry, and engineers.
- In 1862 Jefferson Davis issued proclamation stating that captured Colored Troops would be sent back to their state as slaves
- Many were massacred by Confederate soldiers (for example, at Fort Pillow)
- By 1864 there were 175 colored regiments and they composed 10% of the U.S. Army
- 18 colored soldiers received the Medal Of Honor; among them were Sgt. Maj. Christian Fleetwood, and Sgt. William Carvey, both of whom though wounded in battle grabbed the flag from a dying soldier and prevented its capture
- Gen. U.S. Grant gave his opinion that “Negro troops are easier to preserve discipline among than our white troops... All that have been tried have fought bravely.”

We thanked Ranger Penn for his informative talk and was he treated to dinner by Brother John Gee after the meeting.

It was decided to have our next meeting in September, to be held in the third week at the Albany City Library, day to be determined. Members will be notified of the exact date.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Johnson,  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Camp 24