



In Fraternity,  
Charity and  
Loyalty

# Lest We Forget

*A publication of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp, #443, and dedicated  
to the memory of those who fought to preserve the Union, 1861-1865*

Volume 5, Issue 4  
Winter 2025





## In this issue ...

\*Hecker Camp participates in annual parade .....page 4

\*Meet the 'Father of Veterans Day?' .....page 5

\*An overview of Union Civil War Veterans ..... pages 6-7

\*Around the Community .....page 8

\*Civil War museum opens event center .....page 9

\*2025 in review.....pages 10-12

\*A symbol of forgiveness ... page 13

\*I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day .....page 14



## About this Newsletter

**M**erry Christmas and happy holidays. For anyone new to our camp and this newsletter, this camp was first chartered in 1884 as a camp of the [Grand Army of the Republic \(GAR\)](#). Today, the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp, #443 is one of 11 camps in the Department of Illinois for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). It is the only SUVCW camp in southern Illinois. The camp was chartered as part of the SUVCW in 1996.

The SUVCW is a fraternal organization dedicated to preserving the history and legacy of heroes who fought and worked to save the Union. In 1881, the GAR formed the SUVCW as the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America (SV) to carry on its traditions and memory long after the GAR ceased to exist. It became the SUVCW in name in 1925 and is the legal successor to the GAR, first founded in 1866.

This newsletter is used to help educate readers, as well as continue the tradition of providing camp members, and others who are interested in maintaining our history, news about the SUVCW, our treasured American history, and what we can all do to help preserve and honor the memories of the Americans who sacrificed to preserve our Union so many years ago. Some of the history of Hecker Post #443 and the GAR is [here](#). Please share this newsletter with anyone who may have an interest. It's free to subscribe and/or send submissions. Just email [lestweforget1861@outlook.com](mailto:lestweforget1861@outlook.com). Thank you for your readership of this newsletter and/or your participation in Hecker Camp, and the SUVCW.

If you are not a member and have an interest and/or a direct connection to the civil war, or know of someone else who may, please consider applying for membership and passing the word along to others. [Click here to learn more](#). As usual, I try to provide a variety of topics and stories in *Lest We Forget*, as well as highlight camp activities and members.

### Trivia #1

**O**n Dec. 1, 1861, the U.S. gunboat *Penguin* captured a Confederate blockade runner called the *Albion*. What was the value of the military equipment found aboard?

- a. \$25,000
- b. \$50,000
- c. \$100,000

Want the answer? Find the second trivia question.



**Lest We Forget** is a publication of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW). It is the only SUVCW Camp south of Springfield, Illinois, covering the "Little Egypt" part of the state.

For more information about the camp and how to become a member, visit our Website: <http://www.heckercamp443.org/>  
Our Facebook page is [here](#).



For more information or interest in joining, you may also send a message to [info@heckercamp443.org](mailto:info@heckercamp443.org).

More about the SUVCW is here: [www.suvcw.org](http://www.suvcw.org).

Camp Commander (CC): Brother Russell Schleicher

Sr. Vice Commander (SVC): Brother John Stanton

Jr. Vice Commander (JVC): Brother Donn Cooks

Secretary, Editor, Webmaster: Brother Gerald Sonnenberg

Treasurer, Patriotic Instructor: Brother Richard Piper

Camp Guide: Brother Justin Ottolini

For submissions or to subscribe to the newsletter, email:

[lestweforget1861@outlook.com](mailto:lestweforget1861@outlook.com).

**On the cover: Cannon Under Snow is a photograph taken at the Gettysburg National Park by Kat Zalewski-Bednarek.**





# The Corner

By Gerald Sonnenberg  
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

## Hello Brothers, Camp in Review

**N**ovember—Camp meeting was held Nov. 5. We had no guests. After the financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes, we held the elections of officers for the coming year.

With no other nominations or declinations from current officers, a move to accept the slate of current officers was made from the floor by PCC Greg Zelinske and seconded by PCC Garry Ladd. The motion passed, and the officers of the camp are the same as the last couple of years.

\*Camp Commander Russell Schleicher

\*Senior Vice Commander John Stanton

\*Junior Vice Commander Donn Cooks

\*Treasurer Richard Piper

\*Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg

Congratulations to all and thank you for your service to the camp.

Brother Sonnenberg handed out commemorative coins regarding the Hecker Obelisk in Benton Park to participants in the Col. Hecker commemoration activities in Summerfield and St. Louis. He also provided programs from the event to those who wanted one. The Hecker family and Hecker monument restoration committee provided the coins and programs.

A final count of participants for the O'Fallon, Illinois Veterans Day parade was taken. **See page 4.**



**Upcoming Events** - If you have ideas for upcoming events that we, as a camp, or even as individual representatives of the camp can participate, please let us know.

**Next scheduled meetings** - Our next scheduled meetings are Jan. 7, Feb. 4 and March 4 at 7 p.m. at the Shiloh, Illinois Community Center. A Zoom option is usually also available for those who cannot attend in person.

**Ackerman headstone** - The Ackerman headstone is now installed, and planning with the Ackermann family to dedicate it is taking place with an expected date in early to mid-2026.

## Walnut Hill Project Status

We have received a quote from one monument company regarding the restoration of the Union Veteran portion of the cemetery. It is under consideration.

**P**lease keep the newsletter in mind if you have an article or idea to share and if you have attended or participated in any event as a living historian or representative of the Camp. Contact me at [lestweforget1861@outlook.com](mailto:lestweforget1861@outlook.com).

## Camp Officers for 2026



Camp Commander:  
Russell Schleicher



Senior Vice Commander:  
John Stanton



Junior Vice Commander:  
Donn Cooks



Treasurer:  
Richard Piper



Secretary:  
Gerald Sonnenberg





# Celebrating Veterans:

## Hecker Camp participates in annual parade

Photos by Denise Sonnenberg



On Nov. 11, members of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 participated in the annual Veterans Day parade, sponsored by O'Fallon, Illinois' VFW Post 805. Many groups of scouts, bands and other organizations participated.

*In the photo above, (left to right) Past Camp Commander (PCC) Greg Zelinski, Camp Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg, PCC Garry Ladd and Camp Treasurer Richard Piper march down North Lincoln Street in O'Fallon.*

*(Photo right) Volunteer Donna Rees drives Hecker Camp Commander Russell Schleicher during the parade.*





# Meet the 'Father of Veterans Day'

By Gerald Sonnenberg  
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

On Nov. 11, the nation recognizes all Veterans, living and dead, on Veterans Day. Many people know the holiday originated 106 years ago as Armistice Day on Nov. 11, 1919. That was because of a letter by President Woodrow Wilson recognizing the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Armistice ending World War I. However, this year, 2025, was only the 71st official Veterans Day. What many may think has been an official annual event since the letter in 1919, wasn't.

On June 4, 1927, President Calvin Coolidge adopted a resolution by Congress issuing a proclamation calling for the observance of Nov. 11 with "appropriate ceremonies." This included displaying the U.S. Flag on all government buildings and inviting the people to observe the day in schools and churches. Not until 1938 did Congress pass a bill that each Nov. 11 "shall be dedicated to the cause of world peace and ...hereafter celebrated and known as Armistice Day." That same year President Franklin Roosevelt signed a bill making the day a legal holiday in the District of Columbia.

In 1945, World War II, the deadliest conflict in world history so far, was coming to an end. More than 16 million Americans served during the conflict, and World War II U.S. Navy Veteran Raymond Weeks from Birmingham, Alabama, had the idea of a national holiday that would honor all war Veterans, living and dead, to be celebrated on Armistice Day. Weeks led a delegation to General of the Army Dwight Eisenhower, who supported the idea of a



Raymond Weeks petitions Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower to establish a national Veterans Day at the Pentagon in 1946. (Photo courtesy of Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum)

National Veterans Day.

Weeks led the first national celebration in 1947 in Alabama. The celebration included General Omar Bradley as speaker at the World Peace Dinner and the Veterans Day Parade featuring flags of the United Nations carried by native sons of member countries or Boy Scouts. Weeks would continue hosting this celebration annually.

On May 26, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed a bill into law establishing Veterans Day as Nov. 11 each year. At that time, there were still Veterans living from every conflict since the Civil War. However, in two years, Albert Henry Woolson, the last known surviving member of the Union Army who served in the American Civil War, passed away on Aug. 2, 1956, at the age of 106. He was also the last surviving Civil War Veteran on either side whose status is undisputed. He served as a drummer boy in the 1st Minnesota Heavy Artillery.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan honored Raymond Weeks at the White House

with the Presidential Citizenship Medal as the driving force for the national holiday. Elizabeth Dole, who was director of the office of public liaison at the time, prepared the briefing for President Reagan, and through it, established that Weeks was the "Father of Veterans Day."

At the ceremony, the President described Weeks as a person who, "...devoted his life to serving others, his community, the American Veteran, and his nation." He added, "So let us go forth from here, having learned the lessons of history, confident in the strength of our system, and anxious to pursue every avenue toward peace. And on this Veterans Day, we will remember and be firm in our commitment to peace, and those who died in defense of our freedom will not have died in vain."

After nearly 40 years hosting the celebration as Armistice and then Veterans Day, Raymond Weeks, "Father of Veterans Day," died in 1985.



Weeks (right) being honored by President Ronald Reagan in 1982. (Courtesy photo)

# An overview of Union Civil War Veterans

By Richard Piper

Hecker Camp treasurer, patriotic instructor

**Editor's Note:** On Veterans Day, we honor those who have served and defended our country. These individuals aren't just heroes on the battlefield serving this nation, they are human beings. What about those heroes from the Civil War? This article takes a look at some of those who made up the Union Army, the grim reality of injuries they suffered, as well as what happened to many after the war.

On July 1, 1861, the Union had 183,588 soldiers in the Army. By Jan. 1, 1865, the number swelled to 620,924. There were 179,000 African-Americans in the Union Army and 10,000 in the Union Navy.

Foreign-born soldiers also served the Union numbered some 175,000-200,000 Germans; 144,000 Irish; 45,000 British; 4,000 Norwegians; and 3,000 Swedish-born Union soldiers. There were also large numbers of French, Poles, Scots, Canadians, Belgians and Hungarians who, with the other immigrants, made up about 25% of Union troops.

## Casualties

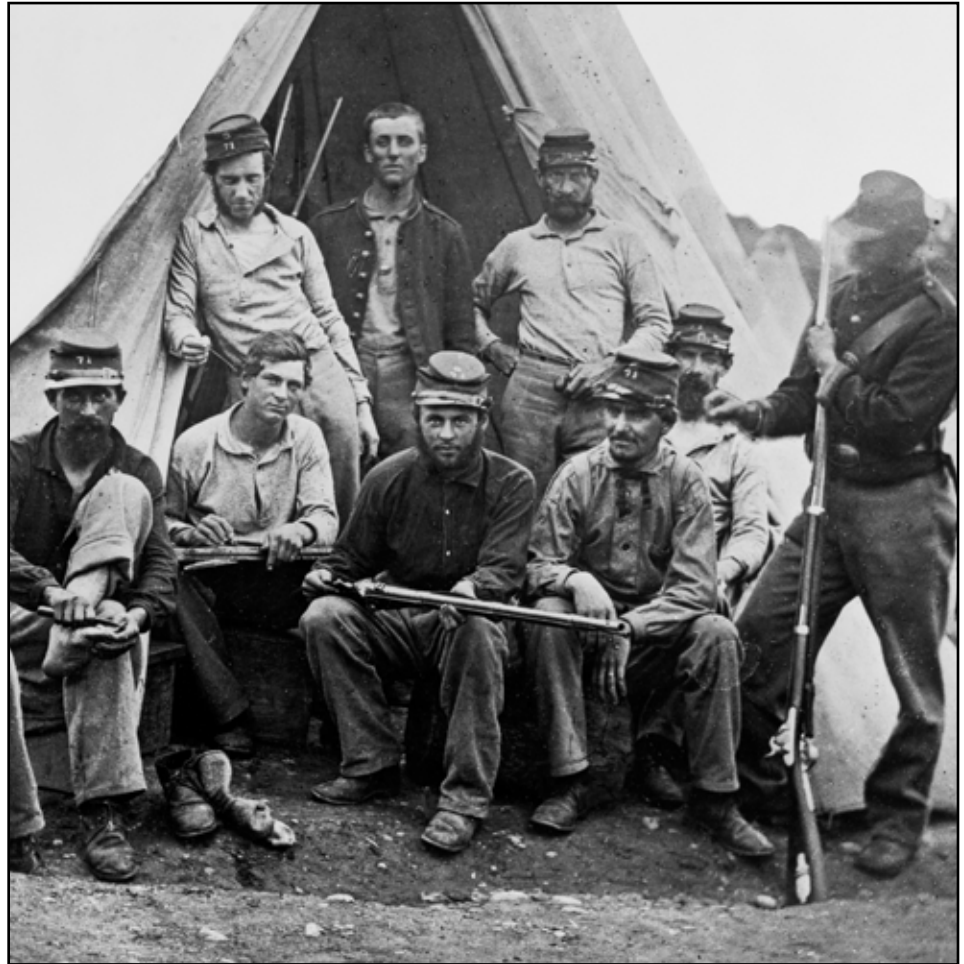
For those who were injured, bullets caused 93% of the wounds, artillery pieces 6% and swords and bayonets injured less than 1% of casualties.

For those who died from their battlefield wounds, 87% were fatally shot in the abdomen, 63% in the chest area, 60% the head and 33% in the shoulder. Doctors dealt with severe wounds by amputations. The fatality rate depended largely where the wound was. Of 29,980 Union amputations the fatality rate was 90% at the hip, 50% at the thigh or knee joint, 25% at the upper arm and 7% at the ankle joint.

If you were not shot, you tried very hard not to get sick. Of the 6,000,000 Union disease cases, diarrhea and dysentery killed 44,558; Malaria 10,063; catarrh and bronchitis 585; pneumonia 19,971; measles 5,177; and scurvy 771.

## War's End

Finally, the war was over, and 200,00 Union troops marched down Penn-



(Above) Union Army Veterans in camp. (Courtesy photo)

sylvania Avenue in the Grand Review on May 23 and 24, 1865. The Eastern Army of the Potomac marched on May 23 in their new uniforms, polished brass and white dress gloves, while on May 24, Sherman's soldiers, nearly half of whom were western troops, wore shabby uniforms and ruined shoes.

Following demobilization, the ex-soldiers often became victims of crime. Thieves and swindlers swooped down on discharge points robbing men of their mustering out pay. Many soldiers became addicted to drugs and alcohol. Morphine addiction became a problem for those who had become dependent on it to treat the lingering pain of their wounds and to relieve the after effects of combat stress. This morphine dependency became known as "the army disease." In 1879, the army surgeon estimated 45,000 Veterans were addicted to morphine.

Roughly 300,000 soldiers were discharged each month at the height of demobilization in mid-1865, and by year's

end, nearly a million men had been released.

The U.S. Sanitary Commission opened employment bureaus to place Veterans in jobs. The North was still largely rural.

Some states showed a sharp rise in divorce. Ohio had a 40% increase from 1865-1866. However, most states also had an increase in marriages with Ohio having nearly a 40% increase in the same year.

More than 200,000 soldiers returned with wounds and many continued to suffer from diseases obtained in the army from chronic diarrhea to tuberculosis.

## Pensions

Pensions were the usual form of compensation for war wounds. The Act of July 14, 1862 started the General Law pension system for Civil War Veterans who had sustained war-related disabilities. Pensions became available to widows, children under 16 years of age,

See **VETERANS** next page ...

## VETERANS continued ...

and dependent relatives of soldiers who died in military service from war related injuries. A Veteran could get \$8 to \$30 a month depending on rank and disability.

However, many Veterans were unaware of pensions. Fewer than 10% of Union Veterans were on pension rolls through the 1860s and 1870s.

The Arrears Act of 1879 was a significant piece of legislation aimed at increasing pensions for Union Civil War Veterans. It mandated that pensions for those who died or were discharged from service would commence from the date of death or discharge and not from the date the pension law was passed. This act required states to retroactively pay arrears at the same rate as the original pension, which was a substantial increase for many Veterans.

These retroactive payments averaged \$1,000, and Veterans filed more than 9,000 new claims per month in 1879 and 1880, versus about 1,600 claims per month previously. The proportion of Veterans on the pension rolls more than doubled during the 1880s.

## National Asylums

In March 1865, Congress authorized the creation of a National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers to provide care and support for Union soldiers who were disabled due to injuries sustained during the Civil War.

These asylums were designed to offer a safe and supportive environment for Veterans, helping them transition back to civilian life. The asylums were not only medical facilities but also planned communities that provided opportunities for employment, entertainment and socialization. The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, which later became part of the Veterans Administration, was one of the most notable institutions of this type.

By 1870, these "homes" admitted more than 3,200 ex-soldiers in Maine, Ohio,

Virginia and Wisconsin.

About 1,400 Veterans entered each year into homes in the 1870s and early 1880s. And when old age was classified as a disability after 1884, yearly admissions nearly doubled as more branch homes were added to the system.

Ex-soldiers had their service record verified, and in the early decades, their disability was war related. The homes furnished barracks for sleeping quarters and provided medical care, food, uniforms and supplies.

The men spent their time tending their institution's farm, reading in the library, working in the laundry or blacksmith shop. Or, in the early years, taking classes.

The residents often resisted the homes discipline as life in one of these homes could resemble still being in the army.

While residents might steal from the kitchen, miss roll calls, get drunk and protest the handling of pensions. The homes often withheld part or all of the payments to resident pensioners as essential to proper discipline. The managers did not want money spent on drink. The pensioners said it was their money, and the managers had no right to take it.

The higher a Veteran's pension, the more likely he would leave; often only a few months after arriving at a home. Managers kept the upper hand and punishments were given from revocation of furlough privileges to a dishonorable discharge from the home so order prevailed in them.

## Grand Army of the Republic

The GAR or Grand Army of the Republic was founded in 1866 and provided charity for needy comrades. The GAR bought food, paid rent, covered funeral expenses of destitute Veterans and widows, as well as provided medical care to comrades in need. The GAR convinced states to fund Veterans' pensions and soldiers' homes. In addition, the GAR served as a disseminator of self control. Drunkenness was the most common infraction brought before courts martial. Veterans

had concern with order and self-control which were qualities they believed were lacking in civilian society.

The GAR's most robust activity was its pension lobbying. The Dependent Pension Act legislation was sent to President Benjamin Harrison in 1890, who signed it. Veterans could now earn a pension if they were disabled for almost any reason, and widows would qualify if their husbands died from any cause.

Depending on the degree of disability, the scale of payments ranged from \$6 to \$12 per month. As a result, there was a tidal wave of new applications. More than 650,000 claims were filed in the first year of the new law.

The GAR which had been instrumental in making pensions available was now viewed by the majority of ex-soldiers as no longer needed. The GAR began to lose members in the 1890s when it lost nearly 1/3 of them due to waning interest and the dying of members.

Many who stayed members did so as a way to cope with the passing of their generation.

The 1910 census asked older men if they served in the Civil War because detailed information from the 1890 census was destroyed in a fire.

By 1910, fewer than 1/3 of Union Veterans were still alive. The majority of Union Veterans never joined the GAR because they considered themselves "citizens first and soldiers second." At that time, virtually all living Union Veterans were on the pension rolls. The average payment was \$172 per year. Though a higher rank or multiple disabilities would qualify a soldier for as much as \$1,200 annually.

Federal homes admitted more than 3,700 new residents in 1900 and maintained a total population of 19,000.

The need to provide care for our Veterans is still ongoing. Service members dealing with wounds, disability and PTSD should never be forgotten. Veterans Day is an official holiday to honor them. To me, every day is Veterans Day to remember their deeds, service and sacrifice.



## Trivia #2

The answer to Trivia #1 is c, \$100,000.

The congress of the Confederacy voted to admit Kentucky as a state on Dec. 10, 1861. Had Kentucky, in fact, seceded?

Want the answer? Find the third trivia question.





## Around the Community

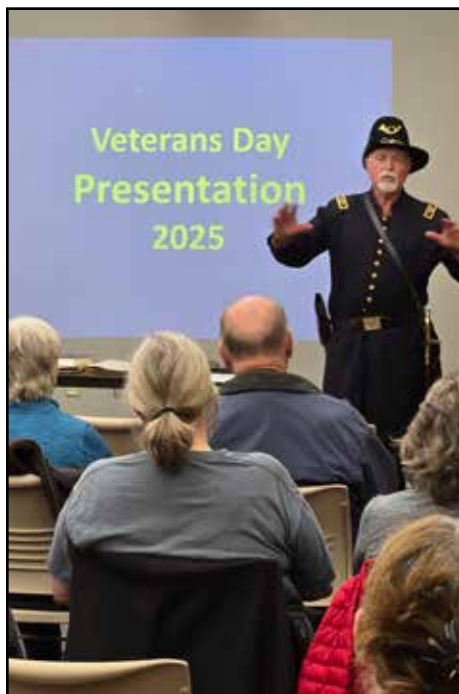
### Raith presentation

Hecker Camp #443 Past Camp Commander (PCC) Greg Zelinske portrayed [Col. Julius Raith](#) during a presentation on Veterans Day at the O'Fallon, Illinois Public Library. Approximately 30 people attended the presentation.

His goal for the event was three-fold: To show how American society after the Civil War transformed its attitudes toward military service and sacrifice from local to national; How changes in warfare technology, medicine, social recognition of death and remembrance, patriotism and charity contributed to this transformation; and how the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) became the catalyst for future organizations and Veteran observances within the country.

Chosen to command the 43rd Illinois Infantry in 1861, Raith was wounded at the Battle of Shiloh on April, 6, 1862, lost a leg and died April 11.

He is buried in the cemetery in Shiloh,



Illinois.

(Photo by Gerald Sonnenberg)



### Thank you Sue

Hecker Camp #443 Treasurer Richard Piper (left), and Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg presented Shiloh Event Coordinator Sue Quitmeyer with a certificate of appreciation Dec. 18 upon her retirement for helping the camp with meeting facilities and other support during her tenure.

### Holiday party

Hecker Camp #443 held its annual holiday party and officer installation event Dec. 6 at Shiloh, Illinois' Klucker Hall. Eight brothers and several family members attended.

During the event, the newly reelected officers for 2026 took their oaths. They are Camp Commander (CC) Russell Schleicher; Sr. Vice Commander (SVC) John Stanton; Jr. Vice Commander (JVC) Donn Cooks; Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg; Treasurer Richard Piper. The only brother not available was Junior Vice Commander Donn Cooks.

Attendees were also treated to a presentation on John C. Frémont by Brother Greg Wolk. He is a retired civil trial lawyer and author who recently released his second book, *John Frémont's 100 Days: Clashes and Convictions in Civil War Missouri* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2025). A life member of the SUVCW, he is a member of U.S. Grant Camp #68 in St. Louis and the Lt. Col. J. Felix St. James camp #326 in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. (Photos by Denise Sonnenberg)



(Left to right) Brothers John Stanton, Richard Piper, Russell Schleicher and Gerald Sonnenberg take their oaths.



(Photo left, left to right) Brothers Gerald Sonnenberg, Justin Ottolini, Greg Zelinske, John Stanton, Stephen Hyatt, Garry Ladd, Richard Piper and Russell Schleicher at the event.

(Above) Brother Greg Wolk gives his presentation.





# Civil War museum opens event center

By Kristen M. Kenshalo  
Missouri Civil War Museum

The Missouri Civil War Museum (MCWM), located at Jefferson Barracks 222 Worth Road St. Louis, Missouri 63125, recently opened its 1918 building that will be used as an event center. The museum facility consists of two structures: the 1905 Jefferson Barracks Post Exchange/Gymnasium Building and the 1918 building.

The first is two stories and was designed in 1903 by the United States government and built a short time later in 1905. It was originally designed primarily as an athletic and activity center for soldiers. It opened as the Missouri Civil War Museum in June 2013.

The 1918 building recently underwent a historic renovation to create the Missouri Civil War Museum's event center located adjacent to the museum facility. Constructed during the First World War, the 1918 Building was originally constructed as a dining and gathering space for the U.S. Army.

Now restored to its original function, this venue is equipped with a beautiful open-floor plan, featuring a caterer's kitchen, high-definition sound system and state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment, including a 12-foot projector screen.

Due to its proximity to Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, the 1918



(Left to right) The museum consists of two structures. The 1905 Jefferson Barracks Post Exchange & Gymnasium Building is two stories and the 1918 Building was originally constructed as a dining and gathering space for the U.S. Army. (Photo courtesy of the Missouri Civil War Museum)

Building is equipped to host celebrations of life for Veterans and family members being buried there. Other suitable events for the facility include military promotion/retirement ceremonies, family gatherings and corporate events.

Starting after the new year, the 1918 Building will be open for rentals and official MCWM gatherings. More information on reservations, capacity and pricing can be found at our website at [1918building.org](http://1918building.org) or by calling the Missouri Civil War Museum at 314-845-1861.

## Upcoming events

The museum is the state's premier Civil War museum dedicated to honor the thousands of men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. Through the weapons, equipment, items and uniforms of those who lived during our nation's defining moment in history, its goal is to tell their story in an unbiased interpretation.

Beginning in March 2026, the Saturday Speakers Series will kick off at the Missouri Civil War Museum. On one Saturday per month at 1 p.m., the museum will feature an historian who will present on a topic relevant to Missouri in the American Civil War. We have four presentations lined up for the Saturday Speakers Series, so far:

\*March 28: "Enslavement and the Underground Railroad in Missouri & Illinois" (Historian & Author Julie Nicolai)

\*April 18: "Civil War as the First Modern War" (Historian Chris Ketcherside, PhD)

\*May 30: "The USS Sultana Disaster" (Historian & Educator Barbara Kay)

\*June 13: "Ulysses & Julia Dent Grant in Missouri" (Historians James & Vicki Erwin)

Tickets are free for active Missouri Civil War Museum members and just \$10 for the General Public, and will include light snacks and refreshments. More information on ticket purchases, event details, and upcoming speakers will be on the Missouri Civil War Museum's website at [mcwm.org](http://mcwm.org).



(Left) Now restored to its original function, the 1918 Building is equipped with a beautiful open-floor plan, featuring a caterer's kitchen, high-definition sound system, and state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment, including a 12-foot projector screen. (Photo courtesy of the Missouri Civil War Museum)





# 2025 in Review

## Hecker Camp member participates in Lincoln remembrance, Stephenson memorial

Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 Treasurer Brother Richard Piper participated at Lincoln's Tomb and at the Dr. Benjamin Stephenson Gravesite Memorial Plaza on April 12 where Brother Piper presented the wreath.

This is the annual Remembrance Day Ceremony for the death of President Abraham Lincoln. It is held by the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U.S., or often known as the Loyal Legion, or today as MOLLUS. Dr. Stephenson was the founding father of the GAR on April 6, 1866 in Decatur, Illinois.

*(Photo right) Brother Richard Piper from Hecker Camp, (standing right) and Brother Steve Westlake hold the Dyer/Wildermuth award named for late Brothers Terry Dyer of Camp 26 and Brother Dave Wildermuth of Hecker Camp #443. It was presented to Company A, 14th Michigan Volunteer Infantry S.V.R. (Irish Rifle), in recognition of efforts to raise awareness and preserve the Stephenson memorial. Westlake and Piper are members as signified by their green scarves. (Photo by Sheila Wildermuth)*



## Ackermann headstone

Past Camp Commander Garry Ladd worked with the family of Private John S. Ackermann, Co. D, 143rd Illinois Infantry, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to gain a new headstone for the Union volunteer who died in 1927. The middle initial on his headstone was incorrect, and the nearly 100 year old monument needed replacing.

The new headstone was ordered and installed (photo left) in Belleville, Illinois' Greenmount Cemetery. Planning is underway for Hecker Camp #443 to participate in a dedication ceremony in coordination with the family.



## SUVCW ROTC award presented

On April 24, Brother Richard Piper presented the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Reserve Officer Training Corps award and medal to a student at the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Army awards ceremony at the American Legion Hall in Edwardsville, Illinois.

## Multiple camps honor Sherman

On March 30 at Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S. Grant Camp, assisted by Wilhelmi, Fletcher and Hecker Camps, along with the Missouri Daughters of Union Veterans and Louisa Volker Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans and others, honored General William T. Sherman and then Dred Scott at dual events. Hecker Camp Brother and Senior Vice Commander John Stanton attended. (Courtesy photo)



## Parking crew

Hecker Camp #443 Senior Vice Commander John Stanton, Treasurer Richard Piper, and Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg helped with parking hundreds of vehicles during the Shiloh, Illinois homecoming event Sept. 5-6.

Supporting this annual event with parking, as well as our presence at the city cemetery allows Hecker Camp members to interact with the community and bring some goodwill with the small city.

Along with rides and food, the city also provided a working police dog demonstration.



## Memorial Day recognizes the service, sacrifice of Veterans



(Photo left left to right) Hecker Camp members PCC Greg Zelinske, Treasurer Richard Piper, SVC John Stanton, Secretary Gerald Sonnenberg, and (not pictured) CC Russell Schleicher prepare to participate in the Belleville Memorial Day parade May 26. (Above) Brothers Stanton, Piper and Zelinske place flags on Union dead at Walnut Hill Cemetery in Belleville. (Courtesy photos)



### Raith history portal

Hecker Camp #443 Past Camp Commander (PCC) Greg Zelinske portrayed [Col. Julius Raith](#) during the Shiloh, Illinois homecoming cemetery tours on Sept. 6. Raith was born on March 29, 1819 in Goppingen, Wurtemberg in modern Germany. He emigrated to the U.S. as a young boy, and later married and settled with his family in Belleville, Illinois. While commanding the 43rd Illinois Infantry in 1861, Raith was wounded at the Battle of Shiloh on April, 6, 1862, lost a leg and died April 11. Somewhat ironically, he is now buried in the cemetery in Shiloh, Illinois. (Photo by Gerald Sonnenberg)



(Above) Members of the German delegation from Angelbachtal, Germany pose in front of the Hecker Obelisk after the rededication ceremony. Their Mayor Frank Werner is center and holding the St. Louis City Proclamation. (Photo courtesy of Adam Hecker)

### A legacy renewed:

Bi-state Hecker projects bring U.S., international guests together

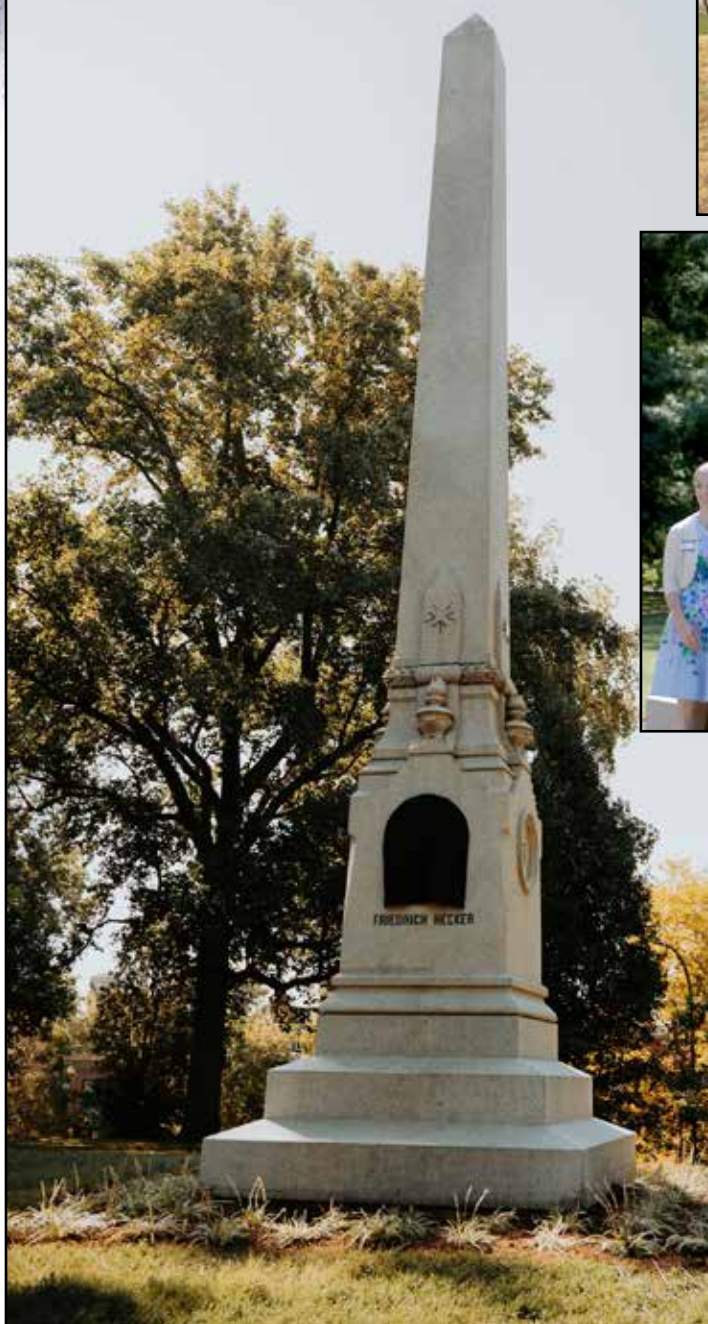
A six-year, bi-state project to celebrate the life of Col. Friedrich K. Hecker concluded with two events. The first event was a ceremony on Sept. 8 in the Summerfield, Illinois cemetery where he is buried. Hecker lived and farmed nearby the small town. The second event on Sept. 9 was the rededication of the restored Hecker Obelisk in St. Louis, Missouri's Benton Park.

The ceremonies included a three-volley salute at Summerfield and presentation of colors at both events involving members of the Col. Hecker Camp in Illinois and U.S. Grant Camp #68 in Missouri, other SUVCW members, as well as others who graciously volunteered. [See the full story here.](#)





## Photos from the bi-state Hecker project events



(Above) The restored Hecker monument at Benton Park in St. Louis, Missouri. (Photo courtesy of Adam Hecker)



(Above) Brothers from Col. Hecker Camp in Illinois, U.S. Grant Camp #68 in Missouri, other SUVCW members, as well as others who graciously volunteered assemble after the Summerfield event. (Photo by Wendy Stanton)



(Left) Two great-great-great-granddaughters of Col. Hecker, Dr. Caroline B. (left) and Caroline S. Hecker, unveil the refurbished obelisk in Benton Park in St. Louis Sept. 9. (Photo courtesy of Adam Hecker)

[Click here for a video about this project.](#)



(Above) One of two informational signs dedicated during the September events. (Photo courtesy of Adam Hecker)



## A symbol of forgiveness

By Gerald Sonnenberg  
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

This is just a thought, but ever since I first saw this image of Union and Confederate Veterans shaking hands across the stone wall at the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1913, I can't help but think about one of the most important aspects of being a human being - learning to forgive. This rings true for me, especially at this time of year.

Forgetting about significant, as well as trivial events in your life is not so easy sometimes, but forgetting them also defeats the purpose of learning from them. Depending on the circumstance, forgiveness can be even more difficult.

Our lives will be full of unpleasant things and events, big and small, that we will need to adjust to, reflect on and absorb into memory. We will need to decide how to react or not to react. That saying of picking your battles comes to mind.

However, regardless of what I'm going through personally, what I witness, hear in the news, a lot of it trivial, it's hard to imagine staring across a stonewall at someone who did their best to kill you, yet raises their hand in friendship. It takes



a level of forgiveness most of us cannot fathom.

If you think about it, holding a grudge is a burden and physically demanding. Forgiveness can be a powerful tool for mental well-being. It can reduce anxiety and ease stress.

"Forgiveness is defined as replacing ill will toward an offender with goodwill, and it does not condone the harm but acknowledges it and helps you be free

from it." It can benefit both the forgiver and the person being forgiven.

So, I figure if those soldiers can forgive at that level, I should be able to forgive that person for cutting me off in traffic, or being rude about something, or hurting my feelings. I hope that if you are in a situation that requires forgiveness of someone, that you consider doing so by remembering these men.



## Civil War Apple Pie Recipe

Below is an apple pie recipe from the Civil War era to help you enjoy the rest of this season and the seasons to come.

Apple Pie Ingredients:

### Filling

8 medium-sized apples  
1 Tbsp butter  
1 cup white sugar  
1/2 cup culinary rose water  
A little grated nutmeg

### Crust

1/2 cup butter  
2 cups flour  
Pinch of salt  
Cold water  
1 egg



Instructions:

Core the apples, chop coarsely and stew until softened — about 15 minutes. When done, add the butter, sugar, rose water and nutmeg, and mix well. Prior to making the apple filling, make the dough. Rub the butter into the flour, add the salt and mix in enough cold water (a few tablespoons at a time) to make a nice dough.

Roll out enough dough to line a deep pie dish. Line the dish with the dough and fill with the apple mixture.

Roll out the remaining dough and cover the dish. Glaze with beaten egg and bake for 30 minutes in a moderate oven (375° F).

Source: William C. Davis, *The Civil War Cookbook* (Philadelphia, CLB Publishing, 1993).



### Trivia #3

The answer to trivia question #2 is no. The new Confederate flag adopted after First Manassas had thirteen stars, including stars for Kentucky and Missouri, but neither state ever officially seceded from the Union.

What phrase was added to federal coins, as required by an act of Congress, in April 1864?

The answer is, "In God We Trust."





# I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1863

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
and mild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime,  
A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
And with the sound  
The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth-stones of a continent,  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
"For hate is strong,  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The Wrong shall fail,  
The Right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men.



"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" is a Christmas carol based on the 1863 poem "Christmas Bells," which was written on Christmas Day by American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The song tells of the narrator hearing Christmas bells during the American Civil War, but despairing that, "hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men." After much anguish and despondency the carol concludes with the bells ringing out with resolution that, "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep" and that there will ultimately be, "...peace on earth, good will to men."

The origin is from 1861 when Longfellow's second wife of 18 years was fatally burned in an accidental fire. Then in 1863, during the American Civil War, Longfellow's oldest son, Charles Appleton Longfellow, joined the Union Army without his father's blessing. Longfellow was informed by a letter dated March 14, 1863, after Charles had left. "I have tried hard to resist the temptation of going without your leave, but I cannot any longer," he wrote. "I feel it to be my first duty to do what I can for my country, and I would willingly lay down my life for it if it would be of any good." Charles was soon appointed as a lieutenant but, in November, he was severely wounded in the Battle of Mine Run. Charles eventually recovered, but his time as a soldier was finished.

The refrain "peace on Earth, goodwill to men" is a reference to the King James Version of Luke 2:14." [Source is Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Heard_the_Bells_on_Christmas_Day)

