



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 6, Issue 2
Summer 2026



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About this Newsletter

Happy 250th United States! For anyone new to our camp and this newsletter, this camp was first chartered in 1884 as a post 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 S.U.V.C.W. camp in southern Illinois. The camp was chartered as part of the S.U.V.C.W. in 1996.



The S.U.V.C.W. is a fraternal organization dedicated to preserving the history and legacy of heroes who fought and worked to save the Union. In 1881, the G.A.R. formed the S.U.V.C.W. as the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America (SV) to carry on its traditions and memory long after the G.A.R. ceased to exist. It became the S.U.V.C.W. in name in 1925 and is the legal successor to the G.A.R., 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 S.U.V.C.W., 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 G.A.R. 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. Thank you for your readership of this newsletter and/or your participation in Hecker Camp, and the S.U.V.C.W.

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

Which Union general commanded the forces that decisively defeated John Bell Hood at the Battle of Nashville?

- A) William T. Sherman
- B) Ulysses S. Grant
- C) George H. Thomas
- D) Philip Sheridan

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 S.U.V.C.W. 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. More about the SUVCW is here: 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
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For submissions or to subscribe to the newsletter, email: lestweforget1861@outlook.com.

On the cover: This monument to William Charles Kueffner, born Feb. 27, 1840 in Germany and died March 18, 1893 in Walnut Hill Cemetery, Belleville, Illinois. He was an officer in the Union Army who served in the 9th Illinois Infantry in the Western Theater in several campaigns. He was later brevetted as a brigadier general for bravery in combat and was a noted attorney in southern Illinois following the war. (Photo by Gerald Sonnenberg)



The Corner

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

Hello Brothers, Camp in Review

April—Camp meeting was held April 1. We had no guests. We then read the financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes.

We then discussed upcoming events. Considering 2026 marks the 250th birthday year of not only the United States, it is also the 30th anniversary of the chartering of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443. Plans were made to tie this event with the annual picnic. It will be held Saturday, Aug. 29 at noon at the Shiloh, Illinois Community Center where we regularly meet. Save the Date/invitations will be mailed to past and present members of the camp.

In addition, we also planned to participate in the Lincoln death day events in Springfield, Illinois and the Benjamin Stephenson event in Petersburg, Illinois April 11.

Brother Richard Piper intends to make the presentation of the SUVCW ROTC award at a ceremony April 23, at the American Legion in Edwardsville, Illinois.

Preparations were made for the Memorial Day weekend that involved placing and retrieving flags at the Walnut Hill Cemetery and marching in the Belleville, Illinois Memorial Day parade May 25.

We planned to participate in a parade June 6 in Murphysboro, Illinois, in honor of the nation's 250th birthday and the 200th birthday of Gen. John A. Logan. This event also provided the avenue of having our civil war ancestors recognized on placards. Individuals would provide the ancestors name, unit, company and their residence at the time if known.

We also received a request to present the colors before a concert in the Shiloh, Illinois park, Wednesday, July 1 at 5 p.m.

During our meeting we received an email about participating at the Koerner House as part of the 250th celebration on June 20 in Belleville.

For Patriotic Instruction, Brother Piper discussed John Brown: Hero, martyr, villain? **See page 5.**

May—Camp meeting was held May 13. We had no guests. After the



financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes, we discussed any upcoming events and other topics.

We discussed new applications to the camp. In all there were seven possible new members. Some have submitted their applications. Others are considering membership. We appreciate their consideration at joining and hope to welcome them soon.

We finalized preparations for the Memorial Day weekend involving placing and retrieving flags at the Walnut Hill Cemetery and marching in the Belleville, Illinois Memorial Day parade May 25.

We agreed to participate at the Koerner House as part of the 250th celebration on June 20 and we are honored at the request. The Koerner House is joining other Belleville museums June 20, to celebrate the country's 250th birthday.

Planning continues for the annual picnic and Hecker Camp Reunion Aug. 29. The invitation/save the date is drafted.

For Patriotic Instruction, Brother Piper discussed lesser known details regarding the Lincoln assassination contained in the book, "*Killing Lincoln*," by Bill O'Reilly.

June—Camp meeting was held June 3. We had no guests. After the financial report and reading of the last meeting's minutes, we discussed past and upcoming events.

Memorial Day event went well with a larger crowd in Belleville than in recent

years.

Plans were finalized for participating June 6 in a parade in Murphysboro, Illinois, in honor of the nation's 250th birthday and the 200th birthday of Gen. John A. Logan.

We also finalized preparations to set up a display at the Koerner House June 20. This would include a tent and other items. Five or six brothers plan to participate.

For Patriotic Instruction, Brother Piper discussed "Brothers in Arms?" A discussion about Black soldiers and recruitment during the war.

Upcoming Events - For a full list of upcoming events, **see page 10.**

Next scheduled meetings - Our next scheduled meetings are July 1 and Aug. 5 at 7 p.m. and Aug. 29 at noon for our annual picnic at the Shiloh, Illinois Community Center. This will also be our September meeting. A Zoom option is usually also available for those who cannot attend in person. No Zoom will be offered Aug. 29.

Please 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. Deadline for the next issue is Sept. 15. Contact Brother Sonnenberg at lestweforget1861@outlook.com or gsonnenberg@hotmail.com.



Doc's Notes: Dr. Jonathan Letterman develops battlefield casualty evacuation

By Dr. Garry "Doc" Ladd
Hecker Camp Past Camp Commander

Jonathan Letterman was one of the most important medical figures of the American Civil War because he transformed battlefield medicine and greatly improved the survival of wounded soldiers. He did this by improving battlefield casualty evacuation.

Born in 1824 in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, Dr. Letterman graduated from Jefferson Medical College and joined the U.S. Army as a surgeon. Before the Civil War, he gained experience while treating soldiers on the western frontier, where he learned the importance of organization and quick medical care. These experiences prepared him for the challenges he would later face during the Civil War.

In 1862, Gen. George B. McClellan appointed Letterman as medical director of the Army of the Potomac. At the time,

battlefield medical care was disorganized and inefficient. Wounded soldiers were often left on the battlefield for days without treatment, and there was no reliable system for transportation or medical supply distribution. Letterman recognized these problems and developed a new system that revolutionized military medicine.

Ambulance Corps

One of Letterman's greatest contributions was the creation of an organized ambulance corps under the direction of the Medical Corps. Prior to this, ambulances were poorly managed and often used for purposes unrelated to medical care and under the direction of the quartermaster. Letterman trained dedicated stretcher bearers and ambulance drivers whose only responsibility was to transport wounded soldiers quickly and safely.

He also established field dressing stations, mobile field hospitals and larger general hospitals farther from the battlefield. This system allowed injured soldiers to receive treatment much faster than before. A concept still followed today.

Letterman's medical system proved highly successful during major battles like Antietam, Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. At Gettysburg in 1863, thousands of wounded soldiers were treated efficiently

because of the procedures he developed. His methods reduced suffering, improved survival rates and demonstrated the importance of organized emergency medical care.

The influence of Dr. Jonathan Letterman extended far beyond the Civil War. His ideas became the foundation for modern battlefield medicine and emergency medical services used today. Ambulance systems, triage procedures and organized trauma care all reflect principles that Letterman introduced during the war. Because of these achievements, he is often called the "Father of Battlefield Medicine."

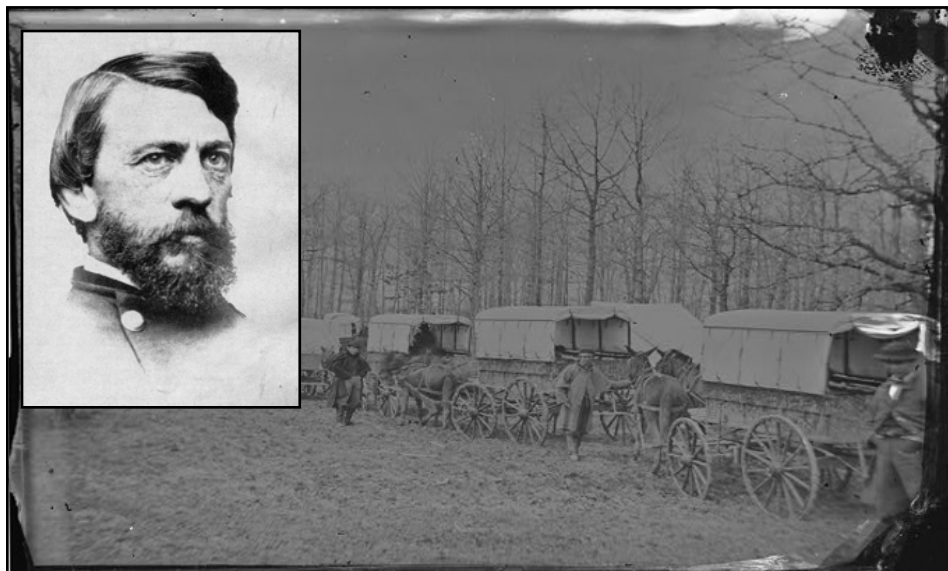
Dr. Letterman's innovations saved countless lives and changed military medicine forever. His leadership, organization and dedication to caring for wounded soldiers left a lasting impact on both military and civilian medical practices in the United States.

References:

- *Medical Recollections of the Army of the Potomac*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1866. <https://achh.army.mil/history/book-civil-lettermanmemoirs-medical-recollections>
- Carter, J., & Meyers, N. (2026). *The Life and Legacy of Dr. Jonathan Letterman (1824-1872): The Father of Modern Battlefield Medicine*. *Cureus*, 18(2), e102779. <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.102779>
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(Inset photo, left) Dr. Jonathan Letterman. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Medical Museum).

(Main photo, left) Ambulances at Harewood Hospital, Washington, D.C., 1863. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Library of Congress)



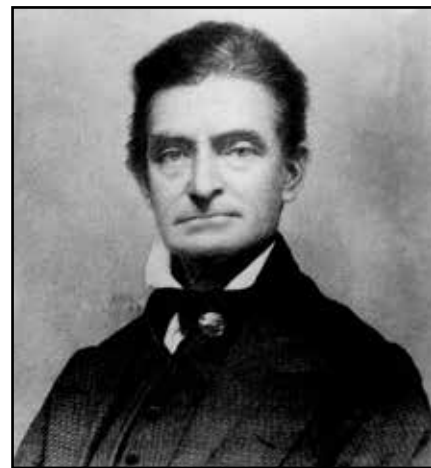
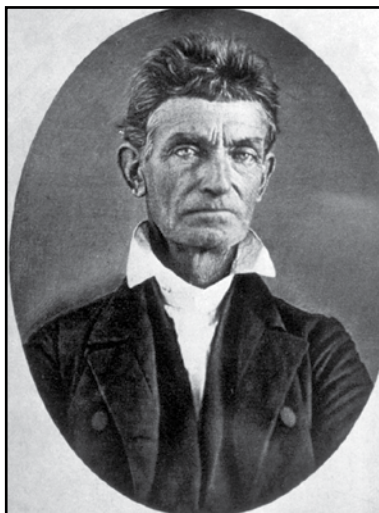
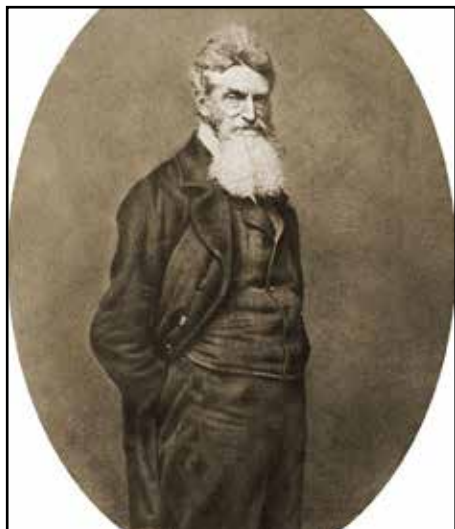
Trivia #2

The answer to Trivia #1 is C) George H. Thomas. Nicknamed the "Rock of Chickamauga," Thomas crushed Hood's Army of Tennessee in one of the war's most decisive Union victories.

What disastrous Confederate assault just before Nashville severely weakened Hood's army and cost thousands of irreplaceable Veterans and officers?

Want the answer? Find the third trivia question.





John Brown: Hero, martyr, villain?

By Richard Piper

Hecker Camp Treasurer, Patriotic Instructor

When the War of 1812 began, John Brown was 12 and started working with his father Owen Brown who was an Army beef contractor. John started his cattle drive to Michigan outposts through a forest trek of 100 miles, and at the end of each drive, John Brown would stay in the home of a U.S. Marshal where he was treated like family. He was given presents and was noted for his intelligence and speaking ability.

Owen Brown taught all his children to hate slavery. The Marshal had a slave about John's age, and they became friends. One evening, the Marshal had friends over. After they left, the Marshal, displeased with the slave boy's dinner service, took an iron shovel from the fireplace and beat the boy on the head and shoulders. The beating he witnessed changed John Brown into the "most determined" enemy of slavery.

Brown's rise

In 1849, Brown and his family moved to upstate New York. There, he assisted former slaves as new farmers on land that had been donated. Once the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 was passed, he moved to Kansas, leaving his wife and youngest children at home.

In Kansas, he helped abolitionist settlers create a free soil state. There, he went to war against pro-slavery settlers and "border ruffians," thus making him a fugitive in most of the country, but a hero among abolitionists.

As time passed, he felt he was not

making enough progress to end slavery as "God's chosen messenger" in the United States. He had a plan, though, that he thought would reach his goal.

Brown's plan

On Oct. 16, 1859, John Brown and his provisional army of 18 soldiers marched toward Harpers Ferry, Virginia, which was located alongside the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. The town contained the second Federal armory of the nation. The first Federal armory has been located in Springfield, Massachusetts since 1777. Being centrally located and inland, the Harpers Ferry armory was safe from attacks from foreign navies, but not a good location in a civil war.

John Brown and his army, which included several relatives, would attack and seize the U.S. Armory and arsenal at Harpers Ferry and capture tens of thousands of firearms. The call for freedom would be sounded to nearby plantations. The slaves would rally to him and raid plantation after plantation. This army of slaves, he thought, would put pressure on the Federal government, which was tolerant of slavery.

He hoped his crusade would make slavery economically unworkable and politically unpopular. His biggest hope was that his actions would create a revolution that would establish a new American government.

Harpers Ferry

When it was time to attack he cut the telegraph lines into Harpers Ferry and seized the covered railroad bridge across the Potomac and another

bridge across the Shenandoah. They dispatched the only guard at the armory.

After that, his master plan then began to unravel. No great army of slaves appeared to help him. Instead, his army was being attacked by the angry citizens of the town who rose up to oppose him, causing casualties in Brown's army.

The first to die was Dangerfield Newby; one of his five black soldiers. A train had been detained for a short time by Brown the morning of the raid. It later arrived at a station where a telegraph message alerted local militiamen who came to Harpers Ferry and forced a retreat by Brown's men to a barricaded firehouse on the grounds of the armory.

Brown still had an ace up his sleeve in that he had taken the precaution of capturing dozens of prominent hostages including Lewis Washington, a slave owning great-grandnephew of President George Washington. He hoped that holding these men would buy him time for reinforcements to arrive. Reinforcements did arrive, but not for his side.

Help arrives

President James Buchanan sent a company of 86 Marines by special train from the Washington Navy Yard. They were placed under the command of Col. Robert E. Lee to stop the raid and arrest Brown and his army. Though the militia and Marines joined together, the militia was not gung ho to attack. The Marines were.

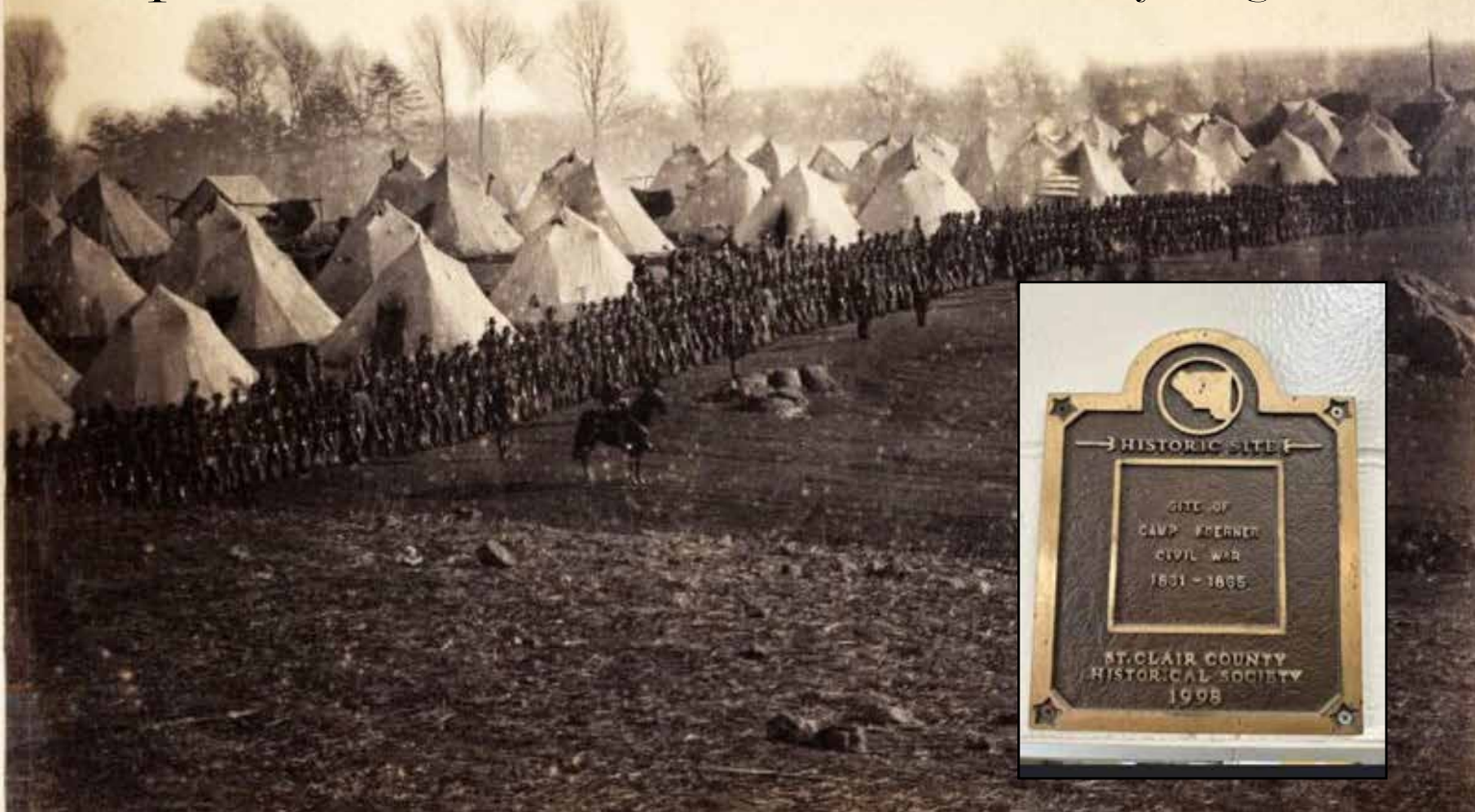
Army Lt. J.E.B. Stuart, home on leave from the West, joined the group. He showed a flag of truce and delivered a

See **BROWN**, page 7 ...

Raising an army:

Camp Koerner and the 22nd Illinois Infantry Regiment

A photograph of a Union training camp during the Civil War. (Courtesy image) In the inset image below is the plaque recognizing Koerner Camp located at the St. Clair County Fairgrounds..



By Brother Jon Stacy
Hecker Camp #443

During the course of my time spent at the Gustave Koerner House on Saturday June 20 for the Belleville History Day Abraham Lincoln Walking Tour, I heard a lot of questions in reference to the St. Clair County Fairgrounds and its history related to the U.S. Civil War. To be blunt, its use during the Civil War is, basically, a footnote in the overall history of the conflict. When interviewed over the phone by a reporter for the *Belleville News-Democrat*, even he thought it was a bigger deal than what it was, so let's dive into it.

In late April 1861, it was decided by Illinois Governor Richard Yates to raise an additional 10 infantry regiments without waiting for Federal approval. Each regiment would come from one of the ten congressional districts within the state and would be trained in the largest county seat of that district. Belleville

was chosen as the place of training their respective regiment, the 22nd Illinois Infantry Regiment, and the St. Clair County Fairground chosen as the site.

Former Illinois Lieutenant Governor Koerner said these regimental rosters were filled faster than those from the original call for troops.

The County Fairground was originally named "Camp Bissell." However the 12th Illinois stationed in Caseyville, Illinois to deter a Missouri invasion of the state, named their camp "Bissell," and the new regiment named the fairgrounds



"Camp Koerner" instead.

When Capt. Ulysses S. Grant toured the camp and inspected the three companies present (two from Belleville and one from Monroe County) on May 8, 1861, food, drink and other necessities were provided by the Belleville citizens in liberal quantities. Everything else was obtained through a credit line or to be reimbursed by the State of Illinois.

The next day, Koerner received word of an impending operation in St. Louis; he then arranged for a westbound train to be readied at the station near the fairgrounds and the troops under Capt. Henry Dougherty (later colonel) be readied for immediate transport, if the operation failed or spilled into Illinois.

Following the Camp Jackson Affair May 10 in St. Louis that ensured Union control of the city for the rest of the war, the troops and train weren't needed, so the training and drilling continued.

See KOERNER, next page ...

BROWN continued ...

letter to Brown from Col. Lee demanding Brown's surrender, which was refused.

The Marines then sprang into action. Sledgehammers and a ladder were used to storm through the barricaded door of the firehouse, and in the final skirmish one Marine was killed. However Brown, who was badly injured, was now in custody.

Aftermath

A quick trial was convened ten days after the raid on Oct. 26. Virginia

Governor Henry Wise wanted the speedy trial for Brown and the other survivors under Virginia law. A conviction was reached Oct. 31, and Brown's execution would take place Nov. 2. Virginia law mandated a one month delay, and on Dec. 2, John Brown was executed. One of the spectators at his execution was John Wilkes Booth.

In the end, the raid was a disaster. Of the 18 raiders, 10 died in the raid and six, plus John Brown, were executed. Brown's family suffered a great loss. In addition to Brown, two of his sons and two brothers of his son-in-law were killed in the raid.



Although his actions are reported as a raid now, at that time, the term

Marines attack the armory at Harpers Ferry. (National Archives)

used was rebellion. The telegraph lines told of the "breaking" news of the day and his attempt to end slavery. Reverent death row interviews were printed in abolitionist newspapers. On the other hand, pro-slavery newspapers had their editors portray John Brown as a villain and a traitor, who showed what happened when you supported abolitionists.

His rebellion set the stage for Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860 and 11 states seceded shortly after to begin the Civil War. When Virginia seceded, Union soldiers burned the armory at once. Harpers Ferry was also an important route to the South, and both the Union and Confederacy wanted it resulting in Harpers Ferry being captured and recaptured 14 times. Its railroad bridge connecting Maryland and Virginia was destroyed nine times.

Depending on your viewpoint, what happened at Harper's Ferry makes John Brown a hero, a martyr or an abolitionist villain. A man with a burning passion to free the slaves certainly helped to ignite the passions that would explode into a war to make all people free.

Sources:

*Gaffney, Dennis and Peter (2011), *The Civil War*, page 21, Hyperion

*Letterjoy.co weekly newsletter



KOERNER continued ...

On June 23, 1861, Gustave Koerner presented the regimental colors to the 22nd Illinois Infantry on the steps of the St. Clair County courthouse, thus ending the fairgrounds tenure as Camp Koerner. Despite only being used in this capacity for less than two months, Camp Koerner is remembered with a bronze marker placed there previously to its re-acquisition by the County and subsequent restoration.

However, the story is not done. For the first time on Oct. 22-24, 1879, the fairgrounds was used to host large Veteran reunions in the city of Belleville.

The *Belleville Advocate* newspaper called the 1879 reunion, "A Monster Boom," as it had guest speakers such as Generals William T. Sherman, Philip H. Sheridan, John A. Logan, Richard Oglesby and A.J. Smith, a massive parade that included Veterans from the War of 1812 and Mexican War, along with a sham battle between Veterans and the 3rd Brigade Illinois National Guard. It was overheard when a Veteran strolled through the camp

of the 3rd Brigade that it, "reminded him so much of old times that he was on the point of stealing a chicken from a neighbors house before he thought of the absurdity of such a proceeding."

The fairgrounds would be known as "Camp Hugo Wangelin" during the Southern Illinois Soldier and Sailors Reunion, held between Sept. 25-27, 1889. Another reunion was held there for the Southern Illinois Soldier and Sailors Reunion between Oct. 5-7, 1892.

Less than two months of service was needed to train "Belleville's Own" 22nd Illinois, and it's fascinating to me, that ordinary folks hold a special place for that tidbit of history. The bronze marker at the fairgrounds has definitely done its job!

Sources:

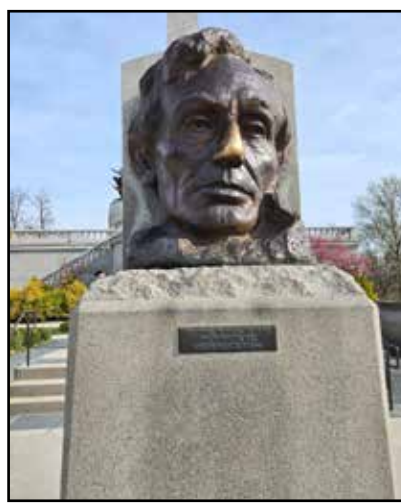
*Koerner, Gustave (1910). *"Memoirs of Gustave Koerner 1809-1896, Life Sketches Written at the Suggestion of his children", Volume II*, Pages 145-149, "Grant in Belleville," "Camp Jackson Taken," "Equipping Volunteer Troops," "Presents Colors



This flag belonging to the 101st Illinois Infantry Regiment was typical in design for Illinois regiments of the time of the Civil War.

to the Belleville Regiment." Edited by: Thomas J. McCormick. Mary K. Engelmann
*Belleville Weekly Advocate: 3 Oct. 1879; 10 Oct. 1879; 24 Oct. 1879; 26 July 1889; 2 Aug. 1889; 27 Sept. 1889; 4 Oct. 1889; 29 July 1892; 9 Sept. 1892; 16 Sept. 1892; 23 Sept. 1892; and 30 Sept. 1892.





Remembering Lincoln

SUVCW, patriotic groups come together to honor the President

*Story and photos by Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp Secretary/Editor*

More than 100 people, including members of Hecker Camp, attended the 70th Annual Lincoln Tomb Ceremony in Springfield, Illinois April 11. It's been 161 years since our 16th president died by the hand of an assassin at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.

The ceremony in front of his tomb in Oak Ridge Cemetery is conducted by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS), as well as with participation by other patriotic, Veteran and historical organizations. These include the National Women's Relief Corps and Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic.

S.U.V.C.W. Commander in Chief Kevin Tucker addressed the crowd that represented camps and organizations from at least Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kentucky, Missouri, Texas, Louisiana and Kansas. In addition, the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regimental Band provided musical entertainment and accompaniment for the ceremony.

The event included the presentation of colors, the laying of wreaths and the playing of taps. Later that day, a ceremony was also held at the Dr. Benjamin Stephenson Gravesite Memorial Plaza in Rose Hill Cemetery in Petersburg, Illinois.

The annual events are conducted by the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and M.O.L.L.U.S., or often known as the Loyal Legion. Dr. Stephenson was the founding father of the G.A.R. on April 6, 1866 in Decatur, Illinois.



(Photo, top left) A color guard representing the Allied Orders.

(Top center) Lincoln's statue

(Top right) CinC Kevin Tucker addresses the audience.

(Above) Brother Jim Achenbach of the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regimental Band plays taps.



(Photo, above left) Hecker Camp Brothers Gerald Sonnenberg and Richard Piper at the Springfield event. (Above) The 33rd Illinois Volunteer Regimental Band. (Right) Brother Richard Piper presents the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 wreath.



Around the Community



Hall in Edwardsville. (Courtesy photo)

SUVCW ROTC award presented

On April 23, Hecker Camp #443 Brother Richard Piper presented the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Reserve Officer Training Corps award and medal to Haden Lucas. Lucas is a student at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois, and this took place at their Army awards ceremony at the American Legion



New members

During our meeting on May 13, we took a photo of a recent new member Eric Rennie (left) with Hecker Camp Commander Russell Schleicher. Brother Rennie is a retired Army staff sergeant and member of VFW Post 805 in O'Fallon, Illinois. Welcome Brother Rennie. We also want to take a moment to welcome back to Hecker Camp a prior member, secretary and historian Jon Stacy. Welcome back Brother Stacy. (Photo by Gerald Sonnenberg)



Grand Celebration

By Gerald Sonnenberg

Hecker Camp Secretary/Editor

On June 6, (photo above) Brothers Greg Zelinske, Gerald Sonnenberg, Justin Ottolini, John Stanton, Richard Piper and Mike Winkler marched in the Gen. John A. Logan Grand Celebration parade recognizing America's 250th birthday and what would have been Gen. Logan's 200th birthday.

This parade in Murphysboro, Illinois was part of a 3-day celebration June 5-7. The event included music, food, reenactors of the Revolutionary and Civil War, games, and a cannon firing demonstration.

Brother Zelinske also assisted with a weapons demonstration (right). (Photos by Diane Zelinske and Gerald Sonnenberg)



Fallen brother



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Brother William Pool, a proud Veteran of the United States Army, Bronze Star recipient and wounded POW, passed away June 7 at the age of 101. He was also the last known surviving son of an American Civil War Veteran, Charles Parker Pool, who fought for the Union Army in the 6th West Virginia Volunteers.

On Jan. 13, 2025, on his 100th Birthday in Bolivar Missouri, Brother Bob AuBuchon of the Department of Missouri presented Brother Pool with a certificate of membership in the Department of Missouri and an S.U.V.C.W. membership medal.

At the time, Mr. Pool's daughter Carolyn George pinned the medal on her father. In addition, a news story about Mr. Pool from television station KY3 was available [here](#).

The full obituary for Brother Pool is [here](#). Thank you Brother Pool for your service.





(Above, left to right) Hecker Camp Brothers Greg Zelinske, Gerald Sonnenberg, John Stanton, Richard Piper, Justin Ottolini and Jon Stacy marched in the Belleville, Illinois Memorial Day parade May 25. Camp Commander Russell Schleicher rode in the trailing vehicle with Donna Rees. (Photo by Denise Sonnenberg)

Remembering the fallen on Memorial Day

By Gerald Sonnenberg
Hecker Camp secretary, editor

On May 25, Hecker Camp #443 Brothers Russell Schleicher, John Stanton, Greg Zelinske, Richard Piper, Justin Ottolini, Gerald Sonnenberg and Jon Stacy marched in the Belleville, Illinois Memorial Day Parade. Donna Rees graciously volunteered to drive the trailing vehicle behind the formation carrying CC Schleicher.

The same group of brothers, in addition to Brother Eric Rennie and his daughters Bryn and Emilia, came to Walnut Hill cemetery in Belleville to place and retrieve flags in honor of Memorial Day (*bottom photo*).

Memorial Day was first widely observed on May 30, 1868 to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers, by proclamation of Gen. John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), an organization of former Union sailors and soldiers. As the third Commander-in-Chief of the G.A.R. Veterans organization at that time, Logan issued General Order No. 11.

The first paragraph reads, "The 30th day of May 1868 is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form or ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will, in their own way, arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit."



Upcoming Camp Events

Please contact Brother Sonnenberg if interested in participating or for questions pertaining to these events.



***BELLEVILLE, Illinois** - The St. Clair County Fair is coming back to Belleville after a 12-year absence at the St. Clair County Fairgrounds Thursday July 30 through Saturday Aug. 1. Hecker Camp has been asked to participate in the 3-day event, so we plan to have a display of varying items and interest in the Expo 1 building from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. each day alongside other groups and businesses. If you attend the fair, please stop by to learn more about our camp and the Civil War, including the fairground's role in training troops. More information about the upcoming Fair St. Clair is [here](#).

***SHILOH, IL** - The year 2026 is not only the 250th anniversary of the United States, it also marks the 30th anniversary of the chartering of the Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp #443 as part of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) in 1996. In tribute of this anniversary, we thought it fitting to make use of our annual camp picnic as a reunion of both current and past members of the Camp. We plan to have food and presentations, as well as an opportunity for friends, old and new, to come together. We will also hold our September Camp meeting as part of the latter half of the event. We are asking that if you are a current or past member of the camp that you please consider attending this event. You are welcome to bring a friend or family member. For our planning purposes, please RSVP by Aug. 15 via email: gsonnenberg@hotmail.com or by telephone: 618-567-4685. The date, time and address for the event is Saturday Aug. 29, 2026 at noon, Shiloh Community Center, 7 Park Drive Shiloh, Illinois 62269.





Photos by Jon Stacy and Gerald Sonnenberg

Koerner House helps celebrate 250

The historic Koerner House (above) is located at the corner of 200 Abend in Belleville, Illinois, and was the home to former Illinois Lt. Governor Gustave Koerner. The group managing this historic site joined with other Belleville museums June 20, to celebrate the country's 250th birthday. The Col. Friedrich K. Hecker Camp was invited to participate.

While Koerner House staff and volunteers provided several group tours and presentations, Hecker Camp members Jon Stacy, Richard Piper, Greg Zelinske, John Stanton and Gerald Sonnenberg, (pictured top right, left to right, in the living room in front of portraits of Gustave and Sophie Koerner) displayed a tent, antiques, memorabilia, equipment and photographs to the dozens in attendance. Brothers Sonnenberg and Piper also had the chance to perform the manual of arms with "private" Charlotte (bottom photo).

Gustav Philipp Koerner, also spelled Gustave or Gustavus Koerner, was born Nov. 20, 1809 in Frankfurt, Germany and died April 9, 1896 in Belleville. He was a German-American revolutionary, journalist, lawyer, politician, judge and statesman in Illinois and Germany, and a colonel of the U.S. Army who was a confessed enemy of slavery.

In Germany, he was a revolutionary trying to help Germany become a free and democratic country. Essentially blacklisted for his efforts, Koerner boarded a ship in Le Havre sailing to North America on May 1, 1833 with a group of emigrants headed by the patriarch of the Engelmann family, whose son Theodor was an old friend of his from college. On the passage he became engaged to his future wife Sophie, a daughter of Engelmann's who was born in Imsbach in the Palatinate (Pfalz), a historic region of Germany. He married Sophie Dorothea Engelmann on June 17, 1836 in Belleville, where they had nine children.

Koerner was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives in 1842, served on the Illinois Supreme Court from 1845 to 1848, and as the 12th Lieutenant Governor of Illinois from 1853 to 1857.

He belonged to the co-founders and was one of the first members of the Grand Old Party, and was a close confidant of Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary Todd. He had an essential role in his nomination and election for president in 1860.

In 1861, Koerner was instrumental in raising the 43rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, but before its organization had been completed, he was appointed Colonel of Volunteers and assigned as aide to Gen. John C. Frémont, upon whose removal he was assigned to Gen. Henry W. Halleck's staff as Brigadier General. He resigned in April 1862 due to impaired health. Shortly thereafter, he succeeded Carl Schurz as United States Ambassador to Spain.



Jefferson Barracks symposium coming in July

By Kristen M. Kenshalo
Missouri Civil War Museum

This summer, join the Missouri Civil War Museum (MCWM) as they celebrate two centuries of service at the Jefferson Barracks Bicentennial Symposium.

Hosted by the MCWM from July 10 through 12, the symposium will feature tours and presentations by local historians, along with delicious food and drinks. On July 10 will be an evening toast, presentation and ceremony. July 11 and 12 includes tours of the parade ground, national cemetery and historic buildings along with other speakers and demonstrations.

Sign up today by calling (314) 845-1861 or visiting the museum front desk. Space is limited! Details are subject to alteration.

For more information, please visit mcwm.org/jb200.

About the museum

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



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

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 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.

More information on reservations, capacity and pricing can be found at our website at 1918building.org or by calling the Missouri Civil War Museum at 314-845-1861.



Trivia #3

The answer to trivia question #2 is the Battle of Franklin. Hood's repeated frontal attacks on entrenched Union positions devastated the Army of Tennessee and set the stage for defeat at Nashville.

Which key battlefield position collapsed on Dec. 16, 1864, helping trigger the complete rout of Hood's army at Nashville?

The answer is Shy's Hill. Today, visitors to Shy's Hill can walk preserved trails and earthworks at the very spot where Union troops shattered the Confederate line and helped destroy the Army of Tennessee.. More information can be found here <https://www.battleofnashvilletrust.org/shys-hill/>



Connection to the past

Brother Eric Rennier provided a group photo of his grandfather Simon Oliver Beales (*far right*) with the then remaining members of his Grand Army of the Republic Post 503 in Trilla,

Illinois, taken in August 1919. The post was chartered April 24, 1885 in Coles County Illinois. Pictured left to right are Brothers B. Brown, Francis Johnson, George Drummond, John Jones, David McCalvy, Stephen Fread, Henry McPherson, and Brother Beals. (Photo courtesy of Eric Rennier)





This painting by artist John Trumbull depicts the moment on June 28, 1776, when the first draft of the Declaration of Independence was presented to the Second Continental Congress. (Image courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol)

Little known facts about the Declaration

Information from an article by Robert Stephens

The Declaration of Independence was not signed on July 4.

Thomas Jefferson presented a draft of what would become the Declaration of Independence in the days before July 4, 1776. The full Congress debated, revised and edited the document on July 2 and July 3. By July 4, they ratified the wording. The formal copy of the Declaration of Independence wasn't officially finalized until two weeks later, and it wasn't signed until Aug. 2. John Trumbull's famous painting (above) of Jefferson, John Hancock, John Adams, Ben Franklin and Roger Sherman does not depict the signing — it is them presenting the draft on June 28, 1776.

The signing wasn't done at once.

The document stayed in Philadelphia until each of the 56 delegates could eventually travel there by horse. It would

take six months for all the signatures to be compiled. Thomas McKean of Delaware was the last person to sign, possibly as late as 1777, though the actual date is disputed. Some copies of the declaration do not have McKean's name on them.

About the signers.

Two 26-year-olds from South Carolina were the youngest to sign the Declaration of Independence (Thomas Lynch Jr., and Edward Rutledge). Benjamin Franklin, 70, was the oldest. Eight of the men were born in the British Isles. They were comprised of lawyers, businessmen, farmers, teachers and a minister (John Witherspoon of New Jersey). Two signers were inventors of similarly named musical instruments that never caught on (Francis Hopkinson with the Bellarmonic, and Benjamin Franklin with the glass armonica).

Nine of the signers died before inde-

pendence was officially won.

Between 1776 and 1783, when the states achieved independence, nine of the signers died — some in bizarre circumstances. Button Gwinnett of Georgia, died in a duel over conduct in a battle, and 26-year-old Thomas Lynch Jr., who was one of the two youngest to sign, drowned in a storm on his way to France.

The first celebration was short-lived.

As the declaration was being read to Continental Army troops on July 9, they were on the verge of being routed by the British Army. The troops had just enough time to tear down the two-ton statue of George III in New York and send it up the East River to Connecticut, where its pieces were melted into musket balls.

If it were not for the sacrifice of patriots then and throughout our 250 years of existence, and I would say, especially during the Civil War to keep our nation whole, what our founders created with this document may have been for nothing. May we be blessed with many 4th of Julys to come.

