

**Term of Department Commander Dean Speaks**

**Department Orders No. 1  
Series 1996-97  
October 1996**

1. I want to thank all the Brothers who elected me to serve as the first Department Commander for the Department of Kansas at the Special Encampment held in Salina, Kansas on August 3, 1996. It is indeed truly an honor to be selected to serve in this capacity and I will do my best to help make this a banner year in our Order. It has been a lot of work and will continue to be for some time but things are coming together and we are growing.

2. I would like to extend my best wishes to the Department Presidents of the Allied Orders here in Kansas and my hope for them to have a successful year. I sincerely believe that with a little work and a lot of luck we can someday hold all of our Conventions and Encampments in the same place at the same time.

3. At the Special Encampment of the Department of Kansas the following Officers were nominated, elected and installed for 1996:

Department Commander - Dean K. Speaks, CC #3  
Senior Vice Commander - Jerry A. Seery, CC #1  
Junior Vice Commander - Albert P. James, CC #2  
Department Secretary/Treasurer - Christopher R. Horn  
Department Council - James P. Coyne  
Merle J. Hodges  
Robert L. Westgate

4. I have appointed the following Department Officers:

Department Patriotic Instructor - Merle J. Hodges  
Department Chaplain - Joseph Brackman  
Department Counselor - Gary W. Owen  
Department Newsletter Editor - Roland R. Brees  
Department Graves Registration Officer - Franklin C. Bergquist  
Department Color Guard - James Finneran  
Department Guard - Roland Vochatzer  
Department Guide - Kim L. Nelson  
Department Historian - James C. Martin

5. I have also appointed the following Brothers to serve on these Department Committees:

*Membership* Robert Westgate, John Tillman, Jerry Coffelt, John Hartford  
*Americanism & Education* Donald Vochatzer, Walter Griest, Kenneth Spurgeon  
*Fraternal Relations* Ronald Vochatzer, Terry Iseli, Thomas Page, Sr.  
*Military Affairs* Merle Hodges, Jerry Seery, Albert James, Kim Nelson  
*Special Projects* James Martin, Robert Westgate, Franklin Bergquist, Joseph Brackman  
*Encampment Site* Michael Sloan, David Duchan, Kim Nelson

6. There will be a Fall Conference of the Department of Kansas on Sunday afternoon, November 17th in Johnson County. (Details will be given out shortly.) The Fall Conference is a chance for the Camps to get together in a non-formal manner to work out any problems, ask questions, give suggestions and share any ideas that are working for your Camp. It is also a chance for Committees to meet to discuss any business before the Annual Encampment.

7. The 1st Annual Encampment will be held on February 22 & 23, 1997 in Wichita. As this is the inaugural Encampment for the Department of Kansas we are hoping to have many of our National Officers attending. Please make your plans now to attend this important event as our Annual Encampment is where we set the guidelines for the Department for the coming year. Camps are encouraged to send their resolutions to the Department Secretary by

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no later than January 15th so that we can get them on the agenda for the Encampment. This will include any proposed changes to our Bylaws, proposals for Department Dues, etc..

8. I am adopting a policy of recognizing Brothers in our Department who recruit new members. In recognizing their efforts I will be awarding the status of Department Aide to any Brother who recruits two or more new members to our Order between the dates of February 1, 1996 and February 1, 1997. They will be awarded a certificate at the Annual Encampment to recognize their efforts. Camps Secretaries please be sure that the name of the recruiter is listed on any applications forwarded to the Department Secretary.

9. I am also announcing the creation of several awards to be presented at the Department Encampment in February.

The first of these is the *Cpl. Leonidas B. Davis Award for "Recruiter of the Year"* for our Department. This award will be given at the Department Encampment to the member who recruits the most new members for the year. It is named after my great-grandfather who enlisted in Co. F, 3rd Iowa Infantry and was wounded in his first engagement at Blue Mills, Missouri. He returned home to Iowa to recover from his wounds and re-enlisted in Co. A, 5th Iowa Cavalry in 1864 and fought to the end of the war.

The next award is the *Capt. Patrick H. Coney Award for "Member of the Year"*. Capt. Coney enlisted in Co. H, 111th New York Vol. Infantry at the age of 15. The 111th New York lost 249 of its 350 fighting men of the line while repulsing attacks of Pickett, Pettigrew and Armistead on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. Capt. Coney was severely wounded at the battle of Peach Orchard near Petersburg, Virginia on June 16, 1864 yet continued with his command until Lee's surrender. Capt. Coney served the Department of Kansas, G.A.R., as its Department Commander in 1905 and 1906 and devoted his life to the betterment of veteran's lives. He established, and donated thousands of relics and documents to, the G.A.R. Museum in Topeka and, as an attorney, wrote several laws concerning the rights and property of the G.A.R. and the Civil War Veteran in Kansas.

The third award is the *William W. Nixon Award for "Camp of the Year"*. William W. Nixon, from Jewell, Kansas, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1940-41, was the only Kansan ever elected to the office and was 94 years old at the time of his election. Commander-in-Chief Nixon served in several Post, Department and National Offices, including serving as Department Commander in 1934-35 and as a member of the National Council of Administration and National Executive Board, served as the National Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief and on several Department and National Committees. Commander-in-Chief Nixon epitomized the title of "Comrade" to his brothers in the G.A.R. and constantly worked to improve Soldier's relief efforts and for laws affecting Civil War Veterans. This award will be presented to the Camp that excels in several areas including: Recruitment, Camp Activities, working with local Veterans and Charitable organizations, etc..

All of these awards are "traveling trophies" and consist of plaques with the name of the recipient engraved on them. The recipient will also receive a certificate indicating that they received the award for the year.

10. I have asked Brother Roland Brees to create a newsletter for the Department of Kansas to better enable us to keep our growing membership informed. I believe that information is the key to helping our Department grow and prosper. Brother Brees will be sending a copy of the newsletter to each Camp Secretary who is to make enough photocopies that each member in their Camp shall have a copy. At this time this is done to keep down expenses and postage. The Department Newsletter will be published each quarter. All Brothers and Camps are encouraged to submit items and articles for publication to Brother Brees.

11. All Camp Secretaries are requested to send an updated list of all members, associates and juniors to the Department Secretary and Department Commander on a quarterly basis. This list should include the names, addresses and phone numbers along with e-mail addresses (if the member has one). This will better enable us to include any and all members in mailings, etc. along with maintaining the membership list.

12. I am presently putting together information for a "Home Page" for the Department on the Internet. This will enable us to get any and all information about our Department, Camps, members, etc. out to the world via computer. Any Brother who has information that they would like to see included in our homepage, or knows of any links that I can include, please drop me a line or you can e-mail me. Our homepage will be linked to the National Organization's and should be online sometime in mid-November.

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13. Camp Secretaries are also reminded to inform the Department Commander of any Boy Scouts in your area that are going to be receiving Eagle Scout awards. Please let me know at least 2 weeks in advance as I have an award to present to them from our Commander-in-Chief at their awards banquets. This is retroactive to August of this year (since our Department was created) and I will try and attend any upcoming events. If for some reason I am unable to attend the presentation I will be calling upon the local Camp Commander to either make the presentation for me or to assign someone to do it.

14. To all Brothers who have been ill, I extend my wishes for a speedy recovery and to all who have lost loved ones, you have my sincere sympathies.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

/s/ Dean K. Speaks, Department Commander

Attest:

/s/ Christopher R. Horn, Department Secretary/Treasurer

**Department Orders No. 2**  
**Series 1996-1997 January 1997**

1. I sincerely hope that this finds everyone in good health and that we all had a good holiday season. Words cannot express the honor it has been to serve as the first Department Commander for the Department of Kansas. I look forward to serving this Department in whatever capacity for many years to come. I am very proud of each and every one of you and your accomplishments in the short time we have had together.
2. The 1st Annual Department Encampment for the Department of Kansas will be held on February 22-23, 1997 at the Star Lumber Company Cabin located at 73rd Street South and 103rd Street West just outside of Wichita. The National Commander-in-Chief of the Sons, Alan R. Loomis, of Valparaiso, Indiana will be in attendance along with, possibly, several other National Officers. The Department Commander and the National Commander-in-Chief will be staying at the Comfort Inn located at 47th Street South and Laura (this is just off of the Kansas Turnpike (I-35) at the 47th Street South Exit).
3. We have planned an interesting session for this year culminating on Saturday evening with a Banquet and "The Commander's Ball", a period dance featuring the band "Blackwolf" from Salina. We have invited several reenacting groups to attend and should have a decent turnout for the event. So bring the ladies along for what should be a good time. (If you have a Civil War uniform, wear it to the dance, if not, dress accordingly).
4. The preliminary schedule of events for the Encampment is as follows:  
Saturday, February 22nd  
  
8:30 a.m. Registration (\$5.00 fee - this covers your lunch)  
9:00 a.m. Opening of Business Session  
11:00 a.m. Initiation of New Members  
12:00 p.m. Lunch at the Encampment Site  
1:00 p.m. Reconvene Business Session  
3:00 p.m. Election & Installation of Officers  
4:30 p.m. Adjourn (will reconvene on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. if needed)  
6:00 p.m. Banquet & Awards Presentation  
8:00 p.m. Commander's Ball (Dance to the music of "Blackwolf")
5. The cost for the Banquet is \$10.00 per person and the cost for the Dance is \$8.00 for Singles and \$12.00 for Couples. As the preliminary schedule of the encampment indicates there will be a \$5.00 registration fee if you are planning on eating lunch at the Encampment site. The lunch, along with the banquet, will be catered by Ken Strader who is a member of our Department. Ken has graciously kept the costs to a minimum and assures us there will be plenty of good things to eat.
6. All Camp Secretaries are reminded to submit a report to the Department Commander by no later than February 7th indicating how many new members their Camp has received between the formation of the Camp and January 31, 1997, along with who recruited each member (please send me a photocopy of their application). This is so the awards for recruiting can be completed. I again stress that I must receive this information by February 7th to have the time necessary to complete certificates and awards for the recruiters.
6. Camp Secretaries are also reminded to forward any and all resolutions to the Department Secretary by no later than February 7th so that he can get them compiled for the Encampment. This will include any and all proposed changes to the Department Bylaws, etc.
7. All Department Officers are to give the Department Commander a written report of their year in office by no later than 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 22nd. It would be preferable if the reports were mailed to me in advance. These reports will be read at the Encampment and will become part of the Official Record of our Encampment.
8. In my first Department Orders I announced an honor for those brothers who recruited new members in the Kansas Department. Brothers who recruit at least two new members to our Order, during my command, will be appointed Department Aides for one year and will be awarded a certificate at the Encampment recognizing their accomplishment.

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9. All Department Officers are expected to attend the Encampment, take their respective chairs, and be suitably attired. If an officer is unable to attend please notify the Department Commander in advance.

10. To those of you who are ill, I extend my hope for a speedy recovery. To those who have lost loved ones in the past year, I offer my sympathy and condolences. I look forward to seeing each and every one of you at the Encampment and, once again, it has been an honor to serve as your Department Commander this year.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Dean K. Speaks  
Department Commander