

The Sunflower Picket

Recipient of the 2006 Marshall Hope Award for Best Department Newsletter

www.suvcwks.org

Publication of the Department of Kansas, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

2025-2026 DEPARTMENT ELECTED OFFICERS

Kent M. Melcher, PDC

*Sixteenth and Twenty-third
Department Commander*



Front Row, left to right: Michael J. Hadl, PCC; Alan L. Russ, PDC; Joshua S. Gillihan-Young; Dale L. Crandell, PDC; James D. Thornton, PCC; Roy A. Lafferty, PDC.
Back Row, left to right: Barrett E. Young, PCC; Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC; Kent M. Melcher, PDC; Conrad M. Fisher, PDC; Jeffrey A. Winters; Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC

NEW BROTHERS, JANUARY 1, 2025 – MARCH 31, 2025

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date Joined</i>	<i>Ancestor</i>	<i>Camp</i>
Barton, Leroy	1/16/2025	Private Robert Harris	Pvt John N. Eckes Camp 10, Winfield
Crow, Zane Allen	1/16/2025	Private Augustus F Taton	Pvt John N. Eckes Camp 10, Winfield
Hansen, John Dietrich Charles	2/27/2025	Private Andrew Johnson	Franklin Camp 5, Olathe
Hansen, Philip Andrew	2/27/2025	Private Andrew Johnson	Franklin Camp 5, Olathe
Montgomery, Joseph Harrington	1/28/2025	Captain Daniel W. McCoy	Franklin Camp 5, Olathe
Palmer, Jeffrey Charles	1/16/2025	Sergeant James Thompson Hight	Pvt John N. Eckes Camp 10, Winfield

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FROM THE DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

Kent M. Melcher, PDC

It seems apparent that American history has lost its vital place in the consciousness of many of our citizens. A vast number of Americans have very little comprehension of the structure and workings of our American form of government. As a consequence, they are susceptible to manipulation of their viewpoints concerning what are best policies for the country and, in fact, for the world at large. For over two centuries, the USA has been a beacon of hope to oppressed people far and wide. Lately, I have wondered how much longer that beacon will shine. I am concerned because history reminds us that every democratic country that has ever existed has fallen, either to a power-hungry dictator or because its people became complacent about their responsibilities as citizens.

When I was in Junior High School, the curriculum included world history and American history. At that time all eighth graders had to take, and pass, an exam on the U.S. and State Constitutions before they could graduate from 8th grade. We spent at least a semester learning about British colonization of North America and the colonists' growing resentment of their mother country. We learned that unpopular and burdensome taxation led to violent confrontations between Americans and the red-coated troops of King George III. The King sent them to prevent

outright revolution. His actions had exactly the opposite effect.

Most of us know that the Declaration of Independence, the revolutionary war, and the unexpected victory of the colonists gave birth to the United States of America. We may not remember the exact date (1787), but most of us know that the Constitutional Convention drafted and signed the U.S. Constitution, which was ratified by the states in 1789.

I don't know how American history is being taught in American classrooms. I'm sure that teachers are doing their best to engage students in this vital knowledge that enlivens citizenship. The teachers' task is made more difficult when students see in some adults an obvious ignorance of how government works, a lack of participation in the democratic process of voting, and disinterest, even distrust and cynicism, in our government. Conspiracy theorists have poisoned the well of patriotic citizenship, putting our country and its future in grave danger.

It is a tragic tale that many of our citizens cannot recount a cogent history of the United States, or the duties of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of our Constitution, or how the three branches interact. If you ask random people on the street about how the Constitution functions, you will often get blank looks and embarrassing silence. Perhaps you have seen videos of just such on-the-street interviews. I don't know what kind of answers you will get from middle and high school students on this topic.

Part of our mission as Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is to relate to students, and to the population as a whole, the true meaning of patriotism, which is helping the country become the best it can be in order to provide an opportunity for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" for all its people. We teach such patriotism by telling of the bravery and selflessness of those who fought so valiantly to preserve the Union and by telling the true history of the Civil War, with its historical causes and effects. I pray that the SUVCW will do our part to help reorient our next generations with an essential knowledge of the workings of government, in order to inspire in our young people a desire to participate in the vital practice of personal citizenship.

So, I ask you: how can we meet this challenge? I am painfully aware that I do not have a lot of answers. But I also know that we need others to collaborate when we face challenges. I wonder if it would be helpful to gather a group representing every Camp in the Department to brainstorm, with a goal of providing our Camps with additional tools to improve their response to this vital need.

What do you think? I welcome your thoughts. Please let me hear from you.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,
Kent M. Melcher

CAMP STRENGTHS, MARCH 31, 2025

As of March 31, 2025, the Department of Kansas listed **163** brothers, including three juniors and six dual brothers. This is a net increase of **one** brother within the Department of Kansas since March 31, 2024, which gives the Department a reportable strength of **158**.

<u>Camp Name & Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Net Change</u>
Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1	29	-4
Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4	26	+2
Franklin Camp 5	44	+2
Humboldt Camp 9	11	0
John N. Eckes Camp 10	18	+1
Old Abe Camp 16	36	0
DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS	164	+1

2025 DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT

Old Abe Camp No. 16 hosted the 2025 Department of Kansas Encampment on Saturday, April 5, 2025, in the Kansas National Guard Museum at Forbes Field, Topeka, Kansas. Thirty-nine brothers from the Department were in attendance, of which all were voting members.

Representing Commander-in-Chief Kevin L. Martin at the encampment was National Council of Administration member PDC Dale Crandell, Department of Missouri. Also present was Department of Missouri Commander Robert AuBuchon.

Department Commander Conrad M. Fisher, PCC, chaired the encampment and took us through the order of business. Those details will be available once the encampment proceedings are posted on the Department website on or about May 6, 2025. Copies of the proceedings will also be sent to each camp secretary for their records.

The activities began at noon with the Memorial Service. The service remembered the brothers who have passed away during the past year. Those were Past Camp Commander Douglas G. Smith, Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1; and Brother Roderick Andrew Hathaway, Pvt. John N. Eckes Camp 10.

The business meeting opened at 12:37 PM. The business of the Department was handled in an efficient and organized manner. These items included the passing of four amendments to the Department Bylaws; election of delegates and alternates to the 2025 National Encampment; voting to keep the Department per capita for 2026 at the current rate of \$7.00; approving a resolution to amend the National Regulations to allow certain Union Civil War battle flags to be eligible for restoration grants; and to allow for exploration into co-hosting a National Encampment with the Department of Missouri.

The Encampment approved the 2026 Department Encampment being held March 28, 2026, at Topeka, Kansas. Put the date on your calendars now as this will be a unique opportunity.

Incoming elected and appointed officers were installed by National Council of Administration member Dale E. Crandell, PDC, Department of Michigan. This was followed by newly installed Commander Kent M. Melcher officially closing the Encampment at 2:50 PM.

Department Commander Fisher presented Past Camp Commander certificates to the 2024 camp commanders of the Department. These were presented to:

- Michael L. Halfman, PCC, Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp No. 1
- William Patrick Myers, PCC, Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp No. 4
- James D. Thornton, PCC, Franklin Camp No. 5
- Bridger P. Keyes, PCC, Humboldt Camp 9
- Joseph E. Chrisman, PCC, Pvt. John N. Eckes Camp No. 10
- Jack M. Puett, PCC, Old Abe Camp No. 16

The following Department Awards were presented by Commander Fisher for 2024-2025:

- William W. Nixon Award for Camp of the Year*
Pvt. John N. Eckes Camp 10
- Leander Stillwell Award for Outstanding Achievement*
Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC, Old Abe Camp 16
- Captain Patrick H. Coney Award for Brother of the Year*
Michael J. Hadl, PCC, Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4

**2025 NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT
August 7, 2025, through August 10, 2025**

The 144th National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is scheduled to be held Thursday, August 7 through Sunday, August 10, 5 at the Sonesta Hotel Houston IAH Airport, 425 N. Sam Houston Parkway East, Houston, Texas.

SUVCW business meetings are held on Friday and Saturday. The pre-encampment Council of Administration meeting is being held Thursday evening.

Optional tours (to be announced) are available on Thursday at additional expense. The traditional “campfire” and entertainment is Friday evening. The Allied Orders Banquet is being held on Saturday evening (additional expense).

A post-encampment Council of Administration meeting will be held on Sunday morning.

2026 DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT

March 28, 2026

The 2026 Annual Department of Kansas Encampment is scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2026, at Topeka. As this is the thirtieth anniversary of the Department, the Department will host the Encampment.

Please put this on your calendar as we close out our first thirty years and begin the next.

Additional details about the 2026 Department Encampment will be provided as they become available.

DEPARTMENT COUNCIL ACTIONS Between January 1, 2025, and March 31, 2025

January 13, 2025 (Remote) Meeting

1. A regular meeting of the Department Council was held on January 13, 2025, for the purpose of discussing and acting upon the business that came before it.
2. Approved minutes of the October 14, 2024, meeting. Vote: YES: 8; NO: 0. Motion carried.

March 17, 2025 (Remote) Meeting

1. A regular meeting of the Department Council was held on March 17, 2025, for the purpose of discussing and acting upon the business that came before it.
2. Approved minutes of the January 13, 2025, meeting. Vote: YES: 8; NO: 0. Motion carried.
3. Next Department Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 5, 2025, at 7:30 PM, via Zoom.

ORDERS ISSUED

January 1, 2025 – April 5, 2025 General & Special Orders (CinC Kevin L. Martin, PDC)

- G.O. 10 New Year's Reveille
- G.O. 11 Passing of President Jimmy Carter
- G.O. 12 160th Anniversaries
- G.O. 13 Passing of WRC PNP Norton
- G.O. 14 Passing of John C. Rutherford, PDC, Dept. of Missouri
- Special Message 3 A Reminder about Lobbying Restrictions
- G.O. 15 Revocation of Charter – Capt. Theodore H. Howell Camp 48
- G.O. 16 Revocation of Charter – General Darius N. Crouch Camp 26

January 1, 2025 – April 5, 2025

Commander Conrad M. Fisher, PCC

DEPARTMENT ORDER 10 (SERIES 2024-2025)

January 17, 2025

NOTIFICATION OF TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT

1. In accordance with Chapter IV, Article I, Section B, Bylaws of the Department of Kansas, the TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS ENCAMPMENT will be held on Saturday, April 5, 2025, as follows:

Registration opens: 11:30 AM

Business Meeting: 12:00 Noon – 4:30 PM

Place: Kansas National Guard Museum, 125 SE Airport Drive, Forbes Field, Topeka, Kansas

[In case of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, the backup date for the encampment will be Saturday, April 26, 2025.]

2. The Annual Department Encampment is for the purpose of conducting the business of the Department, including amendment of Department bylaws; approving policies and procedures; discussing and acting upon items which shall come before the encampment; and election and installation of Department officers for 2025-2026. All brothers of the Department are encouraged to attend this Encampment.

- a. Voting Members of the Encampment are:

- i. Elected officers of the Department of Kansas.

- ii. All brothers who currently hold the honor of Past Department Commander (PDC) with the Department of Kansas.

- iii. All current Camp Commanders within the Department of Kansas.

- iv. All brothers who currently hold the honor of Past Camp Commander (PCC) with a camp within the Department of Kansas.

- v. All authorized Delegates, as elected by the various camps of the Department of Kansas. As of the date of this order, camps are authorized the following number of delegates (this is in addition to those listed in 2, a, i through iv, above).

Camp 1	4	Camp 4	3
Camp 5	5	Camp 9	2
Camp 10	3	Camp 16	5

- b. Non-voting Members of the Encampment: All Alternate Delegates of the camps.

- c. Other Attendees (without vote): All brothers and sisters of the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic in good standing with their respective organization.

3. Department Officer Reports, Department Committee Reports, and Camp Commander Reports:

- a. Elected and Appointed Department Officers, and Department Committee Chairmen shall submit a written report of their activities in their capacity as an elected or appointed Department Officer or Committee Chairman since the last Department encampment.

- b. All Camp Commanders shall submit a written report of the activities of their camp since the last Department encampment.

- c. Reports shall be submitted to arrive no later than Saturday, March 22, 2025, via email to the Department Chief of Staff at chiefstaff@suvchwks.org. This is to allow time to compile and distribute the reports to the officers and camps in a timely manner.

- d. The various reports will NOT be read at the Department Encampment, as each attendee will be furnished a copy of the reports at the encampment. Submitters will be called upon to state if there are any corrections to the report or if the report contains any recommendations. If the report does contain a recommendation, the recommendation shall be read and sent to the appropriate encampment committee for further action.

- e. If any officer, chairman, or camp commander has nothing to report, he should submit an email as required in paragraph 3c, above, stating “Nothing to Report.”

- f. Reports not submitted by March 22, 2025, will not be included with the consolidated reports and will not be allowed to be presented from the floor at the encampment.

4. Additional information concerning the Department Encampment is posted on the Department website (www.suvchwks.org).

IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,

Conrad M. Fisher, PCC
Department Commander

ATTEST:

Alan L. Russ, PDC

Secretary

DEPARTMENT ORDER 11 (SERIES 2024-2025)

March 6, 2025

APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT TREASURER

1. References:

- a. National Regulations Chapter II, Article IV, Section 1.

- b. Department of Kansas Bylaws Chapter V, Section C.

2. The following brother is appointed as Assistant Treasurer for the purpose of receipt and disbursement of funds of the Department regarding processing applications, reinstatements, and reports. As such, he shall properly

maintain financial records and keep the Department Treasurer informed of all activities pertaining to these funds.

Alan L. Russ, PDC, Old Abe Camp 16, Topeka
IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,
Conrad M. Fisher, PCC
Department Commander

ATTEST:
Alan L. Russ, PDC
Secretary

DEPARTMENT ORDER 12 (SERIES 2024-2025) April 5, 2025
ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEPARTMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS
FOR 2024-2025

3. In accordance with Department of Kansas Bylaws Chapter VII, Article III, the following award recipients are hereby announced.

CAPTAIN PATRICK H. CONEY AWARD FOR BROTHER OF THE YEAR
Presented by the Department Commander to the brother whom the Department Commander has determined to have performed significant service to a camp or the Department within the past year.

MICHAEL J. HADL, PCC
Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp No. 4

LEANDER STILLWELL OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Presented by the Department Commander to the brother who has performed significant service to the Department of Kansas or the organization as a whole over an extended period of time.

THOMAS E. SCHMIDT, PDC
Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp No. 1

WILLIAM W. NIXON AWARD FOR CAMP OF THE YEAR
Presented by the Department Commander to the camp within the Department which demonstrated the greatest degree of support to the goals and ideals of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War in such areas as community involvement, memorial ceremonies, public education, conduct of camp meetings, and such.

PRIVATE JOHN N. ECKES CAMP NO. 10
Winfield, Kansas

4. Congratulations to all of the award recipients and thank you for a job well done.

IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,
Conrad M. Fisher, PCC
Department Commander

ATTEST:
Alan L. Russ, PDC
Secretary

April 6, 2025 – April 15, 2025

Commander Kent M. Melcher, PDC

DEPARTMENT ORDER 1 (SERIES 2025-2026) April 6, 2025
ADMINISTRATION

1. Having been elected as Department Commander by the assembled membership and delegates at the Twenty-Ninth Department Encampment held at Topeka, Kansas, on April 5, 2025, command is hereby assumed, and headquarters are established at the above address. All correspondence requiring the attention of the Department Commander shall be sent to the above address.

2. The following brothers were elected, or continue to serve in an unexpired term, to the offices indicated:

Senior Vice Dept. Commander	James D. Thornton, Franklin Camp 5
Junior Vice Dept. Commander	Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC, Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1
Secretary (term expiring 2028):	Alan L. Russ, PDC, Old Abe Camp 16
Treasurer (term expiring 2028):	Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC, Old Abe Camp 16
Council (term expiring 2026):	James H. Graves, PCC, Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1
Council (term expiring 2026):	Barrett E. Young, PCC, Humboldt Camp 9
Council (term expiring 2027):	Roy A. Lafferty, PDC, Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4
Council (IPDC) (term exp. 2026):	Conrad M. Fisher, PDC, Old Abe Camp 16
3. I have appointed the following brothers to the positions and responsibilities indicated:	
Chief of Staff	Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC, Old Abe 16
Patriotic Instructor	Michael J. Hadl, PCC, Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill 4
Chaplain	Jeffrey A. Winters, Franklin 5
Graves Registration Officer	Joseph E. Chrisman, PCC, Pvt. John N. Eckes 10

Historian
GAR Records Officer

Joshua S. Gillihan-Young, Franklin 5
Gregg L. Talkington,
Pvt. John N. Eckes 10

Counselor
Eagle Scout Cert. Coordinator

K. Kirk Nystrom, PDC, Old Abe 16
Eric L. Crittenden,

Civil War Memorials Officer
Signal Officer

Pvt. John N. Eckes 10
Joshua S. Gillihan-Young, Franklin 5
Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC,
Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1

Assistant Treasurer-1

Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC,
Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1
Alan L. Russ, PDC, Old Abe Camp 16

Assistant Treasurer-2

4. All special reports, coordination of commander's schedule, and special correspondence should be directed to the Department Chief of Staff:

Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC, 125 NW Courtland Ave., Topeka KS 66606

5. All business correspondence and official reports should be sent to the Department Secretary:

Alan L. Russ, PDC, 2825 Crystal Lake Dr., Salina KS 67401.

6. All bills, and requests for payment should be sent to the Department Treasurer:

Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC, 125 NW Courtland Ave., Topeka KS 66606

7. All requests for monument and memorial grants and all completed monument and memorials registration forms should be sent to the Department Secretary.

8. All graves registration forms and information should be sent to the Department Graves Registration Officer:

Joseph E. Chrisman, PCC, 6403 Sloan Ave., Kansas City KS 66104-1360.

9. All Civil War Memorials forms and information should be sent to the Department Graves Registration Officer:

Joshua S. Gillihan-Young, 16195 51st Road, Winfield KS 67156-7002.

10. All requests for Eagle Scout Certificates should be sent to the Department Commander:

Eric L. Crittenden, 9760 322nd Road, Arkansas City KS 67005-6416.

11. Department Officers should attempt to attend as many events as possible throughout the year.

12. All Department Officers and Past Department Commanders, elected delegates, and all other brothers of the Department who can do so, are highly encouraged to attend the SUVCW National Encampment on August 8 and 9, 2025, in Houston, Texas.

13. The 30th Annual Department of Kansas Encampment is scheduled to be held on March 28, 2026, at Topeka, Kansas. If necessary, April 25, 2026, has been designated as the alternate date. Additional information will be distributed later.

IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,

Kent M. Melcher, PDC
Department Commander

ATTEST:
Alan L. Russ, PDC
Secretary

DEPARTMENT ORDER 2 (SERIES 2025-2026) April 6, 2025
APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT STANDING COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT BYLAWS COMMITTEE

1. As per Chapter V, Article III, Section E, Department of Kansas Bylaws, the Department Bylaws Committee is established.

2. The purpose of the committee is to review and/or propose changes to the Department Bylaws, as may become necessary. This includes reviewing changes to the National Constitution and Regulations of the Order as passed by a National Encampment for any effect they may have on Department Bylaws. The committee shall ensure all requirements in Chapter IX, Article III, Department Bylaws, are complied with concerning all proposed amendments.

3. The following brothers are appointed to the Department Bylaws Committee.

Alan L. Russ, PDC, Chairman – Old Abe Camp 16

Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC, Member – Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1

Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC, Member– Old Abe Camp 16

Roy A. Lafferty, PDC, Member – Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4

Barrett E. Young, PCC, Member – Humboldt Camp 9

Kent M. Melcher, PDC, Member (ex officio) – Pvt. John N. Eckes Camp 10

IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,

Kent M. Melcher, PDC
Department Commander

ATTEST:
Alan L. Russ, PDC
Secretary

DEPARTMENT ORDER 3 (SERIES 2025-2026) April 6, 2025
APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT STANDING COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT COMMITTEE

1. As per Department of Kansas Bylaws Chapter V, Article III, Section E-3, the Department Encampment Committee is established.
2. The purpose of the committee is to provide for and ensure the requirements for Department Encampments are met.
3. The following brothers are appointed to the Department Bylaws Committee.
Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC, Chairman – Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1
Michael A. Todd, PDC, Member – Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4
Barrett E. Young, PCC, Member – Humboldt Camp 9
Roy A. Lafferty, PDC, Member – Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4
Kent M. Melcher, PDC, Member (ex officio) – Pvt. John N. Eckes Camp 10

IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,

Kent M. Melcher, PDC
Department Commander

ATTEST:
Alan L. Russ, PDC
Secretary

DEPARTMENT ORDER 4 (SERIES 2025-2026) April 6, 2025
APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT STANDING COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

1. In accordance with Chapter V, Article III, Section E, Subsection 3, Department of Kansas Bylaws, the Department Technology Committee is established.

2. The Department Technology Committee serves as the Department's advisory body on electronic communication technology and the management of assigned resources in such a manner as to reflect positively on the accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the Department of Kansas, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.
3. The following brothers are appointed to the Department Technology Committee.

Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC, Chairman (Signals Officer) – Corp. Patrick Coyne Camp 1
Alan L. Russ, PDC, Member (Website Manager) – Old Abe Camp 16
Roy A. Lafferty, PDC, Member (Social Media Manager) – Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4
Michael A. Todd, PDC, Member – Sgt. Samuel J. Churchill Camp 4
Kent M. Melcher, PDC, Member (ex officio) – Pvt. John N. Eckes Camp 10

The committee chairman is authorized to appoint non-voting aides to the committee as deemed necessary.

IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, AND LOYALTY,

Kent M. Melcher, PDC
Department Commander

ATTEST:
Alan L. Russ, PDC
Secretary

PHOTOS FROM THE 29TH KANSAS ENCAMPMENT



Attendees at the 29th Department Encampment.



2025-2026 Officers being administered the Oath of Office.



DC Fisher presents Camp of the Year award to Camp Commander Terry E. Justice of John N. Eckes Camp 10



DC Fisher presents Leander Stillwell Outstanding Achievement award to PDC Thomas E. Schmidt, Camp 1



DC Fisher presents Captain Patrick H. Coney Brother of the year award to PCC Michael J. Hadl, Camp 4



Incoming Commander Kent M. Melcher, National Rep. Dale E. Crandell, and outgoing Commander Conrad M. Fisher



Department Commander Melcher presents the badge of a Past Department Commander and certificate to PDC Conrad M. Fisher



Department Commander Melcher (center) and brothers from Missouri - PDC Dale E. Crandell and DC William AuBuchon.

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

2025-2026

Department Commander	Kent M. Melcher, PDC
Sr. Vice Dept. Commander	James D. Thornton, PCC
Jr. Vice Dept. Commander	Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC
Secretary (term exp. 2028)	Alan L. Russ, PDC
Treasurer (term exp. 2028)	Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC
Council Member (IPDC)	Conrad M. Fisher, PDC
Council Member (2027)	Roy A. Lafferty, PDC
Council Member (2026)	James H. Graves, PCC, Barrett E. Young, PCC
Chief of Staff	Rocky L. Bartlow, PDC
Patriotic Instructor	Michael J. Hadl, PCC
Chaplain	Jeffrey A. Winters
Graves Registration Officer	Joshua S. Young
Counselor	K. Kirk Nystrom, PDC
Eagle Scout Certificate Coordinator	Eric L. Crittenden
Signals Officer	Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE SUNFLOWER PICKET

The Department of Kansas Flag



The new Department of Kansas flag is presented to the Encampment. Incoming Commander James R. Knopke, PCC; Secretary Alan L. Russ, PDC; Outgoing Commander Thomas E. Schmidt, PDC; Council Member Kenneth R. Spurgeon, PDC; and National Council of Administration Member Robert Petrovic, PDC. [Summer 2005 issue, *The Sunflower Picket*]

Twenty years ago, the Department of Kansas finally had a department flag. It was presented to the Department at the Ninth Annual Department Encampment, April 23,

2005. From the Summer 2005 issue of *The Sunflower Picket*: "Highlights of the Encampment included the presentation of the new Department of Kansas flag. The camps and various individuals had donated money to purchase the flag. This is one more example of the progress within the Department of Kansas."

Franklin Camp No. 5

The issue also contained the following notice about a new camp being formed in 2005.

FRANKLIN CAMP 5, Olathe

Camp Commander.....	
Senior Vice Commander.....	
Junior Vice Commander.....	
Secretary.....	

PCC Craig Sundell has been appointed by the Department Commander to be the Camp Organizer for Franklin Camp 5, Olathe. The next meeting is scheduled for 7 PM on July 18, at the Indian Springs Branch of the Johnson County Library. Preliminary meetings have been held on June 6, June 20, and June 27, with great interest expressed. It is anticipated the camp will be ready to "mustered in" in late August.

If you are interested in transferring to the new camp, contact your camp secretary or one of the following individuals for further information:

Camp Organizer

Craig A. Sundell, PCC

Department Commander

James R. Knopke, PCC

THE SUNFLOWER PICKET

The Sunflower Picket is the official publication of the Department of Kansas, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

All articles are welcome for publication and should be sent to the editor no later than March 25, 2025, for the April 2025 issue.

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Editor: Alan L. Russ, PDC

secretary@suvchwks.org