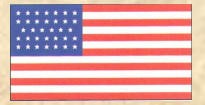




The Union Defender



The Newsletter of Phelps Camp No. 66,
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

January 2023

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER MEETINGS?

For the November meeting, members helped National Park Service staff and volunteers at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield with placing luminaries for the November 5 Annual Memorial Luminary program. Great weather and a high visitor turnout helped ensure a very successful event. Many visitors commented positively about the new format and the focus on the sacrifices of those who fought and died at the battle.

In December, nearly 20 members and their families enjoyed fine food and fellowship at the camp's holiday dinner at Big Whiskey's in Republic.

NEXT CAMP MEETING

The January meeting will be take place at the Visitor Center at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield on Saturday, January 14 at 2 p.m.

We will hold camp elections for 2023 and discuss several important topics.



DUES ARE NOW DUE

It's time once again to "re-up" in Phelps Camp. For many years we kept yearly camp dues at \$30, but with the recent dues increase by the SUVCW national organization (\$10), we must reluctantly raise camp dues as well. The membership recently voted to raise camp dues to \$50 per year in order to pay our national per capita tax AND keep money in the Phelps Camp treasury for local projects.

Please send a check or money order to:

Kirk Singleton
13679 Lawrence 1245
Billings, MO 65610

Members can also pay by cash, check or money order in person at the January meeting. Thanks for supporting Phelps Camp in our 29th year!

ELECTED CAMP OFFICERS

Camp Commander

The purpose of the office of Commander is to direct and to provide oversight of Camp/Department operations in order to foster and promote the goals and objects of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Senior Vice Commander

The purpose of the office of Senior Vice Commander is to assist the Commander, promote the Order and preside at Camp/Department meetings in the absence of the Commander.

Junior Vice Commander

The purpose of the office of Junior Vice Commander is to assist with the recruitment and retention of Brothers (Members, Associates, and Juniors).

Secretary

The purpose of the office of Secretary is to keep the minutes of the meetings and to carry on necessary correspondence for the Camp or Department.

Treasurer

The purpose of the office of Treasurer is to serve as custodian of Camp or Department monies and property, to keep accurate financial records and to prepare periodic financial reports.

Newsletter editor



HISTORICAL NOTES

PRAIRIE GROVE, ARK. Narrow Escape of Two Iowa Soldiers

Editor National Tribune: Stories of our great Civil War possess as much charm for this generation of young people as those of the Revolution did for our grandsires, and all interesting incidents and reminiscences gathered from the lips of our rapidly aging veterans should be preserved and read, that patriotism may be instilled into the youthful mind of those readers who may themselves take a soldier's part in the defense of our great country.

. . .The following was gathered from the lips of Henry P. Gertz, of Shelby, Iowa, who at the age of 21 enlisted in Co. A, 20th Iowa, and served through the war. . . At the battle of Prairie Grove, Ark., Dec. 7, 1862, he made one of the most daring escapes from capture by the rebels on record. His regiment made three gallant charges over open ground and up a gentle slope to a dense woods, where the rebels were in heavy force, in the face of a severe fire of artillery and musketry, and were three times repulsed with great loss. On the last charge the line of battle was three miles long, and the field was covered with dead and wounded. The 20th Iowa was ordered to lie down behind a stake-and-rider rail fence, and here they remained about half an hour, keeping up a rapid fire upon the enemy.

Gertz and two comrades, Abraham Pickards and Dick Richards, of his company, were in a corner of the fence, somewhat separated from their regiment, firing at the rebels. They were so absorbed in their work and the noise of the artillery was so great that they did not hear the command for the regiment to retreat, which was soon at a considerable distance.

The enemy suddenly appeared on the charge in double files and only a few paces distant. Richards, thinking retreat impossible, remained at the fence, but young Gertz and Pickards started on the run of about half a mile, which then separated them from the Union lines. When about 30 paces from the fence a ball struck Gertz and passed through his left thigh, and he exclaimed, "I am shot!" Pickards stopped and allowed Gertz to place his arm around his shoulder, and they ran as one man under a heavy fire, the balls falling around them thick as hail. Gertz's bayonet scabbard was shot away, and balls passed through his hat and the sleeve of his blouse. Pickard's haversack, canteen and clothing were riddled with balls. They ran toward the lines of the 10th Ill. Cav., who opened ranks to receive them, on the order of the officer commanding, who asked to what regiment they belonged, and, upon being answered, exclaimed, "You are brave men!"

VETERAN, Shelby, Iowa December 25, 1890

(Our thanks to Kip Lindberg for providing this article).

