



**Edward J. Norris  
Commander in Chief  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War**



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1. On behalf of the Brothers, we congratulate the award winners listed below. These individuals, Camps, and Departments clearly demonstrate what can be accomplished.
2. Past Commander in Chief Donald E. Darby is awarded the Elmer (Bud) Atkinson Lifetime Achievement Award.

PCinC Donald E. Darby became a member of the SUVCW 30 July 1988 at Gov. Dennison Camp 125 in Athens, Ohio where he served as Camp Secretary/Treasurer. He later became a charter member of Sgt. Richard Enderlin Camp 73 in Chillicothe, Ohio where he served as Secretary/Treasurer, Junior and Senior Vice and Camp Commander.

At the Department level as Graves Registration Officer he registered over 5,000 GAR gravesites. He also brought to fruition the "Last Soldier" Project in the Department of Ohio, which was later adopted as a National project.

Nationally, in coordination with the National Webmaster, he brought the "Patriotic Recollections" and the "Teachers and Scholars" to the National Web page. At his suggestion, the current National Patriotic Instructor instituted the "Adopt-a-School" and "Adopt-a-Unit" program. He supported the SUVCW Charitable Foundation by transcribing on to CD's the GAR and SUV Blue Books, History of the Grand Army of the Republic by Robert Beath, Camp Fire Chats by Washington Davis. For the Sgt. Enderlin Camp he transcribed The Early History of the Ohio Department of the Grand Army of the Republic (1866 to 1880) by T. D. McGillicuddy.

He was elected Commander in Chief in 2005 and has remained an active member of in the Sons of Veterans Reserve, and at the Camp, Department and National levels of the Order. He is a member of the National Committee on Constitution and Regulations, National Military Affairs Committee, CinC Appointed Committee to conduct negotiations with the Allied Orders relating to National Encampment contracts and relations, and CinC Appointed Strategic Development Committee. He holds the rank of Colonel in the Sons of Veterans Reserve and has held the position of Adjutant General since 1997.

PCinC Darby's knowledge of the Constitution and Regulations and experience with the same has resulted in him being selected numerous times to the position of Counselor for many Commanders in Chief and Department Commanders.

3. Brother Thomas Ludka is awarded the Meritorious Service Award with Gold Star.

Brother Ludka of C.K. Pier Badger Camp 1, Department of Wisconsin, along with Margaret Berres of Woman's Relief Corps, canvassed the entirety of Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee. Over 1,000 Union Veterans were found through their ten year process. Each grave was researched for accuracy and authenticity to ensure that the grave held the remains of a Union Veteran. Several hundred graves had damaged or illegible headstones, or had no headstone at all. These headstones have all been replaced or are on order for replacement in 2020. Through the Cemetery Foundation, they helped established the "Adopt a Soldier" program where people can donate money towards the headstone setting costs. Brother Ludka and Sister Berres each put in thousands of hours of research, including walking the actual cemetery grave sites of these Veterans. It is expected that in 2020 all Union Veterans graves at Forest Home Cemetery will be properly marked.

4. Brother Daniel Grable is awarded the Meritorious Service Award.

Over many years Brother Grable of the SGT Henry E. Plant Camp 3, Department of Michigan, has furthered the goals of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. His dedication and perseverance in leading the way for the naming of a new state bridge over the Grand River in Western Michigan resulted in having that bridge named in honor of our local Civil War Medal of Honor veteran, SGT Henry E. Plant, i.e. the SGT Henry E. Plant Memorial Grand River Bridge and non-Motorized Pathway, which also includes a large bronze commemoration plaque with information on SGT Henry E. Plant and his being awarded the Medal of Honor and what he did to earn it. Brother Grable brought together people from the Ottawa County Government; Michigan Department of Transportation; Grand Haven Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW Post 2326; the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks 1200; the Grand Haven American Legion, Charles A Conklin Post 28; The Grand Haven Fraternal Order of Eagles 925; and the Knights of Columbus 2975 George J. McCarthy Council Grand Haven & Spring Lake, Michigan; He also spent considerable time and effort in making sure that SGT Henry E. Plant's action at the Battle of Bentonville, N.C., where he earned the Medal Of Honor, was suitably recognized for his actions. Brother Grable also took the lead in our camp to ensure that local Civil War sites and places were well taken care of and preserved. He also has led the way in our camps living history outreach to schools, etc, along with our camp being included in local parades.

5. Brother Merle Rudebusch is awarded a Certificate of Recognition.

Merle has repeatedly ventured into our Nebraska cemeteries to clean the headstones of our Union Civil War soldiers. He uses a Wet & Forget solution that is environmentally safe as well as safe for the headstone application.

The process is a wetting of the stone with either water or the above solution to let the algae swell, followed by the use of a plastic scraper to remove as much moss/algae as possible. He then soaks the stone with the cleaning solution and uses a soft bristle brush to thoroughly scrub the stone. That is followed by another spraying of the solution and second scrubbing with a final rinse. After the stone sets for nearly 10-minutes, he sprays it one final time with the solution and lets it dry on the stone.

Just prior to the final spray application, he photographs the stone and eventually enters the photo on the SUVCW graves website. During the winter, he enters additional photos that he

had taken previously and were backlogged because of security issues the website previously had. He is diligent about trying to identify our Union Civil War veterans wherever they may be even when a headstone does not exist.

On Memorial Day and at Christmas, he often is the SUVCW Brother who places a wreath at the GAR circle in our local Wyuka Cemetery here in Lincoln to thus keep the memory alive of the sacrifices of our Union comrades.

6. Brother William “Bill” Dean is awarded a Certificate of Recognition.

Brother Dean has accumulated a wealth of photos of GAR statues, stained glass windows, GAR halls, cemetery cannons, etc. for the southeastern portion of Nebraska. Some of these GAR/Civil War artifacts have since disappeared but are preserved through his photos.

He is in the process of updating the photos and adding information as to their locations and history if any is known. Once completed, they will be added to the Department of Nebraska website where anyone can view them. That exemplifies how we keep the memory of our Union Civil War heritage alive.

He also has a vast display of memorabilia such as shells, bullets, etc. and Confederate bonds that he displays several times a year at public events to try to create interest in the SUVCW organization which he promotes when spectators stop to view his display. He is deserving of consideration as well.

7. The Signal Corps is awarded a Certificate of Recognition.

Recognition is for a group of five Brothers who managed our social media platforms. Each of the following will receive the Certificate of Recognition:

- a. Timothy McCoy, PDC, James A. Garfield Camp 1, Department of the Chesapeake,
- b. Benjamin Frail, PDC, Major Sullivan Ballou Camp 3, Department of Rhode Island,
- c. Christopher Workman, Sgt. Elijah P. Marrs Camp 5, Department of Kentucky,
- d. Christopher Powers, David D. Porter Camp 116, Department of Indiana, and
- e. Barrett Young, Humboldt Camp 9, Department of Kansas

Each of these Brothers spent tireless hours insuring that our Brothers received timely news about the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Coordination between was an important goal. They also corrected problems when issues came up.

8. Brother Jordan Levi Milburn is awarded the John C. Clem Award for the Most Outstanding Junior Member.

Brother Milburn was born to be in the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. He is the Great-Great-Great Grandson of Isaiah Jordan Milburn who fought in the 33rd Virginia Infantry and Levi T. Mouser who was a member of the 41st Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

Jordan officially joined Henry Casey Camp 92 and Company C, 20th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Sons of Veterans Reserve, headquartered in Washington Court House, Ohio in the

spring of 2019 but has been a supporter of the Camp and S.U.V.C.W. for much longer than that. He has traveled to every National Encampment and attended every SVR Breakfast since the age of four. He has been to the following Battlefields: Winchester, Antietam, Nashville, Franklin, Shiloh, Corinth, Kennesaw Mountain, Kernstown and Gettysburg. After the National Encampment in Marietta, Jordan took a small hike up Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia before starting out on Sherman's March to the Sea, which ended with a visit to General Sherman's headquarters in Savannah. Jordan has been to every Memorial Day service the Camp has participated in since 2012.

In his first year as a Junior Member, he participated in two Memorial Day Ceremonies, carrying the Camp Colors. At the National Encampment in Independence, Jordan proudly participated in the Encampment Color Guard by carrying the Colors of the Third Military District and marched in his first Remembrance Day Parade in Gettysburg in November. At the SVR breakfast in Gettysburg, he received a Certificate of Commendation for his participation in the National Encampment Color Guard.

Jordan celebrated his 10th Birthday in March and will begin 5th Grade at McKinley Elementary School in Xenia, Ohio in August. His favorite sport is Baseball, which he has played since he was 3 1/2 years old and Basketball, which he has played for the last 5 years.

9. Sister Margaret Berres is awarded the Doctor Mary Edwards Walker Award.

Sister Berres of the Woman's Relief Corps in Milwaukee, Wisconsin helped to canvass the entirety of Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee. Over 1,000 Union Veterans were found through the ten year process. Each grave was researched for accuracy and authenticity to ensure that the grave held the remains of a Union Veteran. Several hundred graves had damaged or illegible headstones, or had no headstone at all. These headstones have all been replaced or are on order for replacement in 2020. Through the Cemetery Foundation, they helped established the "Adopt a Soldier" program where people can donate money towards the headstone setting costs. Sister Berres put in thousands of hours of research, including walking the actual cemetery grave sites of these Veterans. It is expected that in 2020 all Union Veterans graves at Forest Home Cemetery will be properly marked.

10. The following Brothers are awarded the National Aide Award.

- a. David Rish, Jacob Parrott Camp 33, Department of Ohio. He recruited six new Brothers.
- b. Robert Koenecke, PCC, Col. Hans C. Heg Camp 1, Department of Wisconsin. He recruited five new Brothers.
- c. Carl Denbow, John S. Townsend Camp 108, Department of Ohio. He recruited five new Brothers.

11. Mr. Leonard E. "Len" Thomas, of Swartz Creek, Michigan, is awarded the Founder's Award.

Mr. Thomas has demonstrated extraordinary effort and outstanding commitment and leadership as an author, educator, and historic preservationist. He spent considerable time and effort in surveying every cemetery in the three-county area around his home in Swartz Creek, Michigan, in Shiawassee, Genesee, and Lapeer Counties, recording every Civil War Soldier buried there. He researched pertinent information on each soldier, self-published it in

three volumes and donated them at no cost to local libraries, genealogical societies, and the Department of Michigan's Graves Registration Committee. These volumes have been updated and republished as new information has become available and are used by those eager for information regarding their ancestor(s), and by others such as cemeteries needing valuable information to update their records. In 2012, Mr. Thomas purchased over 100 letters from the descendant of a Civil War soldier, conserving and compiling them in a book he wrote and published called "The Civil War Letters of Harrison Harmon Carson" (CPL Co. G, 3<sup>rd</sup> Michigan Cavalry Regiment). The publication has been extremely popular, and Mr. Thomas has presented the story to many groups, societies, and organizations, as well as donating a copy to the Gov. Crapo Camp No. 145. Mr. Thomas has spearheaded historical preservation in his community and beyond. Under Mr. Thomas' watch as President of the Swartz Creek Historical Society, the group took on the task of upgrading and improving an ancient Native American burial ground, the "Three Pines Indian Burial Grounds," which is located on Governor Henry Crapo's farm in Swartz Creek, Michigan. Under Mr. Thomas' tutelage, the group provided new headstones and significant improvements to the cemetery. Mr. Thomas requested, received, and installed a government headstone for Native American Civil War soldier Madison Fisher (PVT Co. D 23<sup>rd</sup> Michigan Infantry Regiment) buried there, including a grave and headstone dedication where more than 150 people paid honor to this soldier. Mr. Thomas, along with his wife, Sharon Walworth Thomas, have adopted two Civil War Regimental flags from the Michigan Capitol Battle Flag Collection for restoration. These flags are now housed in a special archival unit at the Michigan Historical Center in Lansing;

12. Scott Camp 73, Department of New Jersey is awarded the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief's Award.

When COVID-19 hit us the Camp held numerous campaigns over many days to raise needed supplies. Seventy-two bug wipes turned into a special project that they conducted with the Auxiliary of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. The Camp shipped over 2000 packets of Gatorade, mix assorted fruit bars, candy bars, potato chips, and pretzels that was given to reserve soldiers from New York and New Jersey and the National Guard stationed in Kuwait under operation Spartan shield. At a homeless shelter they delivered 50 pounds of individual fruit containers, eight cases of spaghetti, and a \$15 donation.

Working with the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons and Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and the Freemasons of several Lodges the Camp supplied over 60 crates of food to various Food Pantries in their area while also delivering desperately needed food directly to families and children who were unable to obtain it due to layoffs or illness. They traveled up to 20 miles to deliver food to those with no means of transportation. As part of their PPE/Mask efforts, they provided several gallons of locally-made hand sanitizer and 100 masks to the Matawan Police Department.

13. The Department of California and Pacific is awarded the Augustus P. Davis - Conrad Linder Award. The Department added 68 new Brothers.
14. The Department of Maine is awarded the U. S. Grant Cup. The Department increased their size by 15%.

15. The Department of Pennsylvania is awarded the Under Forty Award. The Department added 11 new Brothers under the age of 40.
16. The Department of Missouri is awarded the Marshall Hope Award for Best Newsletter – Department for The Missouri Unionist.
17. The Gen. Thomas C. Fletcher Camp 47, Department of Missouri is awarded the Marshall Hope Award for Best Newsletter – Camp.
18. Scholarship were awarded to:
  - a. Sister Samantha M. Dudgeon, ASUVCW, Phineas Catlin Tent #341, Department of New York, and
  - b. Brother Jaeger R. Held, Chapman-Compliment Camp 2, Department of Colorado and Wyoming.

Ordered this 24<sup>th</sup> Day of October, 2020



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Attested:  
Jonathan C. Davis, PDC  
National Secretary  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War