



# The Railsplitter

*The Newsletter of the Department of Illinois  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*



Spring 2022

## OFFICERS :

### Commander

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### Junior Vice Commander

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### Council Member 2/Dept.

### Quartermaster

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### Secretary/Color Bearer/Fraternal

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Leigh Franklin

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Michael Zafran

### Chaplain

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### Graves Registration Officer/

### Historian/GAR Records Officer/

### Assistant Secretary

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### Civil War Memorials Officer

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### Signals Officer

Robert Welch

### Real Sons Officer

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### Chief of Staff

Steven Westlake

### ROTC Officer

Lee Lasseigne



## DC Hutchinson's Message

Brothers -

Due to lingering COVID variants, It has proven to be a tough winter in select communities throughout the state. Some of our number contracted the virus but, to my knowledge, everyone has recovered. I certainly hope and pray that another wave does not affect us, and that we're able to return to some semblance of normalcy. It is spring and

time once again to engage in outdoor activities. Indeed, In that vein, I hope that everyone is able to attend their local Memorial Day ceremonies.

In May, we meet again at our Annual Department Encampment to elect new officers. Before I took on the position of Department Commander, I had decided that mine would be a term of one year only, and I'm sticking to it. My term is ending and I'm looking forward to welcoming a new Department Commander. Please assist him and the other officers in their duties and continue to support our mission as Brothers of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. It has been an honor and a challenge and I hope that I was able to fulfill the duties. **There is no "owner's manual" that says how to perform the job, and I have relied on our Past Department Commanders, Assistant Department Secretary Steve Aarli, and others to keep me informed of the "what" that needed to be completed "when".**

I was not able to get to all the Camps during my tenure, but in addition to my own Camp meetings, I was able to attend Reed Camp's meeting, and a couple of ZOOM meetings convened by other Camps. I also attended some very special programs within the Department. The Memorial Service for PDC Terry Dyer was very moving. Chaplain Jerry Kowalski spearheaded the fundraising effort for the memorial bench and hopefully, barring any further delays, it'll be placed at Rose Hill Cemetery before the end of the year. I was also able to attend a ceremony to dedicate a large number of new headstones for soldiers who died in Chicago's Camp Douglas. Moreover, I attended a ceremony produced by Hecker Camp 443 Commander, David Wildermuth, to rededicate a marker - now a monument - to GAR veterans that he successfully arranged to have moved from an obscure location in the back of a cemetery, to a place of prominence in the center of town. And finally, annual ceremonies in Springfield and Petersburg, to remember President Lincoln and Dr. Stephenson, respectively, are always important events for

*"It has been an honor and a challenge and I hope that I was able to fulfill the duties."*

the Order come the middle of April, and I was very pleased to attend both of these ceremonies as well.

While not able to get out as much as I would have liked, I hope communications that I sent out furthered our mission. Communication is all important and I know there have been some failures as happens with all organizations. Both locally and nationally, hopefully, these can be kept to a minimum down then road.

The coming days, weeks, months, and years will fly by and who knows what will happen. Situations that we cannot control such as viruses, and wars (such as is happening in Ukraine) are indeed worrisome and take their toll on the world over. Let us pray, do our part, and act in solidarity to do what is right for our communities, our Nation, and the whole world. History need not repeat itself.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty  
Joseph M. Hutchinson, Commander  
Department of Illinois  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

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### SUVCW Lincoln Tomb Ceremony

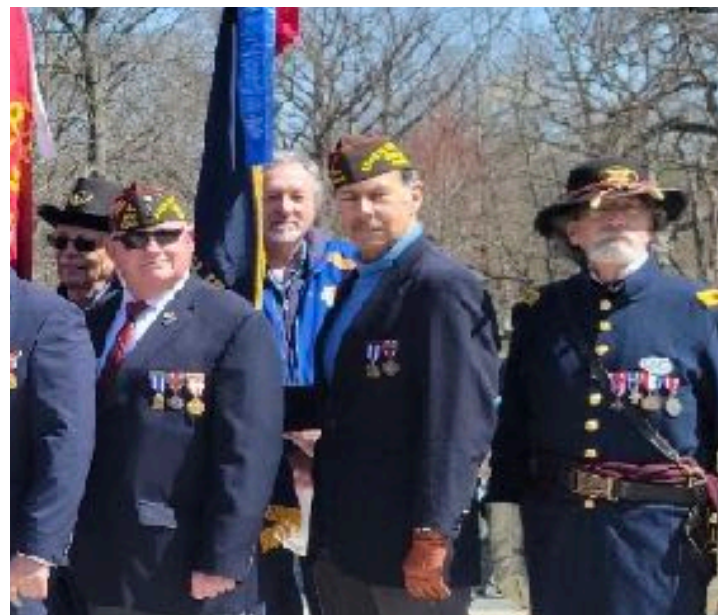
Both SUVCW Commander-In-Chief Michael A. Paquette and Commander-In-Chief, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Robert D. Polloch delivered moving remarks befitting the occasion. Commander Paquette and Commander Pollock were both excellent speakers and listening to others, as they give voice to Abraham Lincoln's greatness, is forever a privilege. And praise be to Chaplain Jerry. His gift with words is remarkably unparalleled.



AFTER THE SUVCW 66TH LINCOLN TOMB CEREMONY WAS OVER ON SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 16, 2022, BROTHER DAVID WILDERMUTH CALLED OUT FOR THE "DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS" TO RALLY FOR A PICTURE. CREDIT HIS WIFE, SHEILA, FOR TAKING THE PHOTO ABOVE. AS YOU CAN SEE, IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DAY. FRATERNITY. CHARITY. LOYALTY.



The large photo on the previous page of the Department of Illinois at this year's Lincoln Tomb Ceremony is divided into quarters below, so we can enjoy closeups of the 23 Brothers who attended. It gives us a strikingly different look, doesn't it? It sounds ambitious, but maybe in a future edition, we can attempt to identify everyone by name, office held, and Camp. If you're interested, send us the requested information and we'll see what we can do. For those of us who, for one reason or another, are not able to attend annual Department Encampments, Bivouacs, Lincoln Tomb or Stephenson Memorial Ceremonies, it'll be neat to pictorially meet everyone. When sending in identifying information, simply refer to the upper left photo, the upper right photo, the lower left photo, or the lower right photo. We're looking forward to hearing from you. And please be sure to include your phone number so we can easily contact you should a clarification be needed. *Please mail to Brother Chuck Murphy at 2067 Huntleigh Road, Springfield, IL 62704 or email him at [murphy2067@comcast.net](mailto:murphy2067@comcast.net).*





IN THE PHOTO ON THE RIGHT IS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES, ROBERT D. POLLOCK, AND TO HIS RIGHT IS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR, MICHAEL A. PAQUETTE.

IN THE PHOTO IMMEDIATELY BELOW IS CC DAVE WILDERMUTH BEING ESCORTED TO PRESENT THE WREATH FOR HECKER CAMP 443 AT THE LINCOLN TOMB CEREMONIES.

BELOW RIGHT DC JOE HUTCHINSON IS BEING ESCORTED TO PRESENT THE DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS WREATH. BROTHERS DAVE AND JOE WERE THE TWO WREATH BEARERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROTHER CHUCK MURPHY)





## Stephenson Memorial Ceremony

Following the tomb ceremony, and after banqueting at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel in downtown Springfield, the Sons reconvened at 3:30pm for proceedings at the Dr. Benjamin Stephenson Monument in Rose Hill Cemetery, Petersburg, IL



FOUNDER OF THE GAR, THE PHOTO ABOVE IS OF DR. STEPHENSON'S MONUMENT. ABOVE RIGHT IS A PHOTO OF PDC AND MC FOR THE PROGRAM, BROTHER JIM LYON. BEHIND HIM FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE PDC STEVEN WESTLAKE, BOB BOQUETTE, WITH THE 14TH MICHIGAN SVR, PDC STUART STEFANY, AND 1ST LT. PAUL DAVIS, ALSO WITH THE 14TH MICHIGAN. PICTURED ON THE RIGHT IS THE 1ST IL ARTILLERY, BATTERY L, BELLOWING IN DRAMATIC FASHION A COMMEMORATION OF THE SOLEMN CEREMONIES. AND THE EXHIBIT BELOW WAS DEDICATED TO THE VISION OF THE LATE PDC TERRY DYER, TO INSTALL MEMORIAL BRICKS AND BENCHES AROUND THE STEPHENSON MONUMENT. THE FUNDS RAISED WILL BE DEVOTED TO MAKING NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS TO THE GROUNDS SURROUNDING THE MONUMENT.



*Photos courtesy of Brother Dave Wildermuth*



### Lincoln Death Day Association (DDA) Tomb Ceremony

At 11:00 in the morning on Friday, April 15, the DDA convened formal remembrance ceremonies at Lincoln's Tomb. Each year the association commemorates the Railsplitter on his actual death day. 23 wreaths were presented and following the ceremony, the DDA retired to the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel for its annual banquet.



ON THE LEFT IN THE PHOTO ABOVE IS BROTHER ALAN HEMBEL, OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN, AND CAMP 4'S LARRY WERLINE, AKA GENERAL U. S. GRANT. BROTHER ALAN WAS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF BROTHER TOM JOHNSON OF WISCONSIN WHO, ALONG WITH DEPT OF ILLINOIS BROTHER GEORGE LESLIE CASHMAN, PAST CAMP 4 COMMANDER, PDC, AND PCIN C WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN FOUNDING THE DDA. A PCC, AND TREASURER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WISCONSIN SUVCW, ALAN HAS BEEN A LONG STANDING MEMBER OF THE DDA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS. ALAN AND HIS SON, BRIAN, PICTURED IN THE PHOTO IN THE CENTER ABOVE, PRESENTED A WREATH AT THE DDA CEREMONY AT LINCOLN'S TOMB ON APRIL 15, AND AGAIN ON SATURDAY, APRIL 16, DURING THE SUVCW LINCOLN'S TOMB CEREMONY. BROTHER RON CLARK IS THE ASSOCIATION'S PRESIDENT AND THOSE HAVING QUESTIONS CAN CALL 217.816.6877, OR EMAIL HIM AT SUVCW4@YAHOO.COM. THE UPPER RIGHT PHOTO IS OF BROTHER FRANK CAMPO. BEFORE MOVING TO ILLINOIS TO BE NEAR FAMILY, HE BROTHERED IN SHERMAN CAMP #28, SANTA BARBARA. WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO HIM JOINING THE DEPT OF ILLINOIS SONS. (PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROTHER MURPHY)

### Department of Illinois Encampment

This is just a reminder that our annual Encampment is coming up on Saturday, May 14. Please see the flier on the back page of the newsletter for details. We appreciate Brother Dave Wildermuth for both submitting the flier and making himself available to take your questions. His phone number is 618.416.2298 and his email address is [dwildermuth59@yahoo.com](mailto:dwildermuth59@yahoo.com).

### Election of Officers

Among the items on the agenda at the upcoming Encampment is election of officers. To review, the nominations are as follows:



Commander - Gary Gunderson - Sheridan Camp #2 Aurora  
DSVC - Bobby Welch - Sheridan Camp #2 Aurora  
DJVC - Lars Jacobson - Dutton Camp #49 Sycamore  
Treasurer - Lee Lasseige - Sheridan Camp #2 Aurora  
Secretary - Don Sherman - Custer Camp #1 Wilmette  
Council - Dave Wildermuth - Hecker Camp #443 Belleville  
Council - Wayne Wehrheim - Bryner Camp #67 Peoria  
Council - Richard Hoovier - Logan Camp #26 Rockford







### CHAPLAINS CORNER

Yesterday I took my wife of almost 55 years to the ER, because of problems she was having as a result of surgery she had a month ago. While I was there, I saw a man in a wheelchair in front of a vending machine. As I was passing him, I asked if he needed help. He asked if I had change for a \$20. I didn't have it, so we tried with the buck and a half he had - and I stood ready with a handful of change. His protein drink was \$2.25. I put my 75 cents in and his drink came tumbling out. He thanked me profusely. And during the course of the next three hours, he waved and smiled at me over and over again. I have never gotten such a positive response, and it only cost me "Seventy-Five Cents". Have you ever had such an experience?

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty, Chaplain Jerry

### PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTION *"Weather and the Civil War"*

As we enjoy the start of Spring of 2022, I thought it would be interesting to find out what the weather was like during the Civil War.

Meteorologically, The Civil War took place at the conclusion of what is often termed as the Little Ice Age, a period of general cooling and climate unpredictability that most scholars date from 1310 to 1850. Despite what its name suggests, the Little Ice Age actually encompassed dramatic fluctuations in weather with one year bringing on intensely cold winter and easterly winds, and the next heavy rains and raging heat. On the whole, conditions began to warm after 1850, in both the north and south, but there were still radical weather events in North America well into the 1860's.

Weather is out of the control of elected officials, military leaders, soldiers, and civilians. Despite efforts of Civil War-era Americans to overcome rain, snow, wind and heat, these elements set real limits on how armies moved or sat stationary, how crops flourished or failed, how transportation worked or did not work, and how soldiers and civilians felt in these conditions. In an event that took place largely outside, the outdoor environment played a critical role in shaping the nation's conflict.



THE PRINT ABOVE BY MORT KUNSTLER IS ENTITLED MUD MARCH, AND PORTRAYS BURNSIDE'S FAMOUS MUD MARCH IN JANUARY 1863. (THIS IMAGE WAS FOUND ONLINE AND DOWNLOADED BY BROTHER MURPHY AFTER GOOGLING BURNSIDE'S MUD MARCH.)

The war's most famous weather impact was at Burnside's Mud March in January 1863. While the battle began in reasonable weather, a strong storm with freezing temperatures, howling wind, and heavy precipitation bogged down the battle plan and led to a demoralizing failure, with the North suffering over 13,000 casualties. This debacle resulted in Ambrose Burnside's removal from command. Heavy rain slowed George McClellan's Spring advance up the Virginia Peninsula. In the summer of 1862, dry weather and heat helped stop Don Carlos Buell's advance toward North Alabama and Chattanooga. In late 1862 and early 1863, William T. Sherman and U. S. Grant encountered heavy rain and flooding that stopped two attempts to capture Vicksburg. Unusually wet weather in Virginia in Spring 1863 hindered Joseph Hooker's rejuvenation of the Army of the Potomac, and made chaos out of the army's initial offensive moves in April 1863.

For the Confederates, the conditions were the same. Stonewall Jackson's Bath-Romney Campaign in January 1862 ground to a halt because of numbing cold, icy roads, and finally a blizzard. Heavy rain, fog, flooding, and mud thwarted the Confederates at the Battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky on January 19, 1862. Bad weather and drought limited Bragg's army in northern Mississippi in the spring and summer of 1862. After Gettysburg, the deluge that soaked the defeated soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia, led to the rapid rise of the Potomac River and imperiled Robert E. Lee's escape into Virginia. Soldiers in James Longstreet's First Corps suffered through a miserable winter near Knoxville, Tennessee in 1863-1864 as rain, cold, and snow limited their advancement. In late 1864, John Bell Hood's Tennessee Campaign collapsed in the face of fierce winter weather including snow, ice, fog (that helped General George Henry Thomas conceal his preparations for attacks on December 15 and 16) and freezing rain that fragmented unit cohesion in the rebel ranks.

Drought, frost, and heavy rain interrupted planting seasons, destroyed crops in the field, and impacted crop yields across the country. As historian Kenneth Noe has pointed out, perhaps one of the most under-appreciated events of the Civil War was the 1862 drought that destroyed crops across the Confederacy. This failure set off long term consequences for soldiers and civilians alike in the South, while at the same time favorable weather led to an abundant harvest in the North, allowing troops to be well-supplied with provisions.

Many letters to loved ones on both sides of the battle spoke about the weather conditions that soldiers had to endure, especially those who were a great distance from home. It also affected morale of the troops and their willingness to carry on the fight. Consider the men who slept in a tent or out in the open field through horrible weather, with little or no sleep, being asked to take up arms for the cause, not knowing what they were to face next.

Respectfully submitted in F.C.L., Michael Zafran  
PI Department of IL, and PCC PH Sheridan Camp #2

## CAMP NEWS

### Sheridan Camp 2 - Aurora

PH Sheridan Camp#2 initiates another new member. Bryson Taylor is a member of the Friendship United Methodist Church, where Camp #2 holds their monthly meetings. He is the second youngest member of Camp #2 and is looking forward to helping on some of the cemetery projects in spring. Standing behind the table in the photo on the right, and conducting the ceremony is CC Lee Lasseigne. Others witnessing Brother Taylor's initiation include from left to right Dept Treasurer, Bobby Welch, Dept Chief of Staff, Steve Westlake, and Council Member Brian Conroy. (PHOTO COURTESY OF BROTHER ROGERS.)





Respectively Submitted by Bob Rogers  
Camp #2, Secretary-Treasurer

**Cemetery** work ended for the season at Bluff City Cemetery in Elgin with 41 new markers installed, many more raised and reinstalled, and over 300 cleaned. We have 9 more markers to install this April. The work was headed by SVC Lee Lasseinge, now Camp Commander, with research done by Brother Dave Bailey, and Brother Brett Nila's wife, Pam. Volunteers included the Jr. Marines, to whom we're very grateful. Also, at Root Street Cemetery, with the kind help of the Boy Scouts, 5 markers were efficiently installed in just one day by Brothers Lee Lasseinge and Robert Rogers.

**Camp #2** members participated in the Veterans Day ceremony at Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago. National Chaplain Jerome Kowalski, Council member Brian Conroy, PCC Tedd III, Father Bob Miller, and Commander Michael Zafran participated. The photo to the right is Brother Zafran at the lectern addressing the proceedings. (Those standing behind Brother Zafran are unknown.)



**PH** Sheridan Camp #2 installed 9 new markers and raised a few others with the help of BSA troop 32, from West Dundee, IL. Jr. Marines and Brother Gary Gunderson helped out, and Lee Lassiegne led the effort. Pictured on the lower right with Dept. PI, PCC Michael Zafran (with shovel in hand in the center of the photo), are scouts from Troop 32. (PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROTHER ZAFRAN.)

Respectively Submitted in F.C.L., Michael Zafran  
Dept of Illinois PI and PCC, Sheridan Camp #2



### Hecker Camp #443 - Belleville

Hecker Camp website <http://heckercamp443.us> has been shut down. Please messenger us on our Facebook page, *Col. Frederick K. Hecker Camp #443 (SUVCW)*, or email [lestweforget1861@outlook.com](mailto:lestweforget1861@outlook.com) for a copy of our newsletter.

**General announcements** include Hecker Camp has joined the German American Committee of St. Louis - descendants of Col. Hecker and U.S. Grant Camp #68 SUVCW - to form a consortium to restore Hecker's Monument in Benton Park, St. Louis. The project will include the placement of informational/interpretive signs to be installed both in the park and at Hecker's gravesite, in the small village of Summerfield, Illinois. CC Wildermuth will be serving on the restoration committee of the Monument site in St. Louis. Also, the Camp is the sole sponsor and in the final stages of ordering an Illinois State Historical Society Marker dedicated to Hecker, that will also be placed in Summerfield this summer.

Below is a masthead for Camp #443's newsletter. It sure brings to mind the word patriotism.



**At 10:00 in the morning** on June 11, 2022 Hecker Camp will be honoring two brothers, Henry and Frederick Schulze, who served in the 9th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. Proceedings will take place at the Trinity Lutheran Old German Cemetery in Worden, Illinois. The photo to the right is a new Government Memorial for Frederick, who was killed at Shiloh.

The photo below is of Henry's great grandson, Brother Stephen Schulze, Lt. Commander Edward Lea, USN Camp #2 Houston, Texas standing beside Henry's family gravestone. Henry's name is in the square on the far left. He was a POW twice but survived.

The family has purchased a plaque to honor both Frederick and Henry, and it will be mounted on Henry's grave marker (see below). This will be a very special occasion, and Camp #443 cordially invites Brothers of the Dept of Illinois to attend the ceremony to honor Henry and Frederick. With questions email CC Dave Wildermuth at [dwildermuth59@yahoo.com](mailto:dwildermuth59@yahoo.com).



**Taken** at William Tecumseh Sherman's grave in Calvary Cemetery, on the far right is a picture of CC Dave Wildermuth (on the left) and Guard Gerald Sonnenberg. Brothers Dave and Gerald were participating in a March 13 Remembrance Day service hosted by U. S. Grant Camp #68 St. Louis. (PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROTHER WILDERMUTH.)

Respectively Submitted  
CC Dave Wildermuth, Hecker Camp #43



McClelland Camp #4 - Springfield



April is always a busy month, but this year it was particularly active. Exhibit A is Brother Larry Werline's/General U. S. Grant's April speaking schedule. As part of the Illinois State Military Museum's (ISMM) tribute to General Grant on the occasion of his 200th birthday, on April 9, 2020 (Appomattox Courthouse) Larry presented "The Grant Collection at the Tomb". At the DDA banquet on April 15, Brother Werline presented "Lincoln and Grant Win the War". At the banquet following the SUVCW Lincoln Tomb Ceremony on April 16, the General's topic was "Stories From my Life". And then on Saturday, April 23, Brother Werline delivered two presentations at the museum. That morning he spoke alongside Bob Davis on "United States Colored Troops", and that afternoon he teamed up with Mike Anderson to present "Grant and the Troubadour". Bob Davis is a well known speaker on Lincoln's Colored troops, and as an excellent Frederick Douglass first-person presenter. When Bob and Larry team up, it's always a pleasure. Can you imagine watching a TV show, or a movie, without music? Mike Anderson is a very well known children's author, storyteller, and Mountain Dulcimer artist. When he tickles songs from the Civil War era, you can hear a pin drop. (Photos below courtesy of Brothers Werline and Murphy.)

The ISMM is to be commended. The tribute to U. S. Grant was superb. The museum's director, Colonel (ret) Paul Fanning, does an excellent job and he is known for working very well with patriotic organizations. Perhaps some of you have toured the State of Illinois Civil War flag collection now at Camp Lincoln. Most Illinois Camps are probably aware if the collection includes flags that were born in battle by regiments from your neck of the woods. You may recall the collection used to be on display in the Centennial (now the Howlett) Building's "Hall of Flags". Though they are now stored in large, individual drawers, seeing the flags preserved is always a sight for sore eyes. And of particular interest is the harness apparatus they use in the restoration process. Catered banquets in the museum are forever enjoyable. Civil War enthusiasts are never disappointed when dining in such a time honored and historically significant venue.

Brother Chuck Murphy, PI  
McClernand Camp #4



AT LEFT IS AN APRIL 9 PHOTO OF LARRY STANDING BESIDE THE 21 ILL. VOL. INF. REGT FLAG THAT THE MUSEUM RESTORED FOR GRANT'S BICENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY. IN THE PHOTO ON THE RIGHT CC JOSEPH KESSLER SPEAKS ON APRIL 9 ABOUT THE SUVCW, AND CAMP 4 IN PARTICULAR. ON THE LOWER LEFT IS AN APRIL 23 PHOTO OF MIKE ANDERSON AT HIS CRAFT. AND ON THE LOWER RIGHT IS AN APRIL 23 PICTURE OF GRANT WITH HIS BIRTHDAY CAKE. THE SENTIMENT IN TINY BLUE PRINT ON THE LOWER RIGHT EDGE OF THE CAKE (THAT IS HARD TO MAKE OUT) READS "LICK 'EM TOMORROW". PICTURED BELOW IS PRESENTER BOB DAVIS TAKEN ON APRIL 23.





## ANNUAL ENCAMPMENT DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS

### *Sons Union Veterans of the Civil War*

Held at McLean County Historical Museum Bloomington, Illinois 200 North Main  
Entrance is on Washington St. side at street level, free parking.



**Saturday May 14, 2022**

**Door opens at 11am meeting will start at 1pm**

**Please note we will not be eating at this location,**

**Luncheon: Will be on your own - several Restaurants are located near.**

**Here are a few restaurants: Poblano Burrito's 108 West Washington  
Windy City Wieners 116 West Washington  
Rosie's Pub 106 East Front**

**Any Questions CALL Dave Wildermuth: 618- 416- 2298 or email to  
dwildermuth59@yahoo.com**