

January 8, 2018

Greetings Compatriots,

I would like to take a few minutes and wish all of you a happy New Year and I hope you and your families have had a wonderful holiday season. It is hard to believe it is already 2018 isn't it, nevertheless time marches on and the new year is indeed upon us and I am excited about the prospects it brings for our camp! That being said our year kicks off with our very own Lee-Jackson Celebration Dinner here in Chattanooga on January 13th at Polly Claire's and I hope to see you there!

During this coming year I look forward to our normally scheduled monthly meeting, including the possible addition of meetings in November and December. We will bump up the week of our meetings for these two months to allow for the holidays and will get that date information out to the camp as soon as possible. It is understandable that not everyone can make every meeting but we want to take every opportunity to get together when we can. We had an *officially unofficial* gathering during December at Wally's in East Ridge and had a nice turnout with great camaraderie, plus we were able to contribute over \$200 worth of toys towards making some children's Christmas a little brighter!

In addition to our normal monthly meetings we are hoping to add a few more activities to our camp's agenda this year that will be both educational and fun. I hope we can also have another meeting or two in the field should the possibility present itself for such a program as we had this past October. If we are able to do these meetings in the field we will publish the information way ahead of time so everyone is aware and know the time and location. I highly encourage you to come to these meetings (and other activities too). There is always an opportunity to learn more about our Southern Heritage and then we are able to go out and share it with others. Just an example of this was our October meeting. It was at the actual Brown's Ferry location. If you missed it you missed an excellent opportunity to see, walk upon, and learn about an important portion of the Chattanooga area battlefield that isn't open to the general public at this time. This is a key piece of property that has been saved by the Civil War Trust that they hope to be able to add to in the future to expand the National Park's local area and enhance the understanding of the Battles of Chattanooga, here right in our own back yard.

In regards to other activities during this coming year we hope to have a few planned excursions for the camp. Ideas that we have been looking at thus far include some local battlefield tours, going to a Civil War themed Dinner Theater, a trip up to the Tennessee State Museum which has an very nice Civil War collection, a trip to the Southern History Museum and tracing the Great Locomotive Chase back to Chattanooga, and maybe even a trip over to the SCV Headquarters, Elm Springs in Columbia. There are endless ideas we can look into and if you have a suggestion I would certainly love to hear it! While there are some things we can and can't do it never hurts to throw out an idea so don't be shy, and if you don't feel comfortable suggesting it during a meeting feel free to send me an email directly.

We are also gearing up for this year's Hunley Awards! Now is the time to nominate a JRTOC student and if you would like to do so you can even sponsor and award. If you know of a JRTOC student who you think is deserving of one please send me their info (name, school, and detachment leader) so I can be in contact ASAP! I must say it was extremely rewarding and an honor to get to go to several schools this past year and present awards to students and I really look forward to it again this year! We are also hoping to partner with some of our other local Southern Heritage organizations on these awards too to

include a nice book which really goes a long way in telling the story of the Hunley and sharing yet another chapter of our Southern Heritage.

And lastly to address the proverbial elephant in the room – no doubt that 2017 was a tough year for Southern Heritage in many respects with the outright illegal actions taken in both New Orleans and Memphis with the removal of monuments and grave markers. However, there were many victories too and we can't forget these, instead we need to build off of them! While we cannot sit idly by and ignore the assaults on our Southern Heritage, we can't take paths of rebuttal which hurt our efforts either. It might be hard but we have to allow the legal process to work. Contact your elected officials; let them know you support not only our Southern Heritage but the protection of ALL of our nation's past. Whether you like it or not, our past is what it is and makes us, as a nation who we are today. We cannot pick and choose just the parts we like but we must embrace the entirety of it. Urge your elected officials to demand the enforcement of laws that are for the protection of our nation's history and to prosecute those responsible for violations of the law.

I want to thank you for entrusting me to lead the camp and I look forward working with each of you during this next year. I look to the future with great anticipation to see what it brings and for things we can accomplish together!

Respectfully Yours,

Nick

Nick Norwood
Camp Commander

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