



CAMP GROWTH, STABILITY, AND MEMBER RETENTION

C. Marc Robinson
8th (East Texas) Brigade
Texas Division
Sons of Confederate Veterans



The Battle of Sharpsburg
September 16 - 17, 1862

Here in the Cornfield early on the morning of September 17 the Texas Brigade helped blunt the attack of elements of Mansfield's Union Corps. Almost alone during this powerful Federal onslaught the Texas Brigade sealed a threatening gap in the Confederate line. In so doing the 1st Texas Infantry Regiment suffered a *casualty rate of 82.3 percent*, the greatest loss suffered by any infantry regiment, North or South, during the war.



Texas Division Sons of Confederate Veterans

- Do you ever ask yourself, why do I continue to be a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans?
 - A. Because it is a Honor...
 - B. To Celebrate my Heritage...
 - C. Because of a strong sense of DUTY to honor, vindicate, and preserve the true history of my Confederate ancestors...
 - More especially since they gave so much and are far too often and unjustifiably dishonored and disrespected...



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- Camp Growth...
- Recruiting at festivals, fairs, etc.
 - Imperative that **name, address and phone number** is recorded when recruiting at festivals, fairs, etc.
 - Best not to wear Confederate uniforms when recruiting!
 - Remember the public doesn't know who we are and might think that we are a reenactment group!
 - Giving "interested" prospects a brochure is very ineffective, not that you couldn't have them available.
 - A *camp newsletter* and *phone call* from a camp officer is mandatory to get them to a meeting.
 - Display table should have a nice appearance!



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- When the Division or anyone sends you a *lead on a potential member(s) who has contacted the SCV or asked someone about joining*, immediately contact him with a phone call and then a follow-up email or card.
 - This should be done very promptly so the potential member realizes how important he is to us and our cause.
 - It is best to continue working or checking with him to make sure he gets all the necessary paperwork in order prior to the next camp meeting if that is his wish.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- The most effective way to get new members is to **bring them to the meeting**.
 - When you invite people, it is too easy for them to back out.
 - Very few will stand you up if you tell them you will pick them up and bring them to a meeting; they most always will be ready.
- Bring friends from work, church, neighbors, and cousins. Bring a hunting buddy, golf friend, etc.

Chaplain Rod Skelton recruited his cousin Charlie Skelton (center) and many others



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- The **two most important things** you can do to keep people interested is:
 - A. Provide for a friendly atmosphere
 - B. Have interesting programs!
- We all like people who are congenial and we all enjoy informative, interesting and educational programs.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- Stability...
- Camp Executive Committee Officers:
 - Do your very best **to not bring major controversy to your camp meetings!!!** (It will run off potential members and possibly current members.)
 - Hold CEC meetings at least **once per quarter** and if necessary, call a special one so that the camp leaders can get on the same page before the regular camp meetings!
 - *Once things are hashed out and voted on at the CEC meeting, the camp leaders on the Camp Executive Committee should stand together.*
 - If a motion is made from the floor at a regular meeting that needs more research or maybe certain important leaders are not present, **table the motion**, to give your camp more time to sort things out.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- Retention...
- Never have a meeting **without** two or more people (greeters) **printing** "Hello my Name is _____", i.e. name tags, with a **magic marker** so it can be easily read.
 - Do NOT let a member or **potential member** script their name with an ink pen as it usually cannot be read easily.
 - Some camps, have made permanent name tags for camp members that are given out and collected at the end of the meeting by a designee.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- Finding speakers should be the easiest task of any camp!
- Brigade Commander's speakers list and/or
 - Calling neighboring camps will yield some speakers that are interesting and close by.
 - Visit other camps and see what is working for them.
 - You can build on shared programs, ideas, projects, events, etc.
 - Speakers should be given a time limit! (30-45 minutes)



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Maj. Gen. John Furlow, U.S. Army, Retired, presenting an excellent program on the 10th Texas Cavalry (dismounted) in which his ancestors served.



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Reagan Camp officer, Rudy Ray, presents a first person program on John H. Reagan, Postmaster General, C.S.A.



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A two-part program (30 min each) of the one-hour documentary of the history of the Hunley and the reburial of its brave sailors. Excellent documentary film made by the South Carolina Division SCV.



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Norris White, Jr., presented "A Reading" and presentation that introduced Gideon Randall, a Hood's Texas Brigade black Confederate, from a book by Louise Hathcock titled "True Stories of Little Dixie."



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Johnnie Holley, then ET Brigade Cmdr., sharing a great power point presentation with relics on "The War Between the States Artillery."



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- ▣ **Successful camps** have members who are:
 - A. **Informed** - Made aware of projects, upcoming historical programs, duties through newsletter & personal contact.
 - B. **Interested** - In our Confederate ancestors history and in the camp that works diligently to honor and vindicate them...
 - C. **Involved** - Members that are involved, attend meetings and help with projects.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- Remember to **recognize members for their efforts!**
 - ▣ A **simple thank you** at a camp meeting.
 - ▣ Photos in **camp newsletters** of new members, current members working, etc.
 - ▣ Annual **Camp awards**, recommend worthy members for **Division awards** and **National awards**; SCV War Service Medal, etc.
 - ▣ *All go a long way to make members feel that they are not only appreciated, but also needed in the camp and organization!*



Douglas Camp Adj. Cooper Goodson (L) 2013 Texas Division Reunion Best Camp Newsletter - 1st place



John H. Reagan Camp Quartermaster Frank Moore (right) Receives Camp Member of the Year Award





Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- Nearly all organizations from churches, Lions, Jaycees, etc. experience nearly a 50% loss of new members for that year and the SCV is no different.
- **Camps that have high retention always do one thing:**
 - *Delinquent members are personally called!*
 - Usually a couple of notes that dues are past due will get most, but every year there are some that just have to be personally called!
 - This has worked time after time.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- When speaking to people about the SCV, let them know that we are a **Historical Honor Society**, not just a club, group or just some organization.
 - We certainly are:
 - HISTORICAL
 - **It is a HONOR to be a descendant of a Confederate veteran!**
 - We are a SOCIETY.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- The SCV has an image problem, thanks to the distortions of the news media.
 - One most important thing we can do about this is always have **camp officers wear a tie and/or business/sports coat!**
 - It is said that if the leaders do not **portray the proper respect to their ancestors' image**, how can we expect anyone else to do so?
- Anytime we meet as SCV, we are honoring and representing our Confederate ancestors!
- How did the Confederate veterans themselves dress when they met representing themselves and their fallen comrades?
- I realize times have changed, but at least consider it.



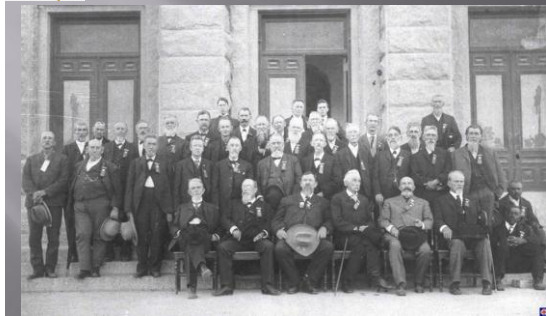
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1902 Reunion of Terry's Texas Rangers Dallas Texas



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1905 Reunion of Terry's Texas Rangers, Austin, Texas



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention



Arkansas Confederate Veterans Parade 1911, Little Rock, AR



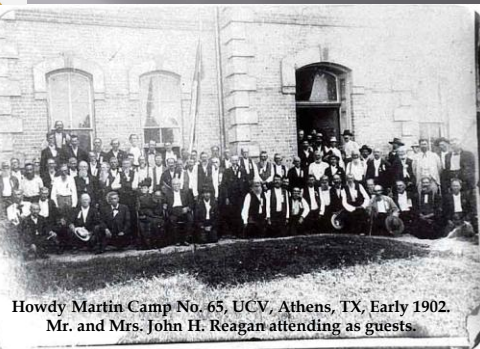
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John H. Reagan Camp No. 44, United Confederate Veterans, Palestine, Texas, Early 1900's



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Howdy Martin Camp No. 65, UCV, Athens, TX, Early 1902.
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Reagan attending as guests.



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"He who feels no pride in his ancestors is unworthy to be remembered by his descendants"

Major David French Boyd, 9th Louisiana Infantry, C. S. A.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- ▣ Let all become informed that the SCV is about two things:
 - **Education and Preservation**
- ▣ We have always been about preservation of our monuments, graves, etc. and always will be.
- ▣ But we are educational even more so:
 - Our duty is to tell others the truth about the WAR FOR SOUTHERN INDEPENDENCE.
 - ▣ This objective is accomplished at our meetings, recruiting displays, school visits, the Sam Davis Youth Camp, one on one with friends and family, etc.



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- ▣ It all sounds like a lot of work!
- ▣ Do not our Confederate ancestors, who sacrificed so much to the cause of constitutional liberty and independence from a tyrannical and oppressive government, deserve our best efforts?
- ▣ Camp Commanders should delegate camp work to individuals who will get the job:
 - To better utilize the special talents of various camp compatriots
 - So they will not burn out quickly.
- ▣ Camp Commanders should, if at all possible, pass the torch about every two years or so before they themselves become burned out and also to let other quality camp leaders have the opportunity to lead as well.



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

- ▣ Remember the focus in all we do in the Sons of Confederate Veterans should be to please the Almighty God while we are striving to fulfill the Charge given to us by Lt. Gen. Stephen D. Lee:

"To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we submit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought; to your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles he loved and which made him glorious and which you also cherish."

God bless us all in our efforts to
Forward the Colors!!!



Camp Growth, Stability, and Member Retention

References:

Jack E. Marlar, SCV Field Rep.
2161 Greenpond Rd.
Fountain Inn, SC 29644
Cell 864-616-0042 Home 864-862-3946
(Past Commander South Carolina Division)

My own personal camp experiences and information
gathered from other SCV camp commanders and camps
in which I have visited.

