



Position Statement

Jacob Summerlin Camp 1516 Sons of Confederate Veterans

1. Jacob Summerlin Camp 1516 is a group of men, 85+ strong, located in Osceola County. We belong to a larger group, 37,000+ strong, known as the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

The Sons of Confederate Veterans is a heritage organization whose purpose is to honor our Confederate ancestors who fought for a cause they felt was just.

We the Sons of Confederate Veterans are an outgrowth of an organization known as the United Confederate Veterans. Lt. General Stephen D. Lee, Commander General of the United Confederate Veterans gave us our charge in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1906. His charge reads as follows:

"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 and the perpetuation of those principles he loved and which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations."

2. To a person seeking admission into the Sons of Confederate Veterans the following facts are quite clear.

We the Sons of Confederate Veterans do not lend support to individuals or groups who use the battle flag of our ancestors in acts of violence or civil disobedience. At one time the idea of a suit against such individuals or groups was considered, but because the First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees both freedom of speech and expression, it was not pursued.

Individuals who seek membership in our organization are asked why they wish to join our ranks. They are told up front that if they are looking for a racist or hate group to go elsewhere, because they are not welcome amongst us.

A person takes an oath when he becomes a member of Jacob Summerlin Camp 1516, Sons of Confederate Veterans. Part of the oath is that he will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic.

3. The Confederate Battle Flag was just that. It was a device used as a guide for troops while marching, or in combat and came into existence because of the confusion that occurred on the battlefields due to the similarity of the United States Flag and the First National Flag of the Confederate States of America.

We understand the fact that our Battle Flag is looked upon with disfavor by some individuals and groups. It is also true that flags displayed by other individuals and groups are looked upon with disfavor by some. We do not feel that one flag should be singled out from a larger group of flags. It is for the above reasons and our desires to carry out the charge given to us by Lt. General Stephen D. Lee that we approve the banning of our Battle Flag.

The Constitution of the United States in all of its greatness does not give anyone of us the right not to be offended. It does give us the right of both freedom of speech and expression.

4. The following is a list of the activities and achievements of Jacob Summerlin Camp 1516 in Osceola County:

We maintain multiple cemeteries and place Battle Flags on all Confederate Veterans gravesites in Osceola County.

We have constructed identical monuments in both Rose Hill cemetery in Kissimmee and Veterans Park in St. Cloud, bearing the names of 75 Confederate Veterans buried in Osceola County.

We have received proclamations from the City of Kissimmee and the Osceola County Board of County Commission designating April as Confederate History Month.

We have sponsored the Battle at Narcoossee Mill for the past 15 years.

We have an education day on the Friday prior to the Battle at Narcoossee Mill. The teachers and students from Osceola County and other surrounding counties attend this event. They are moved from station to station where Union and Confederate reenactors demonstrate and explain various activities connected with the military and civilian life during that period of time.

Members of our camp have also participated in demonstrations and lectures for students at area schools within Osceola County on subject matters pertaining to the War Between the States.

We have donated ten percent of the proceeds from the Battle at Narcoossee Mill to the Osceola County Library System; these monies have been utilized for the purchase of research material about the War Between the States.

We provide a color guard and detail for marching in parades and have taken part in the same in both Kissimmee and St. Cloud.

We have taken part in civic events. Our organization has served as food vendors at both the St. Cloud Art Show and the 4th of July program at the St. Cloud lakefront.

We have cooked for events sponsored by the downtown business organization in St. Cloud.

We have cooked for an athletic function honoring athletes at the Osceola High School.

We have participated in the Osceola County Adopt a Road Program.

We have provided multiple \$500.00 scholarships for the past 7 years to students in Osceola County to help with their tuition.

We sponsor a Confederate Christmas program. This program provides \$200.00 gift certificates to up to six families in Osceola County to purchase food and Christmas gifts for their children. We do not know the names of the families as they are selected by local ministers.

We have constructed a protective fence barrier and placed a plaque at the historic Old Sugar Mill located at Chisholm Park near Narcoossee.

We sponsor an American Flag that is one of many that are displayed on Veterans Day at Mount Peace Cemetery in St. Cloud.

We have met with the Superintendent of Osceola County Schools and with the members of the School Board. These meetings were conducted to discuss Jacob Summerlin Camp 1516's reasons for being and its relationship with the school system. A Position Statement was presented to and accepted by the superintendent.

We have placed a booklet titled "Confederate Issues in the State of Florida" within the Osceola County school system.