

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

November 2020



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*"We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."*

*Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861*

As this message is written during the waning days of another presidential campaign, we do not yet know who will be taking the oath of office next January. We can only hope, though, some influential staff member with a knowledge of history will remember Lincoln's words and shepherd them into the inaugural address. Just as Lincoln faced an uncertain future with discordant voices that had already caused fissures in the Union, we find ourselves in similar times where the "better angels of our nature" seem to be noticeably absent.

There is plenty of blame to go around, and neither Republican nor Democratic office-holders can legitimately claim to have travelled the high road. And many of us may have some difficulty looking in the mirror after a Twitter rant or Facebook post...or maybe just a good, old-fashion face-to-face argument...with a once-close friend or relative. "Brother against brother" (updated to include "sister against sister") has a whole new meaning in the 21st Century.

It is long past time to dial back the volume and balance personal passion with respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Just as a "house divided" could not stand in Lincoln's time, it cannot stand today. As students of the Civil War era, we know the terrible cost of an inability to find and travel common ground, and we tremble when recalling George Santayana's prescient warning that "those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

And so we can fervently hope and pray that Americans...*all Americans*...will heed Lincoln's admonition from long ago and our future promises that we may find and be guided by "the better angels of our nature."

*Craig*

## Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT met on October 13, 2020, at Giannotti's. Twenty-four members were present with ten others joining the meeting virtually when speaker Ron Kirkwood began his program discussing the Spangler Farm and its role during the Battle of Gettysburg.

The meeting was begun at 6:40 p.m. with a prayer offered by Ev Binns followed by President Craig Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

We welcomed Bruce Engle virtually who had recently been hospitalized. Also, our best wishes go out to Roger Cotterill who also had been hospitalized.

It was learned that at least one member had not paid dues but didn't want to be dropped from the rolls. A list of non-membership dues payers will be kept. Hopefully former members will rejoin soon. By the October meeting, Lori Border reported that 45 members had paid dues and 5 paid dues at the meeting bringing the total to 50 members currently.

### Membership

It's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2020-2021 if you have not done so. Please fill out the membership form found on the website, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment has passed, but all who have not renewed membership are encouraged to rejoin. Funding programs is not possible without membership dues. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the November meeting, please be sure to fill out **the renewal form** and **bring it along** with your payment.

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy reported as of October 13, 2020, the balance in the treasury stood at \$3869.34 with \$404.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of October 13, 2020, is \$3465.34.

### Book Raffle News

Thanks to your support, though we may be small in number, we continue to make a difference. With our two raffles in October, we took in \$113.00 for battlefield preservation. We will probably begin another special raffle in January.

The winners of the special raffle were as follows:

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize---Jan Fisher---Bruce Catton's 3 Volume Set Centennial History of the Civil War

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize---Tim Antosy---2 Volume Set American Heritage Pictorial History of the Civil War

1<sup>st</sup> Prize---Roger Cotterill--- Copy of 1886 Gettysburg Battlefield Map

Grand Prize---Ray Kemp---Keith Rocco Print "8<sup>th</sup> Illinois at Brandy Station print

CONGRATS to all the winners!!!

We also received a new influx of books to add to our inventory from the Dave Sweigert Library. There are many interesting new books and sets to offer our members. Many thanks to Dave's family for the gift.

## Website

Webmaster Lisa Breneiser asked everyone to check the “Members Only” section of the website where videos from lectures are available. If you choose to publish your information it will be available only to members of the round table. You are urged to do so.

## Preservation

The American Battlefield Trust currently is running 6 Matching Grants. They are:

- Culp’s Hill-Gettysburg, PA-\$5.38 to \$1
- West Woods-Antietam Battlefield-\$2 to \$1
- Shiloh, Raymond, and Vicksburg-\$2.70-\$1
- Brice’s Crossroads and Chattanooga-\$5.17-\$1
- Perryville & Stones River-\$5.82-\$1
- New Market Heights, VA-\$2-\$1

A motion was made and seconded to send \$300.00 to Vicksburg in memory of Ed Bearss. Ed was a special friend of our round table for many years, and, of course, Vicksburg was a large part of Ed’s working life with the National Park Service.

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## November Program:

### *Presidents at Gettysburg*

featuring Jay Jorgenson



On November 19, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln attended the dedication of the National Soldiers Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Asked to give a “few appropriate remarks,” he provided those present at the ceremony with perhaps the greatest speech ever given – his immortal Gettysburg Address. Since Lincoln’s visit to Gettysburg a number of Presidents have made the journey to that hallowed ground. Some, like Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, came to celebrate important anniversaries of the battle. Others, like Dwight Eisenhower and Jimmy Carter, used the trip as a means of showing foreign dignitaries the battlefield. This month’s presentation will focus on the presidential visits to Gettysburg and the men who made them.



Jay Jorgensen graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University with a BA in history, from Villanova University School of Law with a JD, and from American Military University with a MA in military history - Civil War Studies. He is a Superior Court Judge in New Jersey. Jay is the author of *Gettysburg’s Bloody Wheatfield*, which won the prestigious Bachelder-Coddington Award for best new book on Gettysburg in 2002. He is also the author of *The Wheatfield at Gettysburg: A Walking Tour*, *Edward Porter Alexander: Confederate Cannoneer*, and *Gettysburg’s Leadership Lessons for Lawyers (and Non-Lawyers too!)*. Jay is also the editor and co-author of *Top Ten at Gettysburg*. He is a frequent lecturer on a host of topics on the Civil War, the Revolutionary War, and legal matters. His books will be available for purchase and signing at the meeting.



## Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, November 10, 2020 Meeting

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for November include: Marinated Chicken Breast over rice; Broiled Crab Imperial; or Lasagna. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY November 6, 2020, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations for any reasons after noon on the TUESDAY preceding the meeting. This is the policy of the Inn at Reading, and the Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation and not cancelled prior to the aforementioned time period.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

24th Campaign Upcoming Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
8 DEC 2020	Kevin Rawlings	<i>We Were Marching on Christmas Day</i>
12 JAN 2021	Joe Schaeffer	<i>"Help Yourself and God Will Help You": the Birth, Life &amp; Death of the CSS Alabama</i>
9 FEB 2021	Hallie Vaughn	<i>Dr. Mary Edwards Walker - A Living History Portrayal</i>
9 MAR 2021	Phillip Greenwalt	<i>From Kirby's Kingdom: Ramifications from the Trans-Mississippi in 1864</i>
13 APR 2021	Robert Dunkerly	<i>The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro</i>
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>In Search of George Gordon Meade</i>