

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

October 2020



www.firstdefenderscwrt.us

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are but a few weeks away from yet another episode of "the most important election of our lifetime (or history)" when we shall determine the course of our nation for the next four years. While things are certainly chaotic with civil unrest, COVID, an economic downturn and political views that seem unable to be reconciled, one cannot help but wonder whether this election is quite as critical as that of 1860.

Of course, we have the partisans on both sides trumpeting doom and gloom if their champion fails to get elected on November 3rd, but none are suggesting (yet!) that we are looking at a sizeable portion of the country breaking away. Oh, there are those "talking heads" suggesting we are close to "another Civil War," but their claims are more headlines and click-bait than a fire bell in the night warning of imminent dissolution.

There are those who suggest President Trump will not vacate the White House in January should he lose the election just as there were those who anticipated Congress would not accept the results of Electoral College voting in February 1861 by certifying Abraham Lincoln as the 16th President of the United States. Yet even during the "Secession Winter," the tenets of the Constitution stood taut above the screeds of politicians and newspapers. The War came, but the nation persevered.

(It seems wholly incomprehensible our forebears could conduct an election of consequence 160 years ago, yet our modern technological capabilities and partisan divides seem unable to ensure the relatively simple process of casting a ballot cannot be done safely and efficiently without much wailing and gnashing of teeth!)

In the end, a president will take the prescribed oath of office at noon on January 20, 2021. About half of the country will be thrilled and the other half will be someplace in between disappointment and despair. Still, appealing to "the better angels of our nature," most Americans who are neither politicians or their fawning acolytes will go about their daily lives until the "most important election of our lifetime" next rolls around in 2024. What they won't have to do, however, is gird themselves for a fratricidal war with other Americans. For that, the entire nation should fall to its knees in prayers of thanksgiving.

Craig

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

Unless someone steps forward, this Newsletter may be the last to be published by the Round Table. Secretary Linda Zeiber announced her "retirement" last spring, but thusfar there have been no volunteers "flocking to the colors" to fill her place.

Round Table Business

The First Defenders CWRT met on September 9, 2020, for the inaugural meeting of the 24th campaign at Giannotti's. Twenty-four members were present with eleven others joining the meeting virtually when speaker Chris Makowski began his program discussing Grant at Vicksburg and Chattanooga and his ensuing rise in the war.

The meeting was begun at 6:30 p.m. with President Craig Breneiser offering a prayer and leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Lisa Breneiser and Joe Schaeffer stepped in to collect money for meals and membership since Kathy Little and Tim Antosy were joining the group virtually.

Following Chris's presentation, the book raffle was held by Gary Hertzog. Ten books were awarded to the winning ticket holders, and \$100.00 was collected for battlefield preservation.

Those in attendance agreed that the meeting went well despite all of the roadblocks thrown in the way from the Covid 19 pandemic. President Breneiser had the technology working flawlessly, and those who attended in person seemed to put aside concerns about the virus and enjoy the company of old friends who had last seen each other in March prior to the shut-down of such gatherings and life as we knew it.

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 is October 13, 2020. If you plan to pay your dues in person at the October 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 September 8, 2020, the balance of the treasury is \$3272.38. Our preservation account has \$324.00 not including what was collected at the September meeting. The unencumbered balance as of September's meeting stands at \$3048.38.

Book Raffle News

Our 24th Campaign is off and running. On September 8th, the Round Table met and collected \$100 for preservation through the monthly book raffle and special print raffle. A decent amount, when coupled with matching funds, that will greatly aid in efforts to save our heritage. We will conclude our special print raffle at the October meeting. Another special raffle will probably begin in December or January. THANK YOU for your support of our preservation efforts.

Gary Hertzog

Preservation

We are back! After a crazy ending to last season with having to cancel the last two meetings we are back and off to a great start to a new season. While we all would like to meet in person our first hybrid meeting was a success and Chris Mackowski gave a great presentation. I would also like to thank Chris for the comments he made about Preservation and his continued interest in our Preservation efforts.

I want to start first with summarizing our Preservation efforts from Last Season. Despite having to cancel our last two meetings the 23rd Campaign Season was our best season yet in terms of donating money to Preservation. Last Season we raised a total of \$1378. We donated \$1,072 and with all of the Matching Grants we donated to our Total Contribution for Season 23 was \$132,282. Taking in to account all of our seasons to date the Total Money we have donated is \$35,197 and with all of the Matching Grants our Total Contribution we have made is \$410,093. We are inching ever closer to the half a million mark.

With the start of the new Campaign Season we have \$324 in the Preservation fund we were able to carry over from last season. At the September meeting we raised a total of \$100 which, is a combination of the book raffle and our special print raffle. In addition, we received a gracious donation of a Mort Kunstler Print which we will use for a future special print raffle. Thank you to all of you who bought tickets and made donations. Special thanks to the member who donated the Mort Kunstler print. All of this is greatly appreciated!!

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

In addition to the Matching Grants the American Battlefield Trust named David Duncan as the new President to replace James Lighthizer who is retiring. David is the Director of Development for the Trust and in my time as Vice President I have had the pleasure of corresponding with him about Matching Grants and our donations. I believe David will be a good President and the Trust will be in good hands when President Lighthizer retires.

That's all for now. Until next month!

Mark Quattrock

October Program:

PLEASE NOTE: This will be a virtual program; Ron Kirkwood will make this presentation remotely!

Too Much for Human Endurance

featuring Ron Kirkwood

Logistically, the George Spangler farm may have been the most significant farm during the Battle of Gettysburg, and Ron Kirkwood argues it was, in fact, the most important. Located a short distance behind Cemetery Ridge along the Granite Schoolhouse Road, the Spangler's thriving farm suddenly transitioned into one of the largest and busiest field hospitals following the fighting in early July 1863. Kirkwood has closely studied this site, and his book reveals factors that have long been overlooked. Newly-found information about Confederate Brig. Gen. Lewis A. Armistead's time at Spangler Farm, the Spanglers themselves, the Artillery Reserve and stories of the suffering and heroism of the surgeons, nurses, wounded and mortally wounded at the two hospitals on the Spanglers' land are woven together to tell the story.



Ron Kirkwood is the author of "Too Much for Human Endurance: The George Spangler Farm Hospitals and the Battle of Gettysburg," which was published by Savas Beatie in hardcover in June 2019 and went into its second printing in October. Now retired after a 40-year career as an editor and writer in newspapers and magazines including USA TODAY, the Baltimore Sun, the Harrisburg (PA) Patriot-News, and the York (PA) Daily Record, Kirkwood has edited national magazines for USA TODAY Sports, was National Football League editor for USA TODAY Sports Weekly and he managed the copy desk in Harrisburg when the newspaper won a Pulitzer Prize in 2012. A Michigan native and graduate of Central Michigan University, Ron has returned as guest speaker to journalism classes as part of the school's Hearst Visiting Professionals series, and has been a Gettysburg Foundation guide at the George Spangler Farm Civil War Field Hospital Site since it opened in 2013.



24th Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
10 NOV 2020	Jay Jorgensen	<i>Presidents at Gettysburg</i>
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 & 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>

Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Meeting:

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for October:

Broiled Salmon with baked potato, vegetable, salad and dessert; Chopped Sirloin with baked potato, vegetable, salad and dessert; or Manicotti with vegetable, salad and dessert. 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 October 9, 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 FRIDAY preceding the meeting. This is the policy of Giannotti's, 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. *THE MEAL COST AT GIANNOTTI'S IS \$27.00!* THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**
