

GENERAL ORDERS



The Newsletter of the

**Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
and The Iron Brigade Association**



April 9, 2026

Wayne Motts

Wisconsin Civil War Artifacts in the Collection of the National Civil War Museum

Join historian, author, and National Civil War Museum CEO Wayne E. Motts for a dynamic PowerPoint presentation showcasing significant original Civil War artifacts connected to Wisconsin figures who fought in the American Civil War. As part of his presentation, he will highlight items related to the famed Cushing brothers and memorabilia related to the famed "Iron Brigade," illustrating their stories through rare objects preserved in the museum's collection. Wayne explores each artifact and brings to life the people behind these remarkable Civil War treasures.

Wayne E. Motts serves as the CEO of the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He has led three non-profit historical organizations, including the Adams County Historical Society in Gettysburg and the Gettysburg Foundation. For thirty-eight years, he has guided visitors as a licensed battlefield guide at the Gettysburg National Military Park. He has also authored two published works on the Civil War.



Motts was born and raised in central Ohio and graduated from The Ohio State University with a B.A. in military history in 1989. Moving to Gettysburg in 1990, Wayne earned a Master's Degree in American History from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania in 1994.

Wayne was one of the youngest persons ever to complete the licensing process to be a Licensed Battlefield Guide at

Gettysburg National Military Park. He has now led tours to the battlefield for nearly forty years. He has spoken to a wide range of historical bodies and groups on topics related to the American Civil War including the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

General Orders No. 4-26

April 2026

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April Meeting at a Glance The Wisconsin Club 9th and Wisconsin Avenue Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Jackets are required for dining room.

- 5:30 p.m. - Registration/Social Hour
- 6:30 p.m. - Dinner
- 7:30 p.m. - Program

Speaker and topic are subject to change. In case of inclement weather, listen to WTMJ or WISN for meeting status.

2025-2026 Speaker Schedule p. 7

milwaukeecwrt.org

MCWRT Mission Statement

The purposes of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee shall be to promote study of personalities and events leading to or associated with the American Civil War; to provide a forum for members and guests to exchange views; and to support study and remembrance of our own nation's history.

When Reservations are Cancelled

Please be aware that cancellations of dinner reservations within 48 hours of the meeting are subject to payment in full. The MCWRT is charged for these dinners whether they are used or not!

Your Cooperation is Appreciated

“Walk-in dinner” requests are sometimes difficult to honor. Remember, dinner reservations are to be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date. We are always happy to accommodate where possible, but we cannot always guarantee a dinner that evening if you have not called in or emailed your reservation. Thank you for your understanding.

Special Dietary Needs

We have quite a number of regular members who have opted for special entrees as options to the regular dinner being served. The Wisconsin Club and the Round Table will make every effort to meet any special dietary needs you may have. As a courtesy, **please give a reminder when making your reservations**, so we don't forget to serve you what you're expecting!

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, creed, ancestry, pregnancy, marital or parental status, gender identity or expression, veteran status, physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or any other legally protected status in its educational programs, activities, or membership.

Slate of Candidates

The following names have been proposed for the Round Table Board of Directors with terms expiring in June 2029.

Michael Benton
Dale Bispalec
Tom Hesse
Justin Tolomeo

NUMBER	NAME	AGE	REGIMENT	PLACE OF BIRTH	OTHER RELIGIOUS SERVICE	REMARKS
	Edward Hahn					
1	George A. Hahn	28	1st Regt. Wis. Inf.	Wisconsin		His father's destination of settlement...
2	George A. Hahn	28	1st Regt. Wis. Inf.	Wisconsin		His father's destination of settlement...
3	George A. Hahn	28	1st Regt. Wis. Inf.	Wisconsin		His father's destination of settlement...
4	George A. Hahn	28	1st Regt. Wis. Inf.	Wisconsin		His father's destination of settlement...
5	George A. Hahn	28	1st Regt. Wis. Inf.	Wisconsin		His father's destination of settlement...

MCWRT Annual Fund

The following members have made a generous commitment to the MCWRT by investing in that fund. This list reflects those donations made July 1, 2025 through March 13, 2026.

Major Contributor (\$500 and above)

Susan Anderson, Paul Eilbes, Gerald Frangesch, Doug Haag, Van & Dawn Harl, Rebecca & Charles Jarvis, Grant Johnson

Patron (\$200 - \$499)

Mike Deeken, George Geanon, Gene & Jane Jamrozy, Dan Nettesheim, Andrew Platta, Laura Rinaldi, Brad & Kathy Schotanus, Dave & Kay Wege

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Contributor (up to \$99)

George Affeldt, Gordon Dammann, Thomas Doyle, Lori Duginski, John Durr, Julian Gonzalez, Leon & Margaret Harris, Christopher Johnson, Rich Kallan, Jerome Kowalski, Jay Lauck, Fred Madsen, Rod Malinowski, Seth Maxfield, Paul & Susan Miller, Thomas Olsen, John Rodahl, Rick Schultz, Diana Smurawa, Anne & Dave Steinhilb, Dan VanGrunsvan, Paul Zehren

Speaker Enhancement Fund

George Affeldt, Don and Amy Bauer, Jerry & Ellen DeMers, Thomas Doyle, Lori Duginski, John Durr, Paul Eilbes, Gary & Judy Ertel, Gerald Frangesch, George Geanon, Julian Gonzalez, Jim Heinz, John Helmenstine, Tom Hesse, Don & Laverna Hilbig, Peter & Jean Jacobsohn, Gene & Jane Jamrozy, Dan Jones, Rich Kallan, Allan Kasprzak, John Lencheck, Steve Leopold, Rod Malinowski, Robin & Tom Martin, Kathy McNally, Jim & Monica Millane, Paul & Susan Miller, Thomas Olsen, John & Susan Petty, Laura Rinaldi, Diana Smurawa, Dan Tanty, Paul Zehren



Previous April meetings of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table featured these speakers and topics.

- 2003 Kenneth Noe: "The Battle of Perryville"
- 2004 Jim Ogden: "Inflict All the Damage You Can"
- 2006 Horace Mewborn: "Mosby and His Rangers"
- 2008 Jennifer Weber: "Copperheads"
- 2010 David Stewart: "Impeachment of Andrew Johnson"
- 2012 Marshall D. Krolick: "Riding for the Union: Memoirs of the 8th Illinois Cavalry"
- 2013 John Fitzpatrick: "Lincoln at Gettysburg"
- 2014 Scott Bowden: "Last Chance for Victory: R.E. Lee and the Gettysburg Campaign"
- 2016 Scott Biggs: "Nashville: Siren's Song of the Confederacy"
- 2018 John Marzsalek.: "Memoirs of U.S. Grant"
- 2021 Ron Kirkwood: "Too Much for Human Endurance"
- 2022 Jeff William Hunt: "Meade and Lee at Rappahannock Station"
- 2023 Richard Holloway: "Arrested, Promoted, Transferred: Richard Taylor and the Red River Campaign"
- 2024 A. Wilson Greene: "Opening the Cracker Line: Brown's Ferry & the Battle of Wauhatchie"
- 2025 Phil Spaugy: "The 19th Indiana of the Iron Brigade"



The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee was established in 1947 and is the second oldest of the more than 200 Civil War Round Tables still in existence in the United States and abroad. Current membership of the MCWRT is approximately 200.

Kenosha Civil War Museum

Second Friday Lecture Series

Sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and the Iron Brigade Association. Free and open to the public.

How the Great Lakes Caused the Civil War

Friday, April 10 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Ted Karamanski

The Civil War was won, and the American Republic was saved because of the remarkable contributions of men, supplies, and leaders provided by the states of the Great Lakes region. These are the states that created the Republican Party. Something more than slavery was behind their deep resentment of the Confederacy. Join us for a program detailing how navigation issues exasperated sectional relations in the years before the war and how Union victory transformed our region.

Theodore Karamanski is a Professor Emeritus of History at Loyola University Chicago where he has taught courses in American Indian history, the Civil War, and public history. Karamanski has been a leading national voice in the promotion of American and public history for more than three decades. He was the founder and later director of Loyola's Public History Program as well as a prolific author in the fields of American Indian, Great Lakes, Civil War, and nineteenth-century American history.

Freedom Will Be Theirs by the Sword

Friday, May 1 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Jeff Kluever

On September 29, 1864 fourteen black men earned the Medal of Honor for their actions at the Battle of New Market Heights outside Richmond, Virginia. Their charge against Confederate fortifications broke the Rebel lines, but left hundreds of their comrades dead and wounded on the field. Join author and historian Jeff Kluever to learn the stories of these former slaves and freemen who fought valiantly for a country that did not yet consider them citizens.

To Care for Him Who Has Borne the Battle

Civil War Medical Weekend with the 17th Corps Hospital Group

Saturday, May 2 | 10am – 4pm

Sunday, May 3 | 12pm – 4pm

Find more information on the website of the Kenosha Civil War Museum. Look under the tab for Public Programs. Updates will also be included in the [General Orders](#) as the event draws closer.



An Interesting Letter from the Grand Army.

Onward to Richmond- the grand army enroute for Manassas -first days March -appearance of the country's- Centreville and Manassas evacuated -fortifications retreat of the enemy -their destination- destruction of the bridges, houses, and stock -feeling of our troops- Wisconsin second - sad effects of the war upon Virginia -union sentiment contrabands.

Army of the Potomac Fairfax County, Virginia, March 13th 1862

We may now truly say that the world does move and all is not quiet on the Potomac, as the onward movement of the army after seven months of inactive campaign plainly indicates. The order to issue rations for two days and the strike tents preparatory to taking up our line of March for the enemy stronghold Manassas rejoin the hearts of the brave soldiers, who for several months had been leading a life of monotony in camp. For this Change in the program of the military affairs the army is undoubtedly under lasting obligations quote uncle Abe quote and secretary Stanton, who declared that the order for the army on the Potomac was quote March and white quote the opposition of this policy had to cave and submit to the grand March to Richmond via Manassas.

First Day's March

Monday morning 3:00 AM the main body of the center of our army took up the line of March for Centreville and Manassas, where it was expected an opportunity would be afforded to our soldiers to give the rebels a receipt in full for the battle of Bull Run on the memorable 21st of July 61 shortly after bidding a due to the tented field the various bands struck up in "Dixieland will take our stand"

Which was responded to along the lines of the gallant sons of the north and West who to use in common phrase felt their oats. When the queen of the moon appeared in the East and shed her rays of light upon the earth, we behold the grand and imposing spectacle of some 50,000 freemen marching towards to the Gibraltar of the Rebellion.

Though rain and mud We marched the distance of 20 miles to Fairfax courthouse, which place we reach by 2:00 PM we found this antiquated looking specimen of a Virginia village, once the headquarters of the rubble Chieftain, deserted by its inhabitants in every house occupied by a number of troops who formed the advance of the center column of the union forces which advanced on Sunday morning. The division McDonald's to which your correspondent is attached camped about two miles West of the courthouse, 6 from Centreville and 13 from Manassas.

Appearance of the Country

The country lying between the Potomac and Fairfax courthouse presented to the eye strong evidence of the evils arising from the civil war houses burnt down, others unoccupied, their late inhabitants having fled to the rebel Kingdom of king Davis with the hope that once under the protecting arm of Jeff, they would be safe from the tyrannies of the Yankees it was painful to behold the sad destruction of property, all of which Who does the work of the rebels who appear to be influenced by demonic spirits which led them to destroy everything which they could not convert to their own use. During the entire March we met with but 2 white residents, the balance of them having gone to the wars to fight for the overthrow of the government which affords them protection.

Evacuation of Centreville

Upon our arrival at Fairfax, we learned of the cowardly evacuation of Centreville by the rebels. This was a great disappointment to our troops, especially the gallant Wisconsin Second, which had been anticipating a good time in getting satisfaction for their bull run disaster. The same might be received the astonishing intelligence of the abandonment of Manassas by the rebels and its occupation by a detachment of regular Calvary and a regiment of New York infantry.

No fight for us was the general explanation of the boys on the receipt of the snooze. Had our forces been rusted about two hours and then pushed forward, we might here the rising of the next day sun have attacked the rear of their retreating column but for reasons best known to the generals in command, are soldiers quietly allowed to revel in the state of blissful quiet around their campfires while their enemies were retreating with all their stores and ammunition. Your correspondent does not pretend to charge the general in chief of the army Potomac with a want of military skill but when we contrast the inactive policy in this case with that which would have been practiced by Napoleon or other modern warriors under similar circumstances, it does appear that there was a lack of military skill an energy of character.

Retreat of the Enemy

From the reports which continue to reach our camp we learned that rebels are burning Houses, blowing up bridges killing cattle, capturing union prisoners and destroying the country which they are passing through

Their Destination

Various rumors are of afloat as to where the rebels intend to make a stand some to the effect that Gordonsville will be the point where they will erect fortifications and dispute the right of way to Richmond with their union forces others say they will cross the Rappahannock and fortify Fredericksburg, or else marched directly to Richmond.



Through the Looking Glass features are intended to tell the stories of common folks of the Civil War, whether they are civilians or military personnel. If you have access to the story of an ordinary citizen of this war-torn era and are willing to share it with our members, please consider submitting it to the General Orders. Thank you!

Civilians of the Civil War

Cyrus Hall McCormick

(1809–1884)



Cyrus Hall McCormick, one of the United States' great early industrialists, founded the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company in Chicago in 1847. Although he was merely one of several entrepreneurs to invent a mechanical reaper, his company's Chicago home, as well as his family's business acumen, quickly made his version the nation's most successful and widely used harvester, critically helping open the Midwest and Great Plains to family farmers in the decade leading up to the Civil War.

Born February 13, 1809, in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, McCormick was the eldest of eight children raised by Robert McCormick Jr. and Mary Ann Hall. Robert McCormick had attempted to design and build a mechanical reaper of his own during Cyrus' youth, but it proved not to be a sturdy, reliable model. Building upon his father's failures, as well as an unpatented successful version by Scottish inventor Patrick Bell, Cyrus succeeded in constructing a reliable reaper in 1831. He continued working on improving this model and finally received his first patent in 1834.

Two years after Cyrus established the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company with one of his brothers, Leander, another brother—William—joined them in Chicago. William's business insight and Cyrus' skilled salesmanship helped the company flourish. Cyrus, however, suffered a stroke in 1880 and spent the last four years of his life as an invalid before passing away in Chicago on May 13, 1884. In 1902, the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company was absorbed into the International Harvester Company.

Terry Beckenbaugh

Fritz Tegener

(1813–unknown)



A Prussian immigrant, Fritz Tegener lived in the Texas Hill Country town of Comfort, a community started by recent German immigrants embroiled in the political unrest of the Revolutions of 1848 in Europe. Few German Texans owned slaves, and the people of Comfort were openly opposed to secession when the Civil War began, unwilling to participate in another such conflict.

Before the war, Tegener had been politically active in Comfort, serving as a jurist and county treasurer. That would continue during the Civil War. To protect the community from both Indian raids and the Confederacy, Tegener and other residents formed what was called the Union Loyal League.

In 1862 passed, Confederate soldiers began harassing the German Texans to join the Army, spurring more than 60 to organize a group that would travel south to Mexico to avoid conscription and appointing Tegener their leader. The ensemble departed in the summer of 1862, pursued by 94 Confederates as it traversed the rugged terrain of southwest Texas.

On August 10, 1862, the Confederates caught the Germans on the banks of the Nueces River and a battle ensued, known as the Massacre on the Nueces, in which 19 Unionists were killed and nine, too injured to escape, left behind and captured. Confederates executed their prisoners and left all 28 bodies unburied. Though wounded, Tegener escaped and led the remaining Germans to Mexico, only to be ambushed by another Confederate group while crossing the Rio Grande. Eight more died.

Tegener spent the rest of the war in Mexico, but returned home afterward. Later, women of Comfort collected the sun-bleached bones from the battlefield and buried them under the only German language monument dedicated to the Union in the South named Treue der Union (Loyalty to the Union). Tegener risked his life to defend his political beliefs and find refuge for young German men of the Texas Hill Country.

Charles Gear

The Driftless Area Civil War Club Schedule of Meetings

Programs are held monthly on the 3rd Saturday of the month at 1:00 at the Odd Fellow Lodge at 112 Front Street Mineral Point.

Contact John Helmenstine at helmenstine@att.net for more information.

April 18, 2026	Chris Kolakowski – Civil War in New York
May 9, 2026	Reverend Miller – Both Prayed to the Same God
June 20, 2026	Jerry Allen – The 15 th Wisconsin Regiment
July 18, 2026	Mark Tully – Frontier Doctor
August 15, 2026	Bruce Allardice – Lincoln as a War Leader
September 19, 2026	Laura Schiller -Illinois Cavalry
October 17, 2026	Leslie Goddard – Clara Barton



Musings and Memories

Reflections of a Wisconsin Civil War Historian

With the firing on Fort Sumter, John H. Cook of Hartford, a farm laborer, enlisted at Milwaukee in the Montgomery Guard, an Irish militia company being ready for the war. He signed the roll “not for my country being nothing but a boy did not know what that meant, did not know what my duty to country was, but for the sake of seeing the sunny south that I have heard so much about and to be considered brave.” He was a half inch short of 5-foot-4 and called himself “the tough one.”

At war’s end, he wrote a 13-page “Cook’s Time in the Army.” He was detached from the 6th Wisconsin to Battery B, 4th U.S. Artillery from September 12, 1862, until March 4, 1864. Wounded at Antietam (gunshot wound to right leg), he was hospitalized for several months then transferred to 10th Independent Battery, Wisconsin Light Artillery, on March 4, 1864.

Cook’s trouble began after he transferred into Battery B and, coming off guard duty, stopped at a sutler where he purchased two bottles of whiskey “I took them to my tent and left one of them out, then went out before the fire and set down to enjoy a drink by myself when almost at once Miller, one of the squad, (6 in number) called out from the tent, “What have you got there?” I told him nothing, to lay down and go back to sleep. He said, “You can’t fool me. You have whiskey.” And he got up making considerable noise, he woke the rest and they got up and I gave them all a smell of the bottle. They wanted to know where I got it and I told them. They said they were going to get some and went and got 7 bottles then pretty soon they got pretty noisy. When I told them we would all be put in the guardhouse. With that, Cook went off to his blankets. “I had been there about an hour when I was jerked out of tent by whom I did not know, until I found Lieutenant Stewart lying on his back in front of me. I suppose I had knocked him down. I tried to apologize but he wouldn’t allow, but took me and the rest and tied us to the gun carriage.”

John "The Tough One" Cook is a true "Western boy" and how I enjoyed finding his 13-page handwritten memoir at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Born in New England, he displays how the Wisconsin frontier changed him, announcing he had "check" while in the army, ran the guard to spree in Washington, sassed his officers, and showed bravery at several battles. My friend Alan Nolan believed the frontier did not change individuals who move there, but I think "The Tough One" shows it did.

Musings and Memories is a new feature in our General Orders. It will display some of the authentic personalities of the men of the Iron Brigade. These stories are supplied to us by Lance Herdegen, so we can expect solid history, together with tales that will give us a flavor of what the boys in blue were really like. Lance knows these men like they were his own dear friends. It will be a special treat to see what he shares with us in the coming months.

**MILWAUKEE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
2025-2026 SPEAKER SCHEDULE**

- September 11, 2025** **Dr. James Pula**
Overlooked and Underappreciated: Dan Butterfield
- October 9, 2025** **Kim Harris**
Libbie Bacon Custer
- November 13, 2025** **Chris Kolakowski**
*Civil War to World War:
Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr. and Sr.*
- December 11, 2025** **Brian Jordan**
(At the Bavarian Bierhaus)
Marching Home: Union Veterans - Their Unending Civil War
- January 8, 2026** **Guy Fraker**
Lincoln the Lawyer
- February 12, 2026** **Keith Bohannon**
*General Joseph Wheeler and the Army of Tennessee's
Cavalry Corps in the Atlanta Campaign*
- March 12, 2026** **Cliff Roberts**
Castle Pinckney
- April 9, 2026** **Wayne Motts**
*Nevins-Freeman Award Winner
Wisconsin Civil War Artifacts in the Collection of the
National Civil War Museum*
- May 7, 2026** **Chris Mackowski**
*A Tempest of Iron and Lead:
The Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse*
- June 11, 2026** **Alex Rossino**
*Calamity at Frederick: A Fresh Look at the Creation and
Loss of Special Orders No. 191*

Speakers/topics remain subject to change.



**Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
2025 – 2026 Board of Directors**

Name	Office/Position	Term Expires
Terry Arliskas	Secretary/Program Chair	2028
Thomas Arliskas	Past President	2028
Michael K. Benton	President	2026
Dale Bspalec	Member	2026
Roman Blenski	Second Vice President	2028
	Quartermaster	
Mike Deeken	Member	2028
Paul A. Eilbes	Treasurer	2028
Tom Hesse	Past President	2026
Grant Johnson	Membership/Webmaster	2027
	Past President	
Bruce Klem	Past President	2027
Daniel Nettesheim	Member	2027
Frank Risler	Member	2027
Justin Tolomeo	First Vice President	2026
David Wege	Editor, General Orders	2027

www.milwaukeecwrt.org

**CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE NEWS EMAIL
NOTIFICATIONS**

Would you like to receive an email reminder before each meeting? How about an email telling you about a special or upcoming Civil War event in our area? If you are interested in receiving an email reminder/notification please send your email address to Grant Johnson at: grant.johnson@responsory.com

Grant will be creating a database with email reminders set to go out a week before the scheduled event. This is a purely optional choice on each member's part. If you have any questions please talk to Grant at a Round Table meeting or email him at the listed email address.

Milwaukee Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for April 9, 2026

Mail your reservations by Friday, April 3 to:

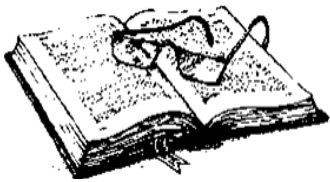
Paul Eilbes
1809 Washington Avenue
Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730

Call or email reservations to:

(262) 376-0568
peilbes@gmail.com

Enclosed is \$ ____ (meal is \$35.00 per person) for ____ people for the
April 9, 2026 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee.

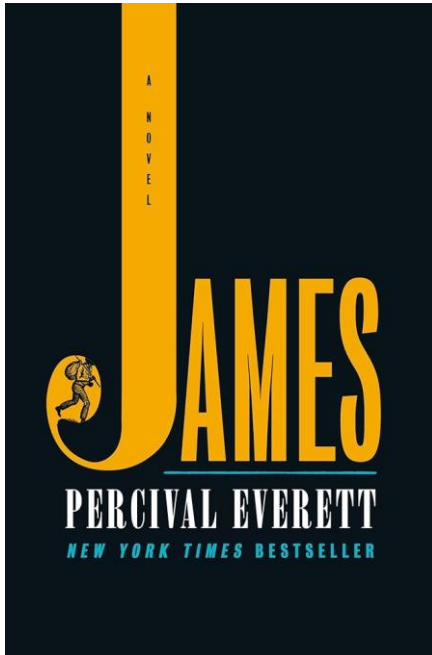
(Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)



BETWEEN THE COVERS

James

Percival Everett



This review now is on a book that the Kenosha Museum's Media group was reading for February. The group has switched to pick up books that bring together the Civil War topics with the 250th anniversary of the nation. The first book for this change is James by Mr. Percival Everett. Mr. Everett is a Professor of English at USC. He has written a number of award-winning books. This particular book won Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. This book is a novel which goes back in time to follow the characters from Mark Twain's book Huckleberry Finn. It focuses on the character of Jim the slave that is with Huck. However, in this writing Jim is the main character and Professor Everett's character sees the action from Jim's eyes not Huck's. It is on Jim that we follow what happens to him and looks at life from a slave's perspective.

The story opens with Jim watching Huck and Tom doing some mischief and he expects them to try to pull something on the slave Jim. Jim pretends to be asleep as the boys sneak into the kitchen and take some candles. Thus, they pull off a caper by getting past the sleeping slave. That is something they could always do because that's how slaves were, is the white perception of slaves in general. Thus begins this story as the tie-in with the Huck Finn characters, but as the story develops the author highlights the stance of white thoughts toward black slaves and how the slaves really were.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this novel. 'Enjoy' feels like a strange word to use for a book that focuses on such a dark side of human history, but Mr. Everett is clearly a master of his art. The focus on the use of language is excellent. I thought Mr. Everett positions well the dichotomy between how enslaved people spoke with each other and how they spoke with the white men and women who purported to own them. In speaking with white people, they protected themselves by attempting to appear as they were perceived—simple, lacking intelligence. But in private, they were truly themselves, discussing life, love, politics, philosophy, and everything in between.

The story continues into Jim becoming a runaway slave when he finds out he is to be separated from his wife and daughter as he is to be sold to someone else. This causes him to run off so he has some time to develop a plan to take them with him to make a break to freedom. Then Huck fakes his death so he can run away from his father. These two become unlikely escapees and travel together to find freedom. Jim unfortunately is to be the person that allergy caused Huck's death, so he has a double problem, a runaway slave and the murderer of a white boy. Thus combined these two begin a journey fraught with adventure, excitement and in some cases terror.

I thought the author in his narrative powerfully conveys the dehumanizing reality of slavery: the constant threat of being bought and sold, the relentless pursuit, the denial of identity and rights, arbitrary violence, sexual assault, and the forced separation of families. The book poignantly illustrates the racism of the south that stripped enslaved individuals of their humanity.

The writing is sharp, layered, and often darkly funny. I believe Mr. Everett doesn't just retell Twain's classic—he uses it as a springboard to explore race, language, survival, and freedom in ways that feel modern but still rooted in the brutality of the 19th century. There's also a surprising amount of suspense and grit in the narrative. James is clever and self-aware, and his inner life is painted with a richness that makes the story feel both epic and intimate.

I felt this was an excellent first choice for the new focus of the Museum's Media club. It is a fast, interesting read and I think a worthwhile book to read for anyone interested in this period of the country and for anyone interested in period novels.

submitted by Bruce Klem

Ethnic Regiments of the Army of the Cumberland
presented by Dan Masters

The Upper Midwestern states of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio provided the bulk of the soldiers for the Army of the Cumberland, the Federal government's second largest Civil War army. Dan Master's program will highlight several of the ethnic regiments—including the 24th Illinois (German) 32nd Indiana (German), 35th Indiana (Irish), 2nd Missouri (German), 9th Ohio (German), 10th Ohio (Irish), and 15th Wisconsin (Scandinavian) -- that served with this potent fighting force.

John Don't Call Me Hunt Morgan and the Not-So-Great Raid of 1863
presented by Darryl Smith

Darryl Smith's presentation will discuss John H. Morgan's Indiana-Ohio Raid from a different perspective – one that shows the raid was not the successful effort that some historians claim it to be – and how it adversely impacted operations in Tennessee. The result was not some grand effort, but instead led to the destruction of a Confederate cavalry division.

Hazardous Duty: Civil War Shipwrecks of the Great Lakes
presented by Brendon Bailod

Raw materials from the Great Lakes region fueled the industrialization of America and played a key role in developing the Union's capacity during the American Civil War. Hundreds of ships were lost in the years prior to the Civil War due to southern opposition to harbor appropriations for the Great Lakes. Hundreds more were lost during the Civil War as they sailed east with cargoes of grain, iron ore and copper. This talk will tell the story of the Great Lakes role in the Civil War through the lens of Great Lakes shipwrecks.

The Western Sanitary Commission
presented by Dana Shoaf

The Western Sanitary Commission, though overshadowed by the larger United States Sanitary Commission in the east, performed invaluable work. Union General John C. Fremont, Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot, James E. Yeatman, and Dorothea Dix established the WSC in August 1861. Headquartered in St. Louis, the hard-working doctors, civilians, and nurses of the WSC established hospitals, administered medical services, and improved sanitation in camps. Additionally, the WSC established a fleet of hospital ships to travel throughout the sprawling Western Theater and provide aid from the Battle of Wilson's Creek until the end of the war.

Return to the Valley: Battles for the Breadbasket

The **Civil War Time Travelers** will be returning to the Shenandoah Valley October 24-31 2026. We will be based in Woodstock, VA for five straight nights! From that base visits will be made to Kernstown, Cross Keys, Port Republic, New Market, and more. A trip over Skyline Drive will reveal the beauty of the Valley from above as nature's tapestry is laid out below us. Our trip will cover sights from both Jackson's 1862 Campaign and the 1864 Campaign that effectively destroyed the Shenandoah Valley's ability to help feed the Army of Northern Virginia.

More information will soon be available, but the ballpark cost for the trip is \$1,250.00. That includes motor coach transportation from Wisconsin, hotel costs, all museum and historian fees, and most meals. Join us for an eight-day excursion into the Valley. See why Thomas Jackson said, "If this Valley is lost, Virginia is lost."

Contact Dave Wege at wegs1862@gmail.com for additional information.

The Shenandoah Valley



I just returned from a very enjoyable trip to the Shenandoah Valley. I was in the company of two Milwaukee Civil War Round Table members, and despite that, I had a lovely time. You see, I'm not that interested in the history of the Civil War.

I didn't go on this trip to learn about the battlefields, or the armies, or the weapons or any of those other details about the Civil War that my husband finds so fascinating. I went to see a part of this beautiful country that I hadn't had the opportunity to see before. I went to experience a little of a culture that's different from my Midwestern upbringing. I went for the food!

However, being naturally curious and a decent listener when I want to be, I couldn't help but absorb some of the history. For example, when we visited Kernstown battlefield, I learned that there was a man named Burton who redesigned the bullet that was used in their rifles to make it more efficient. However, I was much more interested to see the Pritchard house and the period furnishings and tools, the rooms that were used as a field hospital, and how visitors to the house were welcomed into the parlor on the second floor.

The hub of our visit was Woodstock, and we ventured out each day in a different direction. I came to appreciate why the Union army had such difficulty navigating that valley! Our stops included:

- New Market battlefield and museum, where I learned about a soldier who was an engineer, and after his leg was amputated, he designed his own highly functional prosthetic leg.
- Port Republic, where I learned what a Coaling was – a spot where they burned wood to make charcoal.
- Cross Keys, where we visited the cemetery where soldiers sheltered behind the headstones during the battle. One of the head stones still shows a broken corner where it was hit by cannon fire.
- Skyline Drive – several overlook stops to soak in the gorgeous views of the valley and the adjacent mountain ranges.
- Red Bud Run, site of 3rd Winchester. Confirmed with a local that the lovely “skeleton” trees we kept seeing were in fact sycamores, and we identified a variety of hickory nut different from what we see here in Wisconsin.

All that aside, I told you I went for the food! And did we ever eat well, and in some of the most interesting settings.

- The Muse Vineyard, just outside Woodstock had wonderful wine tastings, delicious food, and a fabulous view.
- The Edinburgh Mill, with a colorful history of its own had the best chef's salad I've ever eaten, and an eclectic museum and gift shop.
- The Woodstock Brewhouse had interesting beer selections and a dish called Reuben Tots – a plate of Tater Tots topped with all the fillings from a Reuben sandwich – Yummy!
- The Wayside Inn in Middletown had delicious food, but the building and the welcoming proprietor made this a must see!



All in all, it was a highly enjoyable trip!!!
submitted by Nancy Eilbes

Please submit your own personal Wanderings story so other readers of the General Orders can enjoy your experiences and, maybe, be inspired to visit Civil War sites as well!



Tom Thompson, known to friends as “Tommy,” is this month’s Member Spotlight. Tommy is a long-time member of the MCWRT. He served for several years on the Board of Directors, a position Tom says he was “railroaded” into taking. Tommy is known at the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table for his extremely good luck winning our monthly book raffles.

Over his career, Tom wore many hats as he sought to put food on the table for his family. He worked three jobs at one time for years, as a gunsmith, maintenance at Regal Ware in West Bend, and as the head of his own business, Thompson Electric. Tom also served as a general contractor and

on multiple church and school boards. He is known throughout his hometown as a man who can provide answers, as evidenced by the many years he served as Town Chairman in Osceola Township in Fond du Lac County.

Tom was married to his beloved Sharon, who went to live with Jesus in 2021. They have two daughters, Laurie and Linda, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

After his retirement, Tom claims to be busier than ever, if that’s even possible. He enjoys meeting with friends and family at church and at local eating establishments. He spreads good will with humor and a helping hand. This includes sharing eggs from a local supplier who Tom frequents quite often.

A New Bookstore in Grafton!

A dream has come true for James Cornelius. He will be partners in a store called The Book and Cranny, located at 1522 Wisconsin Avenue in Grafton. A while back, James was looking at the property on his own. However, unknown to him, another individual was also seriously investigating the property. James and Natalie Merkle, the other interested party, decided to go into partnership and the bookstore was born! Book and Cranny opened on March 20.

Cornelius said that the store will have a mix of new and used titles. The plan is to assess what customers’ tastes are and adjust accordingly. As James reports, more and more brick-and-mortar bookstores have opened in recent years. Membership in the American Booksellers Association is up by 255 since last year, according to an article in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

This is certainly good news for those who like an actual book in their hands, rather than a Kindle, tablet, or other electronic device. Here is wishing James and Natalie success and many years of prosperity at Grafton’s newest store, The Book and Cranny.

The Organ of the Soldiers: An Introduction to Civil War Camp Newspapers

Friday, May 8 | 12pm – 1pm

Presented by Dan Freas

“Camp newspapers are a feature of the war that is worth attention,” reported a St. Louis newspaper in 1862. “The camp paper is the organ of the soldiers, through which they communicate their condition, wants, enjoyments, and local news to the public, and to their distant friends.” Historians have documented more than 200 camp newspapers printed during the Civil War. The majority of these publications were published by printers in Union regiments using confiscated shops, equipment and materials in occupied southern communities. A few were created using portable printing offices. Mr. Freas’s presentation will introduce you to the printers, technology, and content from some of these camp newspapers which, given the lack of military or government censorship, provide honest and intriguing accounts of the soldier experience. An emphasis will be placed on camp newspapers associated with the Upper Middle West.

Dan Freas recently retired from a 42-year career in program development and administration of historic sites and museums, most recently serving for 12 years as the director of Old World Wisconsin. A native of Western Pennsylvania, Dan’s interest in the Civil War began at a young age during a family trip to Gettysburg. His father worked for his hometown newspaper and one of Dan’s first jobs as a living history interpreter was working in a historic print shop. With a little bit of ink running through his veins, he is now combining interests in printing and the Civil War through research and writing about camp newspapers and field printing during the conflict.



Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.



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Contact Roman Blenski, Quartermaster
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You may also see Roman in person at the monthly meeting at the Book Raffle table.

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