

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association

2018– Edition II - February

Upcoming Civil War Events Sponsored Events

None at this time

Events Recommended by WVRA members

**Beverly (see below) - July 13-15
2018**

February Meeting - February 17, Weston
Steak House, 1 pm.

University High School - April 20-21

New Market - May 19-20

Gettysburg 155 - July 5-8;

www.gettysburgreenactment.com/reenactors

Cedar Creek - October

Remembrance Day - November

Other Events

Bulltown - October 12 -14, 2018 contact Sam
Krafft (cwarcapt@yahoo.com)

Droop Mountain - October 12-14, 2018.

Other Time Periods

Beverly Centuries of History - Probably
July 13-15

Editor's note - if you plan to attend events, please work with your Unit Rep.

concerning the minutes. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

3. Talked about the web hosting of WVRA.org by WEB.com. Peter Baxter had moved our web site to Godaddy. Web.com tried to charge our checking account in December for the monthly fee but the stop payment that was set up prevented it. This is still being watched.
4. There are currently 26 membership units (individuals and families) registered. Several more paid their dues during the meeting.
5. No other reenactor groups have signed up to be members of the WVRA. It is hoped that having insurance will encourage them to join.
6. Chuck is not putting information on the WVRA Facebook page. He is only putting it on the WVRA-TASAS Facebook page.
7. Jim Barnes wants to take on recruitment as a special project. He looked at setting up a recruiting table at the next Morgantown Gun Show. He said a deposit must be made way in advance. Then they must approve. He will continue to pursue this. Stormy said she would be able to do a display on the Artillery. The next show is April 7-8 in Morgantown.
8. Jim looked into the Liability Insurance (Lockton Affinity, LLC) through the NRA. They sent lots of paperwork to be filled out. Cost is per person based on the number insured and the amount of insurance purchased. Jack and Jim will fill out the paper work to get a better cost and will present at the next meeting.
9. Chuck talked to Tim Walker about the Droop Mountain Reenactment. He said there will be an event the 2nd week end of October and a "Campaign Style" event on November 2-3. More details to follow.
10. Newsletter reimbursement for the production and mailing costs were reviewed and approved..
11. The Post Office Box service fee was paid in December. Jack Rush was added to the account in addition to Mike Phillips. The PO box was registered online to make the yearly fee easier to pay.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will February 17 at 1:00 pm at the Weston Steer House (normal location). Please note the starting time. At this meeting we will be voting to sanction the University High School event and to sponsor the Beverly Centuries of History.

Minutes from Annual Meeting

January 20, 2018

WVRA Meeting

Steer Steakhouse, Weston

At 1:05 pm the meeting was called to order by President Jim Barnes. In attendance were 19 members.

1. Treasurer's Report: The current bank balance is \$3952.41 as of December 31, 2017. The Treasurer's Report was read and approved.
2. Meeting Minutes: The minutes from the October 29th Executive Committee meeting were read and reviewed. There were no questions or corrections

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12. A memorial contribution that family members made for former WVRA member Sue Prager was discussed. They want a \$750 contribution split evenly between Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation and the Pickett's Fort Memorial Foundation. They wanted the WVRA to handle this. The membership voted to allow this to happen. Jack will write the letters and checks and send them to the each organization.

13. The University High School Event on April 20-21 has been approved by the Board of Education. The students will be there on Friday and the general public on Saturday.

14. Phyllis talked about the Beverly Time Line Event on July 13-15. Everything will take place in the town of Beverly. They hope to have presentations on different subjects. Let Phyllis know if you are interested in doing one. There will be a skirmish on Sunday afternoon. There will be no fee this year. Preregister by July 6 to get a lunch ticket. Preliminary information can be found on their website. Phyllis made a motion to sponsor the Beverly Event. Chuck seconded. This motion passed and will be put on ballot for a vote at the next meeting.

15. Nominations were accepted from the members for all leadership positions. Nominations were then closed and accepted. It was moved that the officers be accepted by acclamation. Voted and passed..

President	Jim Barnes
Vice President	Ken Connell
Secretary/Treasurer	Jack Rush
News Letter Editor	Chuck Critchfield
Union Rep	Mark Tennant
Confederate Rep	Bill Brisendine
TASAS Rep	Dianne Tennant
Artillery Rep	Stormy Brasuk
Calvary Rep	John Brasuk
Web Master	Peter Baxter

16. Broke into unit meetings. The following leadership was reported.

1st West Virginia
Capt. - Chuck Critchfield
Sgt. - Ross Wetherell
Corp. - Jim Barnes

25th Virginia

Capt. - Jeff Goff
Sgt. - Gregg Watterson
Corpo. - Jay Allman

TASAS

Union Rep. - Debbie Rush
Confederate Rep. - Sherry Goff
20th Century Rep. - Linda Barnes

17. Events for next year:

University High School	April 20-21
New Market	May 18-20
Grafton Lantern Tour	Memorial Day Weekend
Beverly Time Line Event	July 13-15
Bull Town?	October 12-14
Droop	October 13-14,
November 2-4	

18. Next group meeting will be at 1:00 on February 17, 2018 at the Steer Steak House, Weston.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:55

Respectively submitted,
J. Rush
January 25, 2018

RENEW NOW

To be a member of the West Virginia Reenactors Association, you must be a registered and pay dues. I make this simple, seemingly obvious statement because in this day and age when having insurance coverage is mandatory to participate in some events, you must be a member of the WVRA to be eligible for the insurance we are attempting to purchase.

1st West Virginia members continue to be covered by the USV policy. But only if you are a member of record with the First. You get that membership by joining the WVRA and declaring that you will join the 1st West Virginia.

Dues remain the same. Individual membership is \$15 and family membership is \$25. Family membership is limited to immediate family members from college age downward.

Remember, if you would like the newsletter sent to you via US Mail instead of email, please let me know. The subscription rate is \$10 to cover printing and mailing. PS - I need your address also.

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Renewals to date (January 30, 2018)

General

Elizabeth Swiger

TASAS

Bill Snyder

Jennifer Smith

Peter and Phyllis Baxter

Linda Barnes

Gary and Millie Goetze

Debbie Rush

Debbie Wenig

Brian Ward

Christina Ward

Abbi Ward

William Ward

Jakob Lester

Patricia Carroll

Diane Tennant

Sherry Goff

Katie Skidmore

Katie Goff

Morgan Goff

Jennifer Bravener

25th Virginia

Bill Brisendine

Ken Connell

Dirk Behana

Timothy Glaser

Thurman Shaver

Jeff Goff

John Webb

Jim Allman

Jay Allman

1st West Virginia

Chuck Critchfield

Kevin Skaggs

Jim Barnes

John Ziolkowski

Jack Rush

Ron Wenig

Ed ChapdeLaine

Christopher Carroll

Patrick Carroll

Mark Tennant

Christopher Taylor

Artillery

Mark Poling

Stormy Brasuk

Tony Shaffer

1st Virginia

John Brasuk

Ed Falvo

Carl Vandergrift

Duane Miller

Chuck McCormick

Newsletter

Tag Ireland

Mark Poling

Stormy Brasuk

Carl Vandergrift

Ed Falvo

Chuck McCormick

Colonel Kevin Skaggs

Congratulations to 1st West Virginia member Kevin Skaggs who was elected as colonel of the 1st Regiment of the United States Volunteers at the annual meeting last month in Gettysburg!

I very much wanted to be there to see him be elected but had to cancel because of my father-in-law's death. Kevin did report that the following events have been designated as maximum effort events for the 1st Regiment, which includes us. New Market, Gettysburg, Cedar Creek and Remembrance Day.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Beverly Heritage Days

Living historians from 1750 until 1950 eras are invited join our timeline heritage event to share the history of settlement, conflict, and daily life in the Tygart Valley. Beverly, West Virginia was the original county seat of Randolph County, and was a crucial crossroads through settlement, Civil War and 20th Century history. Located 6 miles south of Elkins along US Rt 219, Beverly is an active heritage tourism destination with town historic district, Rich Mountain Battlefield, and multiple museums and shops anchored by the Beverly Heritage Center. Beverly Heritage Days is our primary heritage event of the year.

Living history camps will include Native American, Pioneer, Civil War, and World War II eras. For this year we are seeking additional representation from post-Civil War periods, including World War I and civilian life. Living history, first person impressions, demonstrations, heritage crafts and displays are all welcome. The event will welcome music from a variety of periods, and a "timeline" dance Saturday evening will feature music and dancing from 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

We welcome input and suggestions from WVRA or other participants, as we plan the activities for the event. If you have a suggestion or would like to participate on the planning committee, please contact event chair Phyllis Baxter, phyllisb@meer.net or call BHC at 304-637-7424.

Beverly Heritage Days - Centuries of History is presented by Beverly Heritage Center and Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation. Editor's Note: nothing is planned at Camp Garnett or on Rich Mountain.

This event is currently under consideration for a WVRA sponsored event.

Film Project

(Editor's note - this was posted by Tonya Daft on the WVRA Facebook page on Oct. 30. All questions can be directed to her. She requests contact by Facebook message. I have received no updates as of Jan. 28) This is an update to that posting (as first published in December newsletter.)

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Update on Civil War era documentary film. Should have some dates after November 1 and location to do the trailer for the film. This so they can produce support for the documentary. I heard from some of you (WVRA members) with names phone email and addresses. Need someone from our WVRA group that has cannons. Need possible two. If you have not contacted (message me) with your info please do so ASAP so when everything is decided I can reach you quickly. Thanks a Million. Tonya Fluharty Daft.

University High School Civil War Days

From Phil Caskey, the award-winning history teacher at University High School in Morgantown, West Virginia:

*Dear WVRA,
You are cordially invited to return to University High School's two-day Encampment, April 20-21, on school grounds.*

Our event last year would not have been successful if not for our gracious participation. By expanding to two days, we are hopeful more re-enactors will be able to commit to our growing event and we are hopeful you all can return again.

April 20 will be our day-long program for students in the county, working in rotations and Saturday the 21st, we expand and welcome the general public. We will have a reenactment on Saturday among other events planned to engage the community.

We are also looking for a sutler this year. Any suggestions.

This event is currently up for vote as a WVRA sanctioned event.

Treasurer's Report

As of February 1, 2018.

Beginning Balance	\$3,952.41
Credits	
Membership dues	\$420.00
Donations	\$30.00
Memorial - Sue Prager **	\$750.00
Debits	
PO Box	\$62.00
PO Box Key	\$9.00
Newsletter	\$64.66
Ending Balance	\$5,016.75

** see item 16 in January meeting minutes

AFTER ACTION REPORTS

I have no after action reports at this time.

OTHER FEATURES

Soldiers & Sailors Monument In Wheeling

According to an article in the Exponent-Telegram of Clarksburg, by Linda Harris, the Soldiers & Sailors Monument in Wheeling Park should be returned to downtown Wheeling by early summer. The 25-ton monument dedicate to those who fought for the Union is set to return to a site adjacent to West Virginia Independence Hall.

A majority of the \$120,000 price tag to tear down the existing structure, prepare the site, move the monument and repair and restore it has been raised. Work is expected to take about nine weeks and will include repairing the missing gun and missing foot.

The memorial was constructed in the early 1880's at the old county courthouse, about one block from the new location.

FOR SALE

Former member Rob Freeman is selling some of his Civil War period clothing that was worn by himself and his father. He is selling shirts, a military vest and civilian vest, a almost new Union frock coat, a Confederate sack coat with Virginia buttons and two pairs of sky blue pants. Contact Pam Nicholson jmpnicholson@aol.com or Rob at rffreeman1373@gmail.com for more information.

155 Years Ago

February, 1863

1st (Western) Virginia Infantry

C. J. Rawling writes only that the regiment remained in camp at North Mountain along the B&O, in the Eastern Panhandle. Joshua Winters didn't much more to add other than diary entries about the weather and letters about people and events back home.

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He does write on the 12th and though he doesn't say it, boredom had to be the bigger enemy at this point. "Alle, thair aint enne strange news. Hear we have vary good times. Hear thar is no drill. Hear we are on gard about once every ten days."

From "History of the First Regiment West Virginia Infantry" by C. J. Rawling and "Civil War Letters and Diary of Joshua Winter - A Private in the Union Army Company G, First Western Virginia Volunteer Infantry" edited by WVRA member Elizabeth Davis Swiger.

12th (Western) Virginia Infantry

While the 1st (Western) Virginia wintered at North Mountain just above Hedgesville on the B&O, the 12th Infantry guarded the Shenandoah Valley at Winchester.

Hewitt likewise, writes little of February, 1863. It was a quiet time in the Shenandoah, or as quiet as that area ever got during 1861-65. He wrote that "little of important interest took place. The cavalry here had some brushes with the Rebel cavalry."

Orr wrote of personal joy: "Our boxes all came to hand in good order." Orr commented that the 12th had plenty to eat, "but we get tired of it sometimes. We get plenty of crackers, coffee, sugar and meat and potatoes, also fresh bread once a week. Beans and rice more then we can eat." But the boxes from home gave them welcomed variety.

He also complained about "butternutism" back home in Ohio County. He urged his family back home to elect the "union candidate" to the "new state convention" to counter the butternuts. "The apparent success of the Butternuts in West Va. appears to encourage the rebs in this locality more then anything else. I hope that I may get back in time to kill half a dozen or so of them." (The Wheeling Convention was reconvening this month).

Later in the month, Orr wrote his father about Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. "There is a great many different opinions in regard to the presidents proclimation the greater portion in fact nearly all of the boys endorce the proclamtion but there are a few exceptions.....they are all favorable to the new state to a man."

From "History of the 12th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry" by William Hewitt and "A company of BOYS IN BLUE" by Mark E. Paul and Thomas Jefferson Orr. (Donated by Orr's descendant Mark E. Paul)

As always, I welcome any similar information on the 25th Virginia or 1st Virginia Cavalry.

They Said It

"Broken eggs can never be mended." - Abraham Lincoln.

"Rather than defacing or dislodging these statues in anger, let's consider making some of them teachable instruments that illuminate neglected truths. Rather than take a sledgehammer to the unsettling past, et's fill in the gaps of our full national story." - Harold Holzer, historian and co-chairman of the Lincoln Forum.

Sites of Interest

Beverlyheritagecenter.org – Beverly Heritage Center
WVRA.org – our website
<http://www.wvmasondixoncwrt.org/> -- W. Va. Mason Dixon Civil War Round Table (Morgantown)
Civil War Trust – civilwar.org

WVRA Officers 2018 (executive board)

President – Jim Barnes
Vice President – Ken Connell
Treasurer /Secretary – Jack Rush
Newsletter editor - Chuck Critchfield*
Website – Peter Baxter*
1st W. Va. Rep – Mark "Quiz Whiz" Tennant
25th Va. Rep – Tim Glaser
1st Va. Cavalry – John Brasuk
Artillery – Stormy Brasuk
TASAS – Diane Tennant
* Non-voting member of executive board

American Revolution

Mark Tennant and I both have ancestors who helped to build Fort McIntosh, an early American log fort situated on a bluff overlooking the Ohio River near where the Beaver River empties into the bigger stream. All this is found in current day Beaver, Pennsylvania, downstream from Pittsburgh about 20 miles. At the time of the Revolution, this was the extreme western frontier for American settlers. Beyond that lay the dark and bloody Ohio frontier. If you go there today, it is

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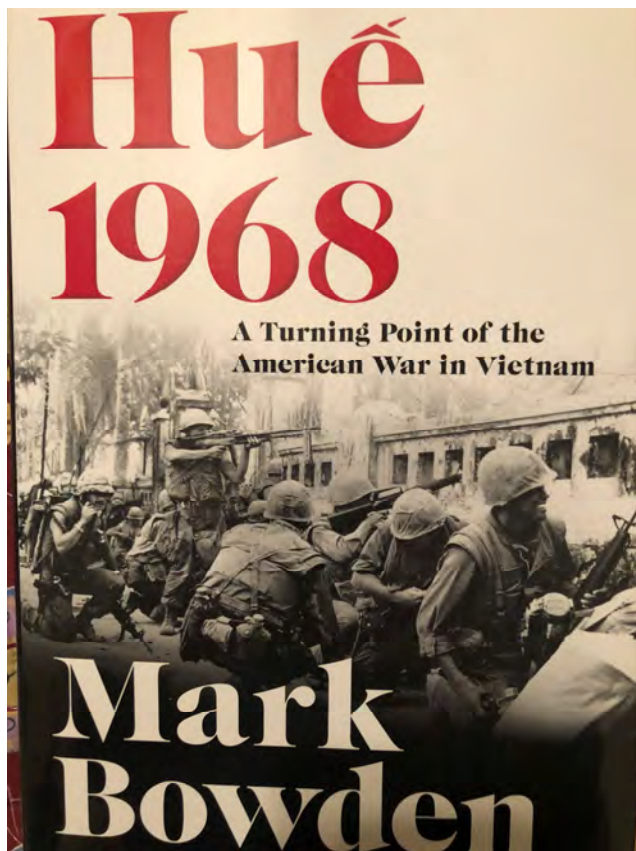
marked by a nice little park looking down the slope to the Ohio.

The fortress was constructed in 1778 under the direction of Lt. Col. Cambray-Digny, a French engineer, and named in honor of General Lachlan McIntosh. The fortress was the site of the signing of the Treaty of Fort McIntosh, January 21, 1785. It was occupied until it was abandoned in 1791. After the Revolution, the fort was the home of the First American Regiment, the oldest active unit in the United States Army.

- parts of this from Wikipedia.

Vietnam

. A Book Review



Hue - A Turning Point of the American War in Vietnam by Mark Bowden

Many from my generation tend to avoid anything connected to the history of the war in Vietnam. Without going into the myriad of reasons, let's just say it is a very unpleasant memory.

But this book is a must read.

After Ken Burns recent series on Vietnam and in my talk with a veteran at the Veterans Administration

Hospital in Clarksburg, I became interested the fight for Hue during the Tet Offensive.

This book does a good job describing the battle, the leadership, the politics, the personal histories and people of Vietnam. It does so in a way to give you a good understanding of both sides of this fight. He explores the American understanding of the Tet offensive especially William Westmoreland's misinterpretation of events and the resulting tragic consequences. The slow military response to the attack only increased casualties and incredibly, the media coverage of the battle did much to convince commanders that Hue had been lost the enemy.

But by the same token, he describes how the North Vietnamese seriously miscalculated by thinking the local population would rise and help them defeat the American military and the ARVN.

At the center of this book, at least for me, was the heroic and horrific struggle by US Marines to retake Hue and the Citadel north of the river. The Marines were up against a tough, well-trained enemy in the regular North Vietnamese units facing them in the house-to-house street fighting. We get to hear from the actual participants as the Marines fight through to the surrounded US compound and then battle through the streets of Hue and finally take back the Citadel.

Meanwhile north of town, US Army units eventually drive back North Vietnamese units guarding the supply lines from the Central Highlands into Hue.

You can't help be admire the military units that did this fighting after suffering early setback after setback. The Americans had committed to not using artillery and air power on the historic city and former capitol of Vietnam. Using small arms and mobile firepower they began to blast the enemy from each house and building in town.

A good book by any measure.

Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

PERSONALS - It was good to see John and Stormy at the annual meeting. They are in the process of putting their life back together after their house in Monumental burned last year. From talking to them, it sounds like a narrow escape.

THANK YOU to Peter Baxter, Hunter Lesser, Phyllis Baxter, Jack Rush for thier contributions and to all the members who were willing to stand for election at the annual meeting last month.

BEVERLY HERITAGE CENTER - announced that rehabilitation work on the 1841 Randolph County jail sitting behind the Heritage Center in Beverly, will

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start in 2018. Beverly is also embarking on our their annual growth campaign to provide funding for improvement projects. Please donate. beverlyheritagecenter.org.

OPINION - I am afraid that our hobby may be changed forever. Possibly, I am overreacting. But the events of the past year at places like Memphis, Charlottesville, Durham, New Orleans and Cedar Creek bear some discussion in our hobby.

The removal and/or destruction of historical monuments is something that causes problems for most reenactors. We try to present our shared history to the public. Not to hide it. Not to destroy it.

I bring all this up because WVRA members have sent me clippings about removal of statues, the debate over the cause of the war and the role of reenactors. And frankly this whole issue doesn't seem to leave the public eye.

Most of us want these monuments to remain and to be reinterpreted if need be. I understand why cities where the majority of citizens are descendants of slavery are not comfortable with Confederate statues. But do we need to tear them down. Are there only two alternatives? Keep them as they are or tear them down? Can they remain with an alternative narrative? As Harold Holzer, historian and Lincoln scholar said on the 154th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, "Extremism on both ends of the historic pendulum can distort the arc of memory."

"Defiling or dislodging statues reflexively -- instead of reflectively -- eradicates not only the original impulse of commemoration, but knowledge of the events themselves. Is memory really worth obliterating -- rather than comprehending and, where necessary, countering?"

But in the end, if New Orleans, or Baltimore or Memphis or Charlottesville decide through lawful government process to remove them, that is their decision to make.

Finally let me take another topic. Our hobby will be under additional scrutiny and pressure after 2017's events - especially at Charlottesville and Cedar Creek. Despite which side of the political spectrum you identify with, those events have drawn additional scrutiny from many people, including, as Cedar

Creek demonstrated, some people bent on destroying our hobby. All this points to the need for us to do our best in presenting accurate Civil War history to those who choose to listen to us. I still hear the words that a well-respected and knowledgeable Civil War buff wrote to me after he heard a reenactor present wrong information to the public. Get it right was the message.

Many of us have spent hours of study on equipment and firearms. But have we spent time reading *Johnny Reb*, *Billy Yank*, *Hardtack and Coffee*, *Company Aytch*?

One of the things that bothers me is the debate over the cause of the war which still rages at times on Facebook. There seems to be an effort to absolve Confederate leaders of slavery by stating other reasons for the start of the war. When I saw these postings, I said to myself: "Ok let me put my money where my mouth is, by studying this subject now." I am wading through the *Impending Crisis* by David Potter, a thorough study of 1848-1861 and I have watched Yale professor David Blight on You Tube. All this in an effort to understand why our country went to war against itself. More on that to come. (PS Blight's lectures are FREE on You Tube).

All of this leads me back to my first statement. The public perception of our hobby has changed. We need to be good, informed ambassadors ready to present a historical picture to the public. Not engage with those who want to argue and ridicule us. Those folks are out there. Wait. Remember the ancestors we wish to honor with our presentations.

CIVIL WAR TRUST SURVEY - A few issues past, I sent a questionnaire to the membership through the Dispatch concerning removal of monuments and thoughts about the Civil War. I got a disappointing response. That aside, the Civil War Trust, whose survey it was to begin with, sent the national results from over 5,000 individuals.

Let me generalize the results. On the first question 33% said keep all war monuments as is; 51% said keep the monuments with additional interpretation if needed; 17% said remove Confederate statues from public spaces if that's what the local community wants.

On the 2nd issue, 97% said keep Confederate monuments on Civil War battlefields. (That's pretty definitive.)

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Question three asked spending CWT money on saving monuments. 13% said yes; 35% said no, stick to saving hallowed ground; 51% said CWT should offer limited support to local groups.

In the next question 83% said the Confederacy seceded and slavery was evil, but the people of the mid-18th century were a product of their times and we should not judge them on today's standards; 17% said the Confederacy supported slavery and committed treason against the lawfully elected government.

The final question was about Lee. Lee turned his back on his country and is not worth of respect according to 9% while 91% said he was a product of his times and worthy of respect today.

Please do not send any correspondence to the PO Box in Buckhannon. Membership information can be sent to me. Remember you must be a member of record to qualify for membership benefits. To be covered under the respective insurance policies that the 1st West Virginia and the 25th Virginia infantry units participate in, you must be a member of record. TASAS members who are also spouses of 1st W. Va. members are covered under the USV insurance. Insurance questions about the 1st Virginia Cavalry should be directed to the Unit Representative.

There are two Facebook pages currently in use as avenues of communication by WVRA members. One is the WVRA-The Trans-Allegheny Soldiers Aid Society group page. The other group is labeled simply West Virginia Reenactors Association. Tonya Daft is the administrator on the West Virginia Reenactors Association page. Please address all questions to her about that page. I am not sure who is administrator to the WVRA-TASAS page. I continue to use the WVRA-TASAS page to post announcements as it has been the page getting the most use (by far) over the past 3 years.

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This newsletter is available free to members by email. It will be mailed by US Mail for \$10 per year.

The views expressed here are not necessarily the views of the WVRA

WVRA website - wvra.org
Chuck Critchfield – editor
608 Skyview Drive
Clarksburg, WV 26301
Ccritch608@yahoo.com

ABSENTEE BALLOT

Return to an officer of the WVRA before the February 17 meeting at the Weston Steak House. You can mail to C. L. Critchfield
608 Skyview Drive
Clarksburg, WV 26301
or email to ccritch608@yahoo.com

Item #1.

A motion to sanction the April 20-21 event at University High School in Morgantown. The first day is living history demonstrations to middle and high school students. (Sanctioned events are those not planned or organized by the WVRA, but approved by the Association for official participation. Attendance is expectation of all WVRA members. - from the bylaws of the WVRA.)

_____ Yes, I am in favor of this motion.

_____ No, I am not in favor of this motion.

Item #2.

A motion to sponsor Beverly Heritage Days - Centuries of History, July 13-15 in Beverly, W. Va. (Sponsored events are those that the WVRA may initiate, organize, or administer on its own authority and responsibility. All WVRA members are required to attend.) Editor's Note: Beverly Heritage will be the primary sponsor of this event.

_____ Yes, I am in favor of this motion

_____ No, I am not in favor of this motion.

(Name)

Print name of member submitting this ballot.
Limited to 2018 members of record of the WVRA.