

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2019 - February - Edition II

Upcoming Events

Civil War
Sponsored

None

Sanctioned

None

Other Events recommended by WVRA members

Civil War Symposium, April 6, Beverly, WV
University High School - TBD

New Market, May 18-19, 2019, New Market,
Virginia (USV)

Fort Mulligan, August 17, Petersburg, WV -
see Dave Judy

Shenandoah 1864, Oct. 4-6 (USV)

Burlington, WV Oct. 4-6 - See Dave Judy

155th Cedar Creek, Oct. 18-20, 2019 (USV)

Other Events

Droop Mountain, October 11-13, 2019

<https://battleofdroopmountain.com>

Other Time Periods.

None to report at this time.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 11, at 1 pm at the Weston Steakhouse at exit 99 of I-79. At this meeting we will be voting on whether the WVRA will sponsor Beverly Heritage Days.

Minutes from Annual Meeting

WVRA Meeting

January 19, 2019

Christ Episcopal Church Parish House

21 members present

President Jim Barnes called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. Several new members present.

The minutes from the November 11 meeting were read by Chuck C. Since there were no additions or corrections, Ken C. made motion to approve. Ron W. seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer Jack Rush reviewed the Treasurer's reports. There were no questions, Chuck C. made motion and Jim A. seconded and the reports were approved as read.

Chuck C. gave newsletter report. There are still some people getting the newsletter by mail. The charge of \$10.00 per year is still adequate to pay for mail subscriptions.

Elections: Bill B. asked if the unit officers should be voted on by each group instead of by vote of the entire group. A motion was made by Chuck C. and seconded by Jim A. to refer officer selection to the units. Motion passed. WVRA officer nominations are the same as 2018.

Motion made to accept all of the officers as were nominated. Motion passed with one vote against.

The meeting broke into unit meetings. Their election results are as follows:

	1st WV	25th Va
Unit Rep	Mark T	Bill B
Captain	Chuck C	Jeff G
Sergeant	Ross W	Greg W
Corporal	Jim B	Jay A

TASAS - Unit Rep Diane Tennant; Artillery and 1st Virginia Cav. not present

Old Business:

Insurance. Policy date is April 23. They will send out renewal forms 40 days before the policy date. The members want some paperwork to show that they are covered by insurance. Jack R will work up package to hand out at the next meeting.

Chuck C made a motion to allocate \$100 to each of the recognized units of the WVRA. Mark T seconded and the motion passed. To get the allocation each group must submit a written receipt and/or request before a check will be written. A question was asked about what it takes to become a recognized group. The method is described in the bylaws.

New Business:

Beverly Heritage Days will be July 12-14. Info will be sent out in the next few days. Chris T made a motion for the WVRA to sponsor this event. Jim B seconded.

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Passed. This will need to be put on a ballot for vote to approve. The ballot should be in the next newsletter.

Dave Judy mentioned two events. Fort Mulligan on August 17 in Petersburg WV. The Apple Harvest Festival at Burlington October 4-6. They need Federal Soldiers.

On April 6 RMBF will be holding a Civil War symposium, Soiree Dinner and Civil War Display rededication at the Heritage center. Call them for details.

The movie "They Shall Not Grow Old" will be shown January 21 at the Regal Theater in Morgantown.

The next meeting will be in Weston on February ?. Date will be advised.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Thanks to all who attended the meeting.

Respectively submitted,
J. Rush

January 31, 2019

NOTICE OF SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL

As required by the by laws of the WVRA, I am publishing notice that at the last meeting the Beverly Heritage Days event was proposed for WVRA sponsorship. A description of that event can be found elsewhere in this edition of the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch.

Members unable to attend the next meeting of Feb. 11, may vote by absentee ballot. There is an absentee ballot on page 6 of this newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

Beginning balance	\$3430.10
Credits	
Memberships	\$295.00
Donations	\$10.00
Debits	
Newsletter	\$103.51
1st WV Unit Monies	\$75.00
Ending Balance	\$3556.59

Submitted by Jack Rush 1/31/19

Membership

Listed below are the members who have renewed membership or joined the WVRA. Please renew

your membership today. I will attach a membership renewal/application form to this newsletter. You must be a member of record to be covered by the WVRA liability insurance. The membership renewal grace period will soon be over, so renew at the next meeting. Remember that if you want the newsletter mailed, a \$10 fee is necessary (and a mailing address!!!!)

Please note the following: Tony Shaffer, my mail to your mailing address came back undelivered. John Arnold the email address that you gave me on your form comes back undeliverable.

Membership Renewals - 2019

GENERAL

Hunter Lesser William Burruss
Aaron Bosnick

TASAS

Phyllis Baxter Peter Baxter
Bill Snyder Linda Barnes
Art Dodds Pam Dodds
Debra Rush Jennifer Smith
Linda Donegan Debbie Wenig
Sherri Goff

1st West Virginia

Mike Phillips Jim Barnes
Chuck Critchfield Kevin Skaggs
Burdell Waffler Jack Rush
Ed Chapdelaine Rick Byrd
Keith Kopshina Bill Donegan
Ron Wenig Chris Taylor
Ralph McCready

25th Virginia

Tag Ireland Dirk Behana
Bill Brisendine Tim Glaser
Ken Connell Jim Allman
Jeff Goff Gregg Watterson
John Arnold

ARTILLERY

Thurm Shaver David Judy
Susan Judy
Newsletter
Tag Ireland Thurman Shaver

Civil War Reenacting News

Upcoming Events

University High School

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I have exchanged emails with Phil Caskey at University High School. He is not sure that UHS will be able to hold its annual living history this year. More information when it becomes available.

Beverly Heritage Days: Centuries of History July 12, 13, 14, 2019 Beverly, West Virginia

Living Historians and Reenactors from 1750 through 1950 are invited to join the Beverly Heritage Center for our timeline heritage event to share the history of settlement, conflict, and daily life in the Tygart Valley. Living history camps will include Native American, Pioneer, Civil War, and World War II eras with scenarios welcome for any part of our timeline, military and civilian. Living history, first person impressions, demonstrations, heritage crafts and displays are all welcome. Planned scenarios and demonstrations are strongly encouraged. This event is FREE with pre-registration, and includes camp amenities and one meal. For information and registration see www.beverlyheritagecenter.org (watch for updates coming soon) or call 304-637-7424.

After Action Reports USV Meeting

The United States Volunteers met at the Gettysburg Hotel on the town square in the historic city on January 12. Close scrutiny of those in attendance would have revealed Colonel Kevin Skaggs, Surgeon Ron Wenig and his wife Debbie and Captain Chuck Critchfield

The First West Virginia is a member of the 1st Regiment of the USV which is commanded by Kevin Skaggs. Kevin was re-elected to regimental command during the 1st Regiment's meeting. During the regimental meeting the Soldier of the Year award was given to a soldier in the 3rd US. Besides some other routine business, which I would be glad to relay to anyone interested, the regiment voted to make 155 New Market, the National Park Service Mule Shoe Demonstration and 155 Cedar Creek as maximum effort events. Other events discussed were Gettysburg, Zoar, Appomattox, Shenandoah 1864 and Mill Springs, Kentucky.

During the Brigade meeting, during which the three infantry regiments, the sharpshooters, the cavalry

and artillery all meet together, the usual business was conducted. One item of interest was the return of Vincent's Brigade to the USV. Vincent's split from the UO (Unorganized Other which became the USV) 27 years ago. The six companies of Vincents will join the 2nd Regiment which lost several companies last year after 2nd Regiment leadership had a falling out with the USV leadership.

General Darrel Markijohn was reelected to command the USV. The USV voted to contribute \$1,000 to the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation which is apparently experiencing difficulties after the cancellation of the event last year. No reason was given for the cancellation and no reason given for the event being resurrected this year. So rumors continue to swirl. If you have any questions, please let me know.

-- Chuck Critchfield



Figure 1- In my past two visits to Gettysburg I have tried to locate the Coster Avenue mural. Finally, on foot, I found the mural that depicts Avery and Hayes Brigades overwhelming Coster's small XI Corps brigade at the brick yard. I couldn't get a good picture since the Plexiglas protective layer reflected so much light.

Other Features

Rick Atkinson's Trilogy

I just finished volume three of Rick Atkinson's Liberation Trilogy, "*The Guns at Last Light - The War in Western Europe, 1944-45.*" This is the third book in the excellent series that narrates the history of the U. S. war efforts in the European Theater of World War II. The first two "*An Army at Dawn - The War in North Africa, 1942-43*" and "*The Day of Battle - The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943-1944*" have been reviewed previously in this fine publication and I don't intend to provide a review of the third other than say to you...it's a great book. Read it.

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Something of note did strike me as I read this third book. Atkinson makes no attempt to whitewash, glorify or shape the history. He praises and criticizes here and there, but he attempts to paint a true picture. He's not afraid to lay low the generals and leaders. If you are a fan of Patton, Atkinson busts Patton's chops a few times as well as praise him for being a good combat general.

Anyway, that leads me to my point. I am always interested in the common soldier and my view of the normal US Army soldier is colored by my youth -- the movies and TV shows (like Combat) that tended to paint a bloodless picture of the "Greatest Generation." It always seemed a bit canned to me. I think that's why *Battleground* was my favorite World War II movie until "Band of Brothers."

Atkinson writes that the US Army "alone hospitalized 929,000 men for 'neuropsychiatric' reason in World War II..." The European Theater Surgeon General told Eisenhower that "...psychiatric casualties are as inevitable as gunshot and shrapnel wounds in warfare." One soldier theorized that after five months of combat duty, a frontline officer was used up....beyond saving. Experts concluded that soldiers wore out for good after 200 to 240 days of battle. Others disagreed and claimed it was a shorter period of time. Even though 90 percent of those hospitalized for combat exhaustion returned to duty, it was often not as a frontline rifleman..

All this I write, not to denigrate the men who won World War II or any soldier for that matter. But only to remind us that there was "psychiatric" cost to the war that often receives little attention from us. And these numbers that Atkinson presented, were startling - at least to me.

-- C. L. Critchfield

155 Years Ago
(February 1864)

My continuing effort to remember the men who fought with the 1st and 12th West Virginia through the writing of Joshua Winters and Thomas Jefferson Orr.

The 1st Regiment was in winter quarters guarding the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road. The regiment was found in the vicinity of

New Creek (Keyser) responding to enemy raids or incursions as required. The three-year men who would be nearing the end of their service with the regiment in coming year were asked to re-enlist for the duration of the war. According to Rawlings over 200 re-enlisted and the entire battalion was granted "veteran furlough to be spent at home." It's not clear, but this furlough seems to be conditioned on re-enlisting. Joshua Winters was one the soldiers who headed home on February 20. "we left New Creek at 6 this evening on the cars for Wheeling. Once in Wheeling they "praided" the streets to Washington Hall where they were feted at a banquet.

The 12th meanwhile was to be found guarding the railroad a short distance away at Cumberland. William Hewitt and Thomas Jefferson Orr note the brutal New Years Day cold spell when he records that temperatures exceeded 20 below. According to Orr, some men froze to death. Even my relatives in the Army of the Cumberland about Chattanooga recorded the same experiences. Orr had been detailed as a Clerk at Sullivan's Division Headquarters, so his duties would take him away from the regiment.

Civil War Letters and Diary of Joshua Winters Edited by WVRA member Elizabeth Davis Swiger. History of the First Regiment West Virginia Infantry, by C. J. RAWLING. A Company of Boys in Blue by Mark Paul and Thomas Jefferson Orr. History of the 12th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry by William Hewitt

Other Time Periods

Nothing to report at this time.

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"They Said It (or didn't)"

"To date, I've slept on a mattress, a steel deck, a wet concrete floor with a little straw on top, dirt floors, a bed, a stretcher, on an

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LST in a truck, in a foxhole, across the front seats of a jeep, in a rope hammock, in cellars, first, second and third floors, in a pillbox, on the back shelf of a command car, in haylofts, on snow, and in shacks."

-- A lieutenant in 99th Division, January 1945

"Thomas J. 'Stonewall' Jackson, Lt. General, C. S.A. Born in Clarksburg, January 21, 1824, Died May 10, 1863, from wounds received near Chancellorsville, Virginia, while fighting for a cause he believed to be just."

"A world renowned soldier and military strategist who walked humbly with his God."

"Erected 1953 by the Stonewall Jackson Chapter Daughters of the Confederacy, Clarksburg, W. Va., with the help of numerous citizens, many of whom were descendents of Union soldiers in the War Between the States."

-- Bronze plaque at the base of the statue on the lawn of the Harrison County Court House

"There is more Smoked Yankies here than you could shake a stick at in a week. They make a fine appearance and they will fight."

-- Thomas Jefferson Orr, 12th West Virginia Infantry, January 17, 1864, City Point, Virginia talking about negro troops.

"Steel not this book for fear of shame for in it is the owners name and on that day the Lord will say, whair is that book you took away."

-- Diary of Joshua Winters as first entry in 1864.

"We have any number of the guerrillas hanging around our camp & it is utterly impossible to beat them far back -- the mountains are now covered with very dense foliage and they can conceal themselves & remain as [secure] as if the were a thousand miles [away]. Whenever one [of our men] straggles from the camp, unless very watchful he will be picked up. It is very provoking to be compelled to contend agains a foe who calls in such auxiliaries to give strength to his arms. We have no mercy on them. When we catch one he hangs. Then his goods are removed from his house, his wife & children required to step out & the torch is applied & soon all this is left is a heap of smouldering ruins."

-- Tom Taylor, 47th Ohio, to his wife Netta from Gauley Bridge, (West) Va., June 10, 1862. From Tom Taylor's Civil War, by Albert Casteel.

Other Sites

American Battlefield Trust - www.battlefields.org

Beverly Heritage Center -

www.beverlyheritagecenter.org

Mason Dixon Civil War Roundtable

www.wvmasondixoncwr.org/

WVRA Officers 2019

Jim Barnes - President

Ken Connell - Vice President

Jack Rush - Secretary/Treasurer

Diane Tennant - Unit Rep (TASAS)

Mark Tennant - Unit Rep (1st W. Va. Infantry)

No vote yet - Unit Rep (1st Virginia Cavalry)

Bill Brisendine - Unit Rep (25th Virginia Infantry)

No vote yet - Unit Rep (artillery)

Webmaster - Peter Baxter

Editor - Chuck Critchfield

ATTENTION - 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 liability insurance policy purchased by the WVRA, you must be a member of record.

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.

As newsletter editor, I encourage submissions from members or readers, that are related to American history. I retain the right as editor to make a final decision on the content of this publication. Abusive or political submissions will not be published.

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Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

THANK YOU to Peter Baxter. Thank you to Stormy Brasuk for all her contributions to the Dispatch and for taking minutes at several meetings in 2018.

HOUSEKEEPING - My emails to Tonya and Jack Daft bounce back to me as undeliverable. I mailed a newsletter to Tony Shaffer in December but the US Post Office returned it as undeliverable.

AT THE USV MEETING long-time reenactor Scott Buffington related a little history of the hobby that was all too familiar. Back in the late 1980's when the popularity of the hobby was rocketing upwards, the Federal reenacting community began to split into groups. The National Regiment was the first large group to organize. Non-NR groups were shuffled into the UO category at large events. Now there is a debate to this date as to what we in the UO were officially called. The O stood for "Others" while the U represented one of the following: Unorganized, Unwanted, Unemployed, Unwashed and a few other "Uns."

I was with the 28 Massachusetts in those days, a unit that was a very active member of the UO and at the center of the battles with NR. Anyway, the UO was commanded by Tom Moore and there were two Majors in the command structure. One of those majors became disenchanted with the UO as it slowly organized into the USV and he left and formed Vincent's Brigade. Now 27 years later, Vincent's is rejoining the USV.

POLITICS - We in the 1st West Virginia learned long ago that it is best that politics are best kept outside of the unit. Especially in campfire discussions at night when judgment and discretion might be clouded by outside influences. The current political division lingers around the edges of our hobby. Let's face it, the Civil War represents another era when our differences divided this country – to a point of armed conflict. And those 19th-century differences linger in today's 21st-century differences. So I guess the temptation to jump into a discussion of today's politics around the campfire, is very great. We are all a bit older and a bit more rooted in our opinions. Which makes it all the more important that today's politics stay out of our hobby.

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The official publication of the West Virginia Reenactors Association

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

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 C. L. Critchfield **before** February 10. It may be returned by mail or email.
C. L. Critchfield, 608 Skyview Drive Clarksburg, WV 26301 or ccritch608@yahoo.com. Ballots received after the deadline or without name will not be considered. You must be a member to vote.
Each member is entitled to vote.

Proposed: The WVRA will sponsor the Beverly Heritage Days living history on July 12-14 in Beverly, West Virginia.
(Sponsored Events are those that the WVRA may initiate, organize or administer on its own authority and responsibility. All WVRA members are strongly urged to attend and to assist with the work of Sponsored events.)

___ YES, I support this proposal

___ NO, I do not support this sponsorship

___ I abstain from voting on this proposal.

Name _____

To be voted upon at February 10, 2019 meeting.

"The lack of a sense of history is the damnation of the modern world - Robert Penn Warren

United States Volunteers Membership Renewal 20_____

<i>Unit Information</i>		
Unit _____	Regiment ___1 st ___2 nd ___3 rd ___Sharpshooters ___Cavalry ___Artillery	
Average number of rifles at event _____	Geographic area for recruiting _____	Website _____
Total Unit Strength _____ Off Enl Civ		

Unit Contacts

Commanding Officer			
Rank	First name	Last name	
Street address	City	State	Zip
Home phone	Cell Phone	Email	
Unit representative			
Rank	First name	Last name	
Street address	City	State	Zip
Home phone	Cell Phone	Email	

Completed form with the annual dues check (\$75 payable to the U.S. Volunteers) should be mailed to:

**Paul Buckler
2A Round Ridge
Mechanicsburg Pa 17055**

DO NOT MIX WITH BANQUET AND MEETING RESERVATIONS