

# Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association

2016 – Edition 1 – January

## Upcoming Events

More information will be added later if made available to the editor

### Sanctioned Events

None at this time

### Events Recommended by WVRA members

**Putnam Civil War Days** – March 31 – April 1, 2016, contact Chris Johnson for more information

**Beverly** – July 22-24

**Bulltown** – October 7-9, 2016 – Hosted by 10<sup>th</sup> W. Va. and Army Corps of Engineers, contact WVRA member, Sam Krafft for details

**Elmwood Manor** – August 26-28, 2016, contact Chris Johnson

### Other - 2016

**Buchanan, Virginia** – April 28-29 (suggested by our friends in the 24<sup>th</sup> Va/83<sup>rd</sup> Pa)

**New Market** – May 12-13

**153<sup>rd</sup> Gettysburg** – July 1-3

**1<sup>st</sup> Bull Run** – July 22-24?(at Cedar Creek Battlefield)

**Sidney, Ohio** – Sept. 16-18, 2016 (suggested by the USV)

**Cedar Creek** – October, 2016

## Next Meeting

The next WVRA meeting will be January 16, 2016, 1:00 – 3:00, at the Steer Steak House, Weston. Officers will be elected.

## Return Your Ballot

Included in this email is a ballot. All officers nominated for WVRA offices as of the date that this Dispatch was emailed, are included. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting on January 16, please return this ballot by email (ccritch608@yahoo.com) or US Mail to Chuck Critchfield, 608 Skyview Drive, Clarksburg, WV 26301. Voting will be concluded at the annual meeting for WVRA officers. As of the writing of this Dispatch, there is little information on MILITARY offices and as a result, that nomination process will be delayed until the annual meeting.

Additionally, as of the writing of the Dispatch, no events are nominated for WVRA sanction. According to one source the Beverly Heritage/Rich

Mountain folks are apparently planning for a living history event in July. Droop Mountain is now being organized by Chapman's Battery and any plans to hold that event this year will rest with that organization.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Members are reminded to renew their membership for 2016. A membership form will be included when the newsletter is emailed. Please return the ballot to C. L. Critchfield, 608 Skyview Drive, Clarksburg, WV 26301. Do not send to the PO Box in Buckhannon. When I receive the dues payments, I will send an email confirmation.... **IF** I have an email address for that member. Individual dues are \$15 and family dues are \$25. Family dues include family members living at home.

The newsletter is being emailed to dues-paying members with an email address and posted to the website. If you would like the newsletter sent through the US Mail, please add \$15 to cover mailing and printing costs.

Thank you to the members who have renewed since last issue of the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch.

1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia Infantry

Jim Barnes

Larry Smith

Larry Smith

John Ziolkowski

25<sup>th</sup> Virginia

John Webb

Chris Johnson

Jay Allman

Jim Allman

Artillery

None

TASAS

Linda Barnes

Gary and Millie Goetze

## Civil War Quotes

*"Even were the questions which now agitate Congress settled to the satisfaction and with the concurrence of the Southern States, it would not avert, or materially delay, the catastrophe (dissolution of the Union). I fix its probable occurrence within 12 years or three Presidential terms...the probability is, it will explode in a Presidential election."* John C. Calhoun from his sickbed, just before his death in 1850. He

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was “*precisely, eerily correct.*” - from *America's Great Debate* by Fergus M. Bordewich.

## Modern Military Units and Their Civil War Heritage

According to the most recent issue of *Hallowed Ground*, the following National Guard units are direct descendents of Civil War regiments:

Virginia's 116<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – the Stonewall Brigade

Alabama's 167<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – the 4<sup>th</sup> Alabama

Louisiana's 141<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery – The Washington Artillery

Kentucky's 623<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery – descended from John Morgan's men

North Carolina's 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – 3<sup>rd</sup> North Carolina

New York's 106<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – 14<sup>th</sup> Brooklyn

New York's 165<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – The Fighting 69<sup>th</sup> New York

Wisconsin's 127<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – 1<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin

Maryland's 175<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment – 5<sup>th</sup> Maryland (US)

New Jersey's 102<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment – 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey

Maine's 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Battalion – 20<sup>th</sup> Maine

Kentucky's 138<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery – Louisville Legion

Vermont's 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry – The Vermont Brigade



At the filming of *Killer Angels*, otherwise known these days as *Gettysburg*. Kneeling: unknown, Roy Shreve. Standing: Unknown, Mike Kelly, Mark Tennant, Jim Barnes, Jeff Zickefoose and Bill Brisendine. Sitting on fence are two unknowns.



At the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary reenactment of Antietam. Kneeling Garth Lindsey, Matt Gillespie, Ross Wetherell, Jim Barnes. Back Row Mark Tennant, Chuck Critchfield, Nathan Gillespie, Sean McCready, Ralph McCready and Terry Hayhurst.

### WVRA Officers 2015 (executive board)

President – Mark Tennant

Vice President – Bill Brisendine

Treasurer – Tim Glaser

Secretary – Jack Rush

Newsletter editor - Chuck Critchfield\*

Website – Peter Baxter\*

1<sup>st</sup> W. Va. Rep – Chuck Critchfield

25<sup>th</sup> Va. Rep – Chris Johnson

1<sup>st</sup> Va. Cavalry – John Brasuk

Artillery – Sam and Connie Krafft

TASAS – Diane Tennant

\* Non-voting member of executive board

## Gettysburg – The Last Invasion Revisited

Sometime in the past year or so, I reviewed Allen C. Guelzo's “*Gettysburg, The Last Invasion.*” I enjoyed his interpretation of the battle and his conclusions, which differed a bit, not radically, from other book-length studies of the battle. In leading up to the actual battle, Guelzo prepares the reader by describing certain aspects of 19<sup>th</sup> century military organization, tactics, firearms, etc. He discusses the political makeup of the armies (CSA -Virginia/all others and USA-McClellan supporters/abolitionists). Some of

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his conclusions challenge our understanding of the history of the war.

One of his discussions which stood out in my mind dealt with the exaggerated effect rifled weapons had on Civil War combat. Which runs contrary to what many of us had come to understand.

“For a longtime, it was customary for Civil War historians to speak of the rifle musket and rifled artillery in awed tones, as though rifling were a prototype of the machine gun, or so novel that Civil War officers were unable to come to grips with its implications. The legendary Bruce Catton summed this up about as well as anyone could when he wrote in 1953:

‘...the generals had been brought up wrong. The tradition they had learned was that of close-order fighting in open country, where men with bayonets bravely charged a line of men firing smooth-bore muskets....But the rifle came in and changed all that. The range at which charging men began to be killed was a least five times as great as it used to be, which meant that about five times as many of the assailants were likely to be hit.’

Guelzo points out by the time of Gettysburg, “there was nothing novel about the improvements in accuracy and range produced in rifling as the Minie’ rifle musket system had been in use since 1854. The United States army had studied its debut in the 1850’s and Cadmus Wilcox and George Willard had written on the subject. And, of course, by 1863 both sides understood the effects of the rifle musket.

But with rifling came a cost; a bullet trajectory that dropped. “To hit a target thus required exact knowledge of the speed and distance of a target, something which in battle was rarely available.” Confederate General Raleigh Colston wrote in 1858 “A very good marksman, by placing his piece in the more careful manner, generally at dead rest...and firing usually not more than once in five minutes,” might “strike a half-dollar tolerable often.” Of course these conditions rarely prevailed on a battlefield. According to the author: “Despite the oft-touted ability of the soldier to load and fire three aimed

shots in a minute, in practice the rate of fire produced by muzzleloading rifle muskets by regiments in line of battle was actually closer to one every four and a half minutes”

- C. L. Critchfield

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## Editor’s Corner

Personals – Tim Glaser has moved to North Carolina. Jack and Debbie Rush are building a new house in Marion County. Thanks to Jim Barnes for information on Beverly

The United States Volunteer annual meeting is scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in January. I plan to represent the 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia at that meeting and will bring back a report. Normally the meeting is an excellent source for information on bigger events. It is also a great excuse for visiting Gettysburg, where the meeting has been held the past few years..

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 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia and the 25<sup>th</sup> Virginia infantry units participate in, you must be a member of record.

The newsletter is being sent by email to members of record who provided a VALID email address. It is posted on the WVRA website also. It is mailed to anyone who pays the \$15 mailing costs. It continues to be my plan to publish related articles of interest in addition to the items mandated by our by-laws (meeting minutes, treasurer’s report, etc.).

Yours truly, has no connection to the TASAS-WVRA Facebook page and takes no responsibility for it. Nor do I have any responsibility for the WVRA Facebook page. I would suggest that the TASAS-WVRA Facebook page seems to have more up to date information.

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

WVRA website - [wvra.org](http://wvra.org)

**Facebook** – [WVRA](#) – [TransAllegheny Soldiers Aid Society](#)

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