

# Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association  
2019 - Special - Edition XII

## Upcoming Events

Civil War

Sponsored

**Beverly Heritage Days** -- July 10-12,  
2020 (PROPOSED)

Sanctioned

None at this time

**ANNUAL MEETING** - January 18.  
Time and location to be announced

## Other Events recommended by WVRA members

**USV Meeting** - January 9-10, Gettysburg.  
Contact Chuck Critchfield for details

**Manassas Gap** - third weekend in March  
is <https://www.tattnallcountyga.com/the-battle-at-manassas.cfm>

**School of the Piece** -- April 18, 2020 at  
Jacksons' Mill - Contact Roger House for more  
information

**Morgan's Raid** -- April 24-26, 2020 at  
Meigs County Fairgrounds , Pomeroy , Ohio --  
Contact Roger House for more information

**Barboursville** -- tentatively May 8-10  
Contact Roger House for more information

**Quantrill's Raid on Lawrence** --  
June 19-21 at Cronwells Turkeyville Resort  
Marshall Michigan, Contact Roger House for  
more information

**Battle of Dry Creek** - August 14 - 16 at  
White Sulphur Springs W.Va

<https://battleofdroopmountain.com/2019-battle-of-dry-creek>

**Droop Mountain** --October -11

<https://battleofdroopmountain.com/2019-battle-of-dry-creek>

**Guyandotte** -- Nov 5-8, 2020

(tentative) contact Roger House for more  
information

## Other Events

**2nd Day Chancellorsville** - National Park  
Service Event, Date to TBD, 2020

**Appomattox 155th Event** - Appomattox  
Nation Park, tentatively scheduled for Easter  
weekend.

## Other Time Periods.

World War II

None at this time

## Next Meeting

The Annual Meeting has not been scheduled  
yet. We are searching for a date in January.

## Minutes From November Meeting

WVRA Meeting

November 10, 2019

Christ Episcopal Church Parish House

Nine members were present. President Jim Barnes  
called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

Waived reading of the minutes from the July 13th  
meeting since they had been published in the newsletter  
and there were no additions or corrections.

The Treasure's report was reviewed. There were no  
questions or corrections. Motion made, seconded and  
the report was approved. Jack R. mentioned that the  
newsletter expenses have been a lot lower this year.  
Chuck C. said that only one person is getting a copy by  
mail now resulting in lower costs.

### Events:

Chuck mentioned that the USV is pushing several events  
in 2020. Appomattox during the Easter Weekend,  
sponsored by the National Park Service. Also  
Chancellorsville, the third weekend of June, sponsored  
by the NPS. There will be more information available  
after the USV meeting in January.

Dave Judy mentioned Burlington the first weekend of  
October and Fort Mulligan the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in August.

Jim will get the proposed activities from the other  
groups.

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## Old Business:

Insurance. Chuck reminded everyone that you need to be a paid member of WVRA to be covered by the insurance.

Chuck made a motion to sign up for insurance again in 2020. Jim seconded and the motion passed.

The complete set of Official Records were given to the Waldomore in Clarksburg. It was noted that they are not currently on display yet.

## New Business:

The Confederates have not spent any of their yearly \$100 allocation. The 1<sup>st</sup> WV always spends some of their money for USV dues. This year there is no Artillery group. The current Artillery group will be eligible for \$100 allocation next membership year.

Bill B. made a motion to nominate the current officers for next year. Dave J. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

These officers are Jim Barnes – President, Ken Connell – Vice President, Jack Rush – Secretary/Treasurer, Chuck Critchfield – Newsletter Editor, and Peter Baxter – Webmaster. Nominations will be open at the next meeting for other candidates.

Dues will remain the same next year.

Roger House talked about the various things he is associated with:

He is going to pull a cannon in Clarksburg Veterans Day Parade. Offered to let us march with him.

The Clarksburg History Museum needs help with displays and general volunteers. They want to decorate a vacant store front to represent Stonewall Jackson's house. They want volunteers to help and make donations of period furniture and equipment.

He asked Chuck about his Stonewall Jackson Uniform. Chuck said he will talk to him later.

The Valley Division wants to cooperate with the WVRA during events. They are a group like the USV and ANV.

Jim asked Roger to send his requests to Chuck for publication in the newsletter.

It was asked what dates do we want to do the Beverly Heritage/Rich Mountain events. Either the second weekend of July or the next one. It was decided that the best weekend is July 17-18. The further from July 4 (Gettysburg) the better. There is a campaign event possible in 2021.

Jim moved that we sponsor the Beverly event. Chuck seconded. The motion will be put in the next newsletter to be voted on.

Jim and Linda are setting up a recruitment booth at the Morgantown Gun Show November 16 & 17. They would like some help.

The group voted to make a donation of \$15 to the church for allowing us to have our meeting there.

It was decided to have the next meeting January 18, 2020 at the Steer Steak House in Weston. Confirmation will be published in the Newsletter.

Meeting adjourned and 2:30.

Respectively submitted,

J. Rush

November 18, 2019

## Future WVRA Votes

I plan to publish a December edition of the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch and to mail that edition (as we often do at this time of the reenacting year). Included in that December edition will be a ballot that can be returned before the Annual Meeting, scheduled for January 18. Included on that ballot will be WVRA officers election and a motion to sponsor the Beverly Heritage Days, July 10-12, 2020.

## Elections

It is time to begin the process of electing new officers for the West Virginia Reenactors Association. Nominations have been made and are STILL open currently for Association positions:

President - Jim Barnes \*\*

Vice President - Ken Connell

Secretary/Treasurer - Jack Rush \*\*

Editor - Chuck Critchfield \*\*

Website - Peter Baxter

\*\* - nomination accepted at November meeting.

The President currently serves as Unit Representative for General members which includes other time periods.

Please send your nominations to current officers or to me, Chuck Critchfield, Newsletter Editor

## Membership Renewal

It is also time to renew our memberships for the next reenacting year. Membership renewals are good from January 1 through December 31 of 2020.

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I will include a membership renewal application with this newsletter.

Keep in mind that in order to be covered by our insurance policy, you must be a member of record.

- Dues:** Dues are \$15 per year per person and \$25 per year for a family. If you wish to receive a paper copy of the newsletter there is an additional \$10 fee. The Email version of the newsletter is included in the membership.
- Minors:** All members under the age of 18 need the signature of a guardian to join. Those under 16 will not be allowed to carry a firearm. Those under 14 may not participate in reenactment battles. In addition the WVRA complies with the particular rules at specific events regarding age.
- Meetings:** Will usually be held at the first Saturday of the month during the off-season. During the Reenacting season, meetings may be held at particular events as needed.
- Families:** All individuals should have their own memberships, although family memberships, covering the entire family can be used to save cost. This is limited to members and their home-based children.

## Memberships Received to date:

1st West Virginia Infantry	
Mike Phillips	Jack Rush
25th Virginia Infantry	
Tag Ireland	Bill Brisendine
Dirk Behana	
Trans-Allegheny Soldiers Aid Society	
Phyllis Baxter	Debbie Rush
Peter Baxter	
Bill Snyder	
Artillery	
David Judy	Susan Judy
Roger House	
General	
Larry Teets	Abraham Price
Erik Herb	Matthew Price

If you think I have failed to list your membership and you have paid dues, let me know.

## Treasurer's Report

October 1-30, 2019	
Beginning balance	\$2,993.88
Credits:	\$0.00
Debits:	\$0.00
Ending Balance	\$2,993.88

Submitted by Jack Rush

## Upcoming Events

### Civil War Roundtables

**Stonewall Jackson Civil War Roundtable** meets at Eat'n Park at the Bridgeport Exit(119) of I-79 at 7 pm. Come earlier if you plan to eat before the program. There is no charge for meetings, but if you plan to join the SJCWR, the annual dues are \$15.

November 12 - The Lincoln Autopsy by Dr. Matt Lively

January 14 - The Civil War in Harrison County by Lt. Col. Pete Taylor.

February 11 - Steps to Secession by Chuck Critchfield

March 10 - Morality or War Experience? The Definition and Treatment of Mental Illness in the Union Army by Katie Thompson

April 14 - Captain John Young by Phil Hatfield

May 12 - A Desperate Fight for Life, The Skirmish at Middle Fork Bridge, July, 1861

### Mason Dixon Civil War Round Table

**Program:** "The Civil War in Indian Territory"

**Speaker:** Zachery Cowsert

**When:** November 19 at 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** The Village at Heritage Point J.D. Anderson Drive near Monongalia General Hospital.

### Kanawha Valley Civil War Round Table

**Program:** "The Kanawha Rifleman" – Charleston's Fighting Military Organization

**Speaker:** Terry Lowry

**When:** November 19 at 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** Dunbar City Library

-- from an email of Richard A. Wolfe

## Rich Mountain Civil War Symposium

April 4, 2020

Beverly, West Virginia

Past Rich Mountain Civil War Symposiums have been held in the IOOF Hall near the Beverly Heritage Center followed by a dinner at the the BHC.

Steve French - McNeil Rangers

Allan Tischler - Sheridan Scouts

Hunter Lesser - Bushwhackers

Cameron Mallow - Swamp Dragons

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## Event Reviews **Cedar Creek 2019** **From the Confederate side**

By Jim Barnes

The reenactment of the Battle of Cedar Creek was held over the weekend of October 19-20. Since I hadn't fallen in with the Confederates at a larger event, I decided to do so this time. I have known Tony Morgan since the days of filming 'Gods and Generals,' and he was pleased to have us join up with his Louisiana PACS for Saturday's battle. However, they were camped with the 2<sup>nd</sup> South Carolina, and I think that is who I finally ended up with. Everyone made Linda and me feel quite welcome and we had a great time with those folks.

Saturday morning we did a fair amount of drilling, and I was pleased to note that this group used Hardee's manual, which was quite familiar. The rough ground was the biggest problem for everyone. The battlefield is evidently leased out for cattle grazing when there is no reenactment, and they can chew up the ground quite a bit. I nearly fell a couple of times, and the young lady who was my file mate did fall. No one got hurt thankfully.

Saturday's weather was clear and cold in the morning but soon turned sunny and seasonably warm. Good conditions for the event. In the afternoon, we reenacted the battle of Cedar Creek, and it was interesting to see it from a different perspective. I thought the troops were handled well, and the scenario shook out as it was supposed to do. We knew we were in trouble when we saw Sheridan riding around waving his hat! After the battle, we thanked our hosts and headed back to the Ramada Inn in Strasburg for the night. (Yes, we were Ramada Rangers!)

On the next morning, we joined up with Chuck, Greg and Kevin to fall in with the Union side for the Battle of 2<sup>nd</sup> Kernstown. Chuck has already related that portion of the event. Somehow I managed to be on the losing side both days!?

Overall, we had a grand time and will probably do it again next year.

## **Cedar Creek - Personal Experiences**

By Chuck Critchfield

In the last edition of the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch I gave a brief review of the Cedar Creek event. Personally I had a few side adventures at this event that I delayed describing until this issue.

The National Park Service along with the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, American Battlefield Trust and probably other organizations I failed to list here, are obtaining more and more of the original battlefield. One of those areas, that Mark Tennant and I stumbled across last year, was Thoburn's Redoubt. Here in a field tucked away among working farms about a mile off of Route 11 and within hearing distance of I-81 was a pair of markers describing the terrible fighting on that foggy morning in October of 1864.

One of the displays contained a self-guided tour of the field spreading out before me. It led me towards Cedar Creek to the approximate spot of the redoubt from whence the visitor could see down to the adjacent farm and towards the Creek, several hundred yards below the field. From there the path led into the woods which concealed the only remaining evidence of the earthworks which once stood on this site. The rifle pits, dug for pickets watching the creek below still could be seen. Eventually the short tour led back to my car which had been joined by another vehicle and another person - obviously an NPS Ranger. We reenactors, always suspicious that the NPS is out to get us, I approached cautiously and introduced myself to the Ranger who turned out to be Eric Campbell, NPS Chief of interpretation at Cedar Creek.

Mr. Campbell was on a mission to inspect the newly printed Thoburn Redoubt guide maps, one of which was in my hand. Produced by another preservation organization in the Valley, he was having his first glance at the literature. I had a pleasant talk with Ranger Campbell, who was able to flesh out the spare brochure with more information. I got my own personal Ranger talk.

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I also had an opportunity to ask Mr. Campbell about the other marker that stood along the road in the edge of the field that was once Thoburn's Redoubt. This marker was dedicated to the story of Thoburn's shooting and displayed the most circulated photo of Thoburn in uniform and a reproduction of Taylor's sketch of Thoburn's death at the hands of a Confederate cavalryman in a Union uniform in the streets of Middletown. When asked, Campbell was unable to provide any information on the spot where Thoburn was shot. But he said I had to hear an NPS presentation by Ranger Jeff Driscoll on the following evening (Saturday) at the NPS Visitor Contact Center during which Thoburn's death would be discussed.



**Figure 1 - Col Thoburn's shooting from Taylor's sketchbook.**

By the time we returned to camp from Saturday's battle, it was just past 4 pm. It would not be possible for to walk from camp on the south end of Middletown to the NPS Visitor Contact Center in the north part of Middletown in time for the start of the Saturday's presentation. But undaunted by such discouragement and in the hopes of at least being in time to take the post-lecture walking tour, I donned my 21st-century hiking boots and began my journey (walking in brogan's would have added time and pain to my mile and one-half journey).

I arrived in time to hear the end of Ranger Driscoll's presentation. About a dozen interested folks were already listening when I walked in. At the conclusion of the talk as we migrated from the map room to the parking lot in front of the

building, I had attracted enough attention in my uniform that I easily made contact with the Ranger. He and I walked together the two blocks to the place he had designated as the spot from which he would talk about Colonel Thoburn.



**Figure 2 The approximate location where Col. Joseph Thoburn was shot during the battle of Cedar Creek. Picture of Episcopal Church in the background**

It was interesting talking with the Ranger, but he was not able to offer anything new on Thoburn's death. The spot he designated from which to discuss the shooting of Thoburn was pretty much the spot we have recognized in the past as the probable location. I walked with the group for the rest of the presentation about the battle's middle stage when the Confederates set up a defensive line on the northern outskirts of 19th-century Middletown.

After the presentation ended, we were invited to participate in the placement and lighting of over 700 luminaries along the main street (Route 11 - the Valley Turnpike) of Middletown to represent the number of killed in the battle.

Most of the luminaries were placed by the time I volunteered. The Vice Mayor of the town handed me a lighter and I began to light the luminaries along with a half dozen others. We started in the center of town and worked towards the battlefield south of town. Fortunately we picked up other volunteers - or we would have been lighting luminaries well into the gentle night. Passing one

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house, the town Mayor, invited me to partake of a keg of brew located in the back of the house. Glancing down the driveway, I noticed a number of people gathered and imbibing.

Once finished, motorists entering town from the slight ridgeline could glance northward through a street lined with luminaries until they disappeared behind another slight rise in the road. A fitting honor to those who lost their life here in 1864. From there it was a mile back to my tent and a bit of music and camaraderie.

These two experiences are what made this Cedar Creek a bit special for me.

## Clarksburg Gun Show

By Jim Barnes

Linda and I set up a recruitment table at the Clarksburg Gun Show on the weekend of October 26 and 27. We were there for both days and talked to a number of nice folks. We handed out several WVRA registration forms but so far, have not gotten any new recruits from that weekend. However, we are keeping the organization in the public eye and that can have positive results on down the line. Name recognition is always a good thing.

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## Other Time Periods

### Fort Ligonier Days

By Jim Barnes

On the weekend of October 12-13, Ligonier, PA celebrates Fort Ligonier Days commemorating the 1758 siege of the British fort by French and Indian forces. We (Jim and Linda Barnes) joined up with Les Compagnies Franches de la Marine du Contrecoeur, which recreates one of the French Marine regiments garrisoned at Fort Duquesne.

The event centered around a lengthy parade through Ligonier in the morning followed by a morning battle, then after lunch another attack on the fort. In the evening, we enjoyed a fine potluck dinner with the regiment.

The battles involved about 50-60 French Marines and a smaller number of French army troops as well as a small contingent of Native allies. The British and colonial troops numbered half again as many troops. There were also a significant number of civilian impressions on both sides.

The fort itself is impressive and is based on the typical 18<sup>th</sup> century star-fort pattern, although constructed of logs rather than stone. The fort is also surrounded by abatis and there is a significant number of cannon and mortars within. There is a very nice visitor's center adjacent to the fort. It is well worth the drive to experience.

This is a fun event and is reasonably close to Morgantown, so we will probably be making this trip again.

## Dick Best

From Wikipedia

The new movie version of the battle of Midway was released this month to theaters around the country. The new version, entitled ***Midway***, is a narrative of events leading up to the battle and the battle itself - at least what can be told in 2 hours. Pilot Dick Best is featured in this movie.



Richard Halsey Best (March 24, 1910 – October 28, 2001) was a dive bomber pilot and squadron commander in the United States Navy during World War II. Stationed on the USS *Enterprise*, Best led his dive bomber squadron at the 1942 Battle of Midway, sinking one Japanese aircraft carrier and potentially damaging another, before

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being invalidated out with tuberculosis that same year.

Beverly Heritage Center -

[www.beverlyheritagecenter.org](http://www.beverlyheritagecenter.org)

Mason Dixon Civil War Roundtable -

[www.wvmasondixoncwr.org/](http://www.wvmasondixoncwr.org/)

Link to Clarksburg History Museum -

<https://clarksburgmuseum.wixsite.com/history>

## Other Features For Sale

Tim Koch (or Cook?) a reenactor in the Morgantown area is selling a large group of Civil War reenacting equipment from weapons to clothing. As of October, he still had items remaining. For more information call Tim at 304-906-552.

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## "They Said It (or didn't)"

*"Historians customarily write about past events as if each one occurred in isolation, neatly encapsulated in a sealed container, or chapter, which keeps it from being mixed up with other events in their own containers. This practice is based on a sound assumption that both the writer and the reader can best do one thing at a time. The alternative would be to make history as chaotic as a dictionary of dates. Yet a realist will always want to remember that this neat historical order is only a convenient fiction, and sometimes a deceptive one, and that diverse events constantly impinge upon and modify one another."*

-- David Potter

*"The next generations must have a knowledge of the past. If you do not know where you have been, you have no idea where you should go."*

The late Bud Robertson

*"Their edifice has crumbled into ruin by the mere force of gravity and the wretchedness of their cement."*

- John Quincy Adams' evaluation of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren's administration.

*"When government takes away citizens' right to bear arms it becomes citizens' duty to take away government's right to govern."*

- Quote **WRONGLY** attributed to George Washington making the rounds on Facebook lately.

## Other Sites

American Battlefield Trust - [www.battlefields.org](http://www.battlefields.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)**

**Bill Brisendine - Unit Rep (25th Virginia Infantry)**

**Vacant - 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. 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.

## Editor's Corner

### The Editor's chance to speak

**THANK YOU** to Peter Baxter, Jim Barnes and Jack Rush. All three have faithfully assisted the editor or made contributions to the Dispatch. **A SPECIAL THANKS** to Jim and Linda Barnes for their efforts at the Clarksburg and Morgantown gun shows.

**BEVERLY HERITAGE DAYS** - Planning for next year's event is underway. If you have any ideas, please let

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me know or pass them on to WVRA member Phyllis Baxter.

**PERSONALS** - Keep Jennifer Smith in your prayers. Jack Daft reports Tonya Daft has had successful knee surgery.

**VALLEY DIVISION** - Roger House, of the Valley Division has joined the WVRA. He has submitted the Valley Division events for consideration.

**THURM SHAVER** - does anyone have an address for Thurm? He is not on line at all and he moved to a new location. But the address he gave me is not correct - at least the USPS keeps returning emails. Has anyone heard from Bill Snyder??

**MORGANTOWN GUN SHOW** - President Jim Barnes reports a successful visit to the gun show during which he signed up a number of new members. These members come from a number of historical periods and represent the WVRA's switch from a strictly Civil War era group to a group more inclusive of all American history. Members from other periods continue to be General Members until such time we feel they warrant their own unit and their own Unit Representative. Jim and Linda also attended the Clarksburg Gun Show.

**THE MOVIE MIDWAY** currently in theaters is worth seeing. It reminds me of the 1970's movie of the same name with the exception of the computer generated graphics. The CGI show exceptional detail although the battle scenes in general are a little over the top. The Japanese zeroes flying 15 above the pavement and in another scene between the battleships on Battleship Row are bit much for this reenactor. Anyway, it is worth seeing this retelling of the great American victory and showcasing a few of the heroes that made this victory possible.

**THE CLARKSBURG HISTORY MUSEUM** is apparently planning an exhibit on Stonewall Jackson in the near future. Details as they become available. The Museum is located on Main Street in Clarksburg across from the street from the Episcopal church where we have danced and met in the past. Check their website for their irregular hours.

I WILL MAKE MY REGULAR plea to the membership (or non-member readers) to contribute to the Trans-Allegheny Dispatch. Especially those members from other periods than the American Civil War.

**PLEASE SEND ALL MAIL TO MY ADDRESS** and not to the PO BOX in Buckhannon. We have received some announcements recently at the PO Box which we do not inspect on a regular basis.

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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.

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**Figure 3** Linda and Jim Barnes were joined by Mark Tennant at the Morgantown Gun Show. Jim reported a lot of interest and a few new members signed up from this show.



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