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BRUNSWICK CWRT: THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS

By Carol VanOrnum

At the conclusion of this past season, the Brunswick CWRT's President expressed his heartfelt thanks to the company of volunteers in the BRCWRT newsletter. President John Butler stated, "We've been blessed with dedicated, creative volunteers who've worked together with our Board members and Advisors to ensure that our members receive and enjoy the full benefit of the wide variety of educational presentations." He continued, "But like any dynamic growing organization, we need more volunteers to sustain ourselves."

The BCWRT doesn't have a volunteer committee or someone overseeing the recruitment and organization of volunteers. Rather, they utilize Team Captains who are responsible for certain areas of volunteers, e.g., registration, the sutlers' table, and the monthly drawing. Registration Team Captain Naomi Macey shared, "I enjoy working with a group of dedicated volunteers, many who have given their time for years. They help make our monthly meeting for the largest Civil War Round Table in the country an enjoyable, well-attended event."

The Board encourages the volunteers to stay connected with its members. Keeping it personal in an auditorium-style setting filled with 350 members plus 30 to 60 zoomers can be a challenge. That makes mingling really important. Volunteer Beth Linton agreed. "I enjoy interacting with new members and giving them information about our group so they can be well informed and get the most out of their membership."

The volunteers engage the speaker as well. Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, volunteers and Board members escort the speaker through the crowd to make introductions to members. Not only are the members afforded an opportunity to meet with the speaker, but the speaker has a moment to individually interact with his audience. At the conclusion of the program, the volunteers and Board members circulate among the audience to gain feedback on the effectiveness of the program.

Between the Team Captains' recruiting efforts and the president's plea for help, volunteers do step forward. Butler is adamant that the best



Photo: Smithsonian Institution

way to reach all potential volunteers is by approaching them in person. Few can resist.

Volunteers are welcome to attend a board meeting and have an opportunity to report on their areas. One of the extensions of the BCWRT Board is serving as an Advisor, again a volunteer position. Both new and seasoned members can apply and be voted in by the Board. These positions, responsible for tours, donations, the women's forum, and others, offer a deeper role in the Round Table. This sometimes leads to an interest in serving on the Board, proof that the greater the engagement, the deeper the commitment.

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SMALL INCREMENTAL CHANGES

By Mike Movius, President

In the past, the pervasive sentiment was that change was not something even whispered about. The “old guard” was comfortably ensconced in leadership roles, and they were not going to budge no matter the logic that was before them. Some even kept secret how they carried out their assigned duties and refused to share.

But times change. And the inevitable happens.

As more and more of the “Stonewall Brigade” leave the scene and the size of Round Tables continues to shrink, some brave soul speaks the word, “Change.”

The knowledge that fewer “walk-ins” are appearing on the membership roster seems persuasive. Yet, there isn’t a long line, or anyone willing to step forward with ideas or actions to

change the situation. What do we do? What are the priorities? And who will carry the torch?

“Bring a friend,” free meals, no dues, newspaper ads, bulletin board notices and the like worked in the past, but now they all silently bomb. Attempts, no matter how feeble, to induce students at local colleges to join are equally unproductive. Are our expectations unrealistic?

Remember that change comes slowly to most organizations, even those with resources and paid leaders. But the fact is that most Round Tables have members with unique skills. Leaders may not know who has the needed knowledge, skills, and abilities to move forward. However, if one was to conduct a skills inventory of CWRT members, that problem can disappear.

[CWRT Skills Inventory Fillable Form.pdf \(cwrtcongress.org\)](https://www.cwrtcongress.org/CWRT_Skills_Inventory_Fillable_Form.pdf)

And, what about community resources? Is there a local history museum, a county historical commission, a genealogy society, a school history club, or a nearby Round Table? What are their missions and goals? Are they willing to share their resources in a mutually beneficial collaboration? Is your CWRT willing to share resources? And, just who are their leaders?

So much of this has to do with the culture of the CWRT and having leaders who are willing to share the stage and who have the confidence to request help.

In the past, CWRTs were growing like mad, excitement



IMPROVEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND NETWORKING

was high, and the future looked amazing. That is no longer universal. However, it is the case with a limited number of Round Tables. What do they know that you don’t? Will they share their experience so we can all grow and prosper? Come to the 2023 Sustainability Conference this August in Gettysburg. We guarantee that your time will be well spent! [2023 CWRT Congress](https://www.cwrtcongress.org)



Photo:
Lynn Light Heller

TAKING THE PULSE OF YOUR ROUND TABLE IS IT TIME FOR A CHECK-UP?

By Steven Rauschkolb

As I drove home from my recent annual physical exam, I was reflecting on all the tests and measurements I underwent to determine the current state of my health. Gratefully, the results were generally positive for a person of my age. It got me to thinking about Round Table Organizational Health. How many of our Round Tables are fit, thriving, and ready to take on the next challenge to grow and thrive? How many are sedentary and struggling with various maladies? And how many are on the verge of flat lining and destined for an unknown future? This bit of “windshield wondering” caused me to do some research into the concept of Organizational Health.

The global consulting firm McKinsey & Company defines organizational health as:

“The organization’s ability to align around a common vision, execute against that vision effectively, and renew itself through innovation and creative thinking. Put another way, health is how the ship is run, no matter who is at the helm and what waves rock the vessel.”

Wouldn’t it be helpful if there were some simple, minimally invasive tests and measures that we could use to determine the health of a Round Table? Individual Round Tables could then easily assess where they stand health-wise, and whether they need a few vitamins, major surgery, or last rites. This information would also be helpful for the CWRT Congress as we try to determine where and how we can assist Round Tables to grow and thrive.

A good place to start an

organizational check-up is using a quick organizational assessment like the one available through ORGHEALTH at orghealthteam.com. This brief assessment allows you to be brutally honest with yourself about your organization’s health. Asking each board member to take the assessment and comparing the results at your next meeting is a great place to start the journey. The OrgHealth website also provides an excellent model and resources to understand the various pillars of organizational health. These pillars are contained in their Ascent™ Model of Organizational Health which focuses on Collaborative Culture, Leadership Accountability, Strategic Momentum and Talent Magnetism.

The good news is that the CWRT Congress already has a great Rx for evaluating and strengthening

This brief assessment allows you to be brutally honest with yourself about your organization’s health.

the health of your Round Table in the Sustainability Challenge which can be found on our website <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/challenge.html>. Just like an annual physical, completing the Challenge should not be a “one and done” activity. It should be completed at least annually and compared to previous years’ results to gain a longer term understanding of your Round Table’s progress or gaps year over year. Using this approach will provide an excellent prognosis for the long-term health of your Round Table.



Washington, D.C. Patients in Ward K of Armory Square Hospital, August 1865.

Library of Congress

STARTING FROM SCRATCH—A NEW CWRT IS EMERGING

By Carol VanOrnum

Creating a new Civil War Round Table is not only challenging, but unique these days. Graham L. Osborne, a former National Park Service ranger and founder and president of the Brice's Crossroads Foundation, has begun the formation of a new CWRT in Northeast Mississippi.

[Brice's Crossroads](#) is a National Park site, nestled between Shiloh to the north and Vicksburg to the south. While the Battle of Brice's Crossroads is well known, the tiny 1.1-acre park site is relatively unknown. Large amounts of land around the NPS site have been purchased for preservation, but the battlefield lacks coherent interpretation and has had minimal upkeep and visitor-use enhancements over the last two decades. Whereas other preservation efforts struggle against urban development, Osborne sees Brice's Crossroads' biggest threat as apathy at the local leadership and community engagement levels. So, he launched the Brice's Crossroads Foundation in November 2022, and looks to follow it with a possible Round Table. The Foundation's mission is to support the interpretation and educational opportunities that deal with Civil War issues in North Mississippi. Osborne sees the opportunity to use the



Brice's Crossroads National Park
Photo: Graham Osborn

Foundation as an umbrella for the new organization.

Osborn was a member of both Vicksburg and Jackson CWRTs. Even though those provide much attention to the Civil War-rich area of the Western Theater, he felt there was little going on in his own neck of the woods in Northeast MS. The closest CWRT for him is in Starkville, but even that doesn't reach the northeast part of the state.

Being a member of two very different CWRTs has shown him a wider range of possibilities on how to create and structure something new. "The biggest challenge is to find someone to take the reins," Osborne explained. He knows he can't do it alone, as he is currently in law school while raising two daughters, ages three and four. However, he feels he may have found that person.

The second challenge was finding a meeting place. He

questioned whether to meet in one stationary place, or be more mobile, rotating between Corinth, Baldwyn, Tupelo, and Oxford. His decision may be made for him, as they're very close to securing the Claude Gentry Theater in downtown Baldwyn for a minimal, if any, fee. That's hard to turn down.

So, with those ideas in mind, Osborne conducted the first annual Membership Weekend in June for the Foundation. Over thirty Civil War buffs attended, and he was encouraged. He noted, "There was a ton of enthusiasm after the first meeting." He's not sure how the Round Table will be structured, but he wants to do it correctly because there are "a bunch of people who care about history" and he doesn't want to let them down. They plan on starting with six meetings a year and see where it goes.

"There was a ton of enthusiasm after the first meeting,"

G. Osborne

As of now, he hasn't decided on a name. It's between Brice's Crossroads CWRT or Northeast Mississippi CWRT. If you're interested in supporting the Round Table, Graham Osborne can be reached at glewisosborne@gmail.com or (703) 789-1415. The Brice's Crossroads Foundation website is bricescrossroadsfoundation.com and they have an active Facebook page and YouTube Channel as well.



Graham Osborne, et al

WE FOUND A GREAT PLACE FOR THOSE CIVIL WAR MAGAZINES!

By Janet Whaley, Pasadena CWRT

Does your CWRT ever get calls from people wanting to donate Civil War books and magazines to a good home?

The Pasadena Civil War Round Table routinely receives these types of donations from members and the general public. We've made the practice of auctioning off books at the beginning of each meeting and putting out the magazines to be sold for \$1 each. Proceeds from these sales go directly to our Battlefield Preservation Fund for donations to various Civil War preservation efforts throughout the year.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, two forces merged to create a perfect storm:

1. With the switch to virtual meetings, we could no longer

auction our books or magazines.

2. People with time on their hands began to clean out their homes and libraries and turned to us as a "good home" for these publications.

With no idea as to how long the pandemic would last, we accepted these donations with the intent to continue our previous practices when we resumed in-person meetings. The donations snowballed, and after we had boxes of books and magazines stored at several board members' homes, we had to stop accepting these well-intended donations.

We were faced with the problem of how to liquidate these publications for the preservation purposes we'd like to fund. With monthly meetings, it would take years to accomplish. At a recent board meeting, ideas were tossed around as to how we

might best fulfill this mission.

CWRT Treasurer Janet Whaley offered to contact the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) to see if we could donate the Civil War magazines, including issues of *Civil War Times Illustrated*, *America's Civil War*, and *Civil War Monitor*. The magazines could be used by history teachers to supplement their textbook materials with in-depth, researched articles on Civil War topics. Magazines could be given to students to use for their own research projects and reports.

The process began by reaching out to the school district to explain the intention of our donation and determine the best person with whom to work. We hit the jackpot when we were referred to the newly created position of History/Social Science Specialist. Ashley Butler, the first person to hold this position with the Pasadena Unified School District, wanted to know more about the types of magazines we were donating and their content. We offered to provide sample copies of the magazines for her review, and she was interested. Because we were nearing the end of the school semester, we offered to batch up and deliver the magazines to the history teachers at the individual school campuses. However, Ashley had the more efficient

"We knew we had a lot of magazines to donate, but it totaled 7 boxes and 600 issues!"

idea of taking delivery at the school district office and providing allocations of the magazines to the teachers at their fall professional development meetings.

We knew we had a lot of magazines to donate, but it totaled seven boxes and 600 issues! These were delivered to PUSD's office in June and will be distributed to individual history and social studies teachers in the fall to use in their classes.

This has been a win-win project for PUSD and the Pasadena CWRT. We put out press releases, and newspapers featured articles on the collaborative effort, providing positive exposure for both entities.

Depending on how well the distribution is received by the district's history teachers, this could become an annual project for the CWRT.



PUSD History/Social Studies Specialist Ashley Butler accepts magazine donation from Pasadena CWRT Treasurer Janet Whaley.

MEMORIAL DAY—THE CWRT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

By Carol VanOrnum

The Civil War Round Table of New Hampshire places a lot of importance on the Memorial Day holiday as the day to honor all veterans, but especially the Civil War veterans. Every year before the holiday, Bill Hallett, past president and current board member, sends out to members a long list of Memorial Day events in the surrounding areas. He shares, "I wanted to make sure our members knew of the towns in our surrounding area with various ceremonies, parades, etc. that they could watch or participate in."

The list is obtained from the Seacoast news organization. Hallett feels the need to acknowledge that while most people focus on WWII, Korea, or Vietnam, they want to make sure that all soldiers/sailors

who gave their last full measure are remembered.

Hallett shared his knowledge of the history of Memorial Day. "After the War, the G.A.R. was formed (Grand Army of the Republic). They were like a combination of the Masons and the VFW or American Legion.

"Veterans could help each other, support widows and orphans and promote the memory of the soldiers and sailors. This was in a time without the Veterans' Administration or any government help.

"Three years after the end of the Civil War, on May 5, 1868, the old vets began Decoration Day, May 30, each year, for the purpose of decorating the graves of the men who didn't come home from the war. By the end of May, every state in the North

had some sort of flowers in bloom so it was a good time of year to do it.

"Decoration Day has turned into Memorial Day to honor those from all military engagements who didn't make it home. Then Congress decided to move it to the last Monday in May so people could use the long weekend to go to the beach, the lake or have a cookout, superseding the original purpose. It's been the last Monday in May since 1970."

Knowing that Memorial Day originated because of the Civil War makes it worth every effort to honor all of our soldiers. It's also an opportunity for your CWRT to possibly create a collaboration with or have a presence in your own community.

They want to make sure that all soldiers/sailors who gave their last full measure are remembered.

G.A.R. Memorial Day Parade 1925 in New York City.

Photo: Library of Congress



THE LIGHTS ARE BACK ON! SAN DIEGO CWRT

By Carol VanOrnum

In the May 2022 *Light Post*, “Another Goes Dark – San Diego CWRT,” the farewell note from Gordon Gidlund cited the many reasons their Board decided to dissolve the Round Table, e.g., aging members, resistance to new technology, and more.

And yet, friendships forged in Civil War history remained strong – strong enough to never entirely let go. The CWRT lives on, and the relief of meeting without pressure helped a lot. Gidlund explained, “A small core of the old membership get along well with each other, such that we continue meeting occasionally for lunch. And without the unrelenting pressure of holding a

meeting every month, it is a relief now to just schedule a lecture when we feel like it. Also, it is nice that we can reserve space from a local library for free.”

One other factor keeping the group going is its legal status: It is a section 501(c)(3) organization and has been recognized as tax-exempt by the State of California. These attributes are relatively easy to maintain (annual postcard returns and a \$25 fee to the state), but quite difficult to acquire and so should not be dispensed with lightly.

They even tried an “experimental” meeting at the

library where Gidlund spoke on “Shakespeare in the Civil War.” “We picked that topic as San Diego has a thriving theatre community, and we thought this would be a good “twofer” event. We had over thirty people in attendance, though most were Shakespeare fans,” Gidlund said.

Another experimental meeting was held on July 16th when President Dave Tooley spoke on Civil War railroads. They advertised with local train enthusiasts, hoping for that crossover effect. Unfortunately, that experiment did not work so well, with only six attendees (although it was an extremely hot day, which may have discouraged turnout.)

**Friendships
forged in
Civil War
history
remained
strong.**

What a great and unique way to collaborate with the San Diego community. We wish the San Diego CWRT continued success in their revival.

THE SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE – TWO CWRTS COMPLETE THE CHALLENGE

By Mike Movius

Last November, the CWRT Congress inaugurated the Sustainability Challenge. As of this writing, two intrepid Civil War Round Tables have completed the challenge, Old Baldy CWRT and Scottsdale CWRT. Their representatives will receive their certificates of achievement at the upcoming 2023 Sustainability Conference.

Old Baldy CWRT was the first to complete the challenge. It was submitted by Jim Countryman, a member of their board. Countryman said, “The Sustainability Challenge was not too



difficult for us as we already had many of the criteria in place.” Dr. John Bamberl, President Emeritus of the Scottsdale CWRT, told us, “We appointed a Sustainability Committee... We plan on presenting the challenge to the board quarterly to semi-annually.”

We like the approaches that both Round Tables have taken and encourage others to follow their example. It can only lead to better organizations.



2023 SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

FRIDAY AGENDA

AUGUST 25, 2023



Seminary Ridge Museum & Education Center

5:00	Registration & Check-in	
6:30	Move to Auditorium	
6:40	Welcome to Seminary Ridge	Pete Miele
6:50	Ice Breaker	Carol VanOrnum
7:20	What if "Stonewall" Had Been At Gettysburg	Chris Mackowski
8:45	Saturday Agenda Explained	Mike Movius
9:00	End	

2023 SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

SATURDAY AGENDA

AUGUST 26, 2023



Adams County Historical Society

7:00	Check-in & Gathering	
8:00	Conference Opening	Chris Mackowski
8:05	Welcome	Andrew Dalton
8:15	Congress Welcome	Mike Movius
8:25	Host CWRT Welcome	Michelle Hessler
8:30	Attendee Introductions	All
8:50	Break	
9:05	Panel - Emerging from the Pandemic	Carol VanOrnum
10:25	Transition	
10:35	Panel - Community Partnerships: The Hidden Value	Mike Movius
12:00	Lunch & Networking	
1:00	Trivia Contest	Andrew Mizensak
1:45	Panel - The Sustainability Challenge	John Bamberl
3:05	Transition	
3:15	Panel - Target Marketing Younger Members	Mike Movius
4:35	Conference Wrap	All
5:00	End	

2023 SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

SATURDAY EVENING AGENDA

AUGUST 26, 2023



Gettysburg National Military Park Visitor Center

6:00	Cyclorama #1 & Museum Tour	
6:15	Cyclorama #2 & Museum Tour	
7:15	Seating & Welcome	Curt Fields
7:20	Welcome to Gettysburg Foundation	Wayne Motts
7:30	Dinner Service	
8:00	8 th Regimental Band	Chris Mackowski
8:30	Awards Presentations	CWRT Congress
9:00	Raffle Drawing	CWRT Congress
9:15	Closing Remarks	Mike Movius

SUNDAY AGENDA

AUGUST 27, 2023

George Spangler Farm Tour

9:00 am	George Spangler Farm Tour	Gettysburg Fdn
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