



MINING YOUR RESOURCES

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By Carol VanOrnum

With a little imagination, some digging, and ample thinking outside the box, CWRTs might have resources right in their own backyard. Whether it's a place to hold meetings, symposiums, picnics, or community service projects, unique opportunities can materialize. Here are two examples.

Pasadena CWRT

Upon the return of in-person meetings, the Pasadena CWRT began a search for a new home. They were fortunate to find the beautiful and historic Blinn House. Built in 1905 by the wealthy lumber family of Edmund Blinn of Oak Park, IL, the family eventually sold it to the Pasadena Women's City Club which opened their doors as a meeting space for many non-profit organizations. When the Women's Club dissolved in 2020, they gifted the facility to the Pasadena Heritage organiza-

The Blinn House, home of the Pasadena Heritage Historical Society, and the meeting place of the Pasadena CWRT



Photo courtesy Blinn House—Tavo Almos & Dennis Hill

USS New Jersey, symposium venue for Old Baldy CWRT



tion, a local non-profit historic preservation organization. They were equally welcoming to local community groups.

Pasadena CWRT was a perfect fit for the preservation organization's mission to host, and the CWRT is thrilled. Not only is the space perfect for them, but they are also regularly promoted as a "Non-Profit Associate Member" to the Pasadena Heritage's 2,000+ members, many of whom have never heard about the PCWRT. Treasurer Janet Whaley stated, "By partnership with a history-related organization, we are supporting the cause of historical preservation, which is a related mission for our own organization."

Old Baldy CWRT

What better venue to hold a Civil War Naval Symposium than on the battleship USS New Jersey, floating on the Delaware River at Camden, NJ. It is considered one of the most decorated battleships in U.S. history. So, it was a

natural choice for Treasurer and Symposium Coordinator Frank Barletta to reach out to when planning Old Baldy CWRT's 2018 symposium. Retiring in 1991, the battleship transformed into the USS New Jersey Museum and Memorial. It was therefore perfect for hosting events, with handicap accessibility, plenty of room for vendors, speakers, reenactors, a naval torpedo display, and as one member said, "an honest-to-goodness, black powder, fire belching, beauty of a cannon." (See back page for photo.) There were performances of the Maritime and Nautical Music of the Civil War by Charlie Zahm and Admiral Dave Farragut, portrayed by Bruce Tucker, gave a stirring account of leading his fleet between two powerful Confederate batteries located inside the forts of Morgan and Gaines. "It was a natural choice to make it unique," Barletta said, proudly claiming it a grand success.



WHY AWARDS AND RECOGNITION?

By Mike Movius, President

As you already know, the CWRT Congress recently announced the first round table recipients to win the Wallace L. Rueckel Innovation Award (Old Baldy CWRT) and the Dr. John A. Bamberl Phoenix Award (Inland Empire CWRT). Both organizations and their leaders deserve to be recognized for their outstanding accomplishments.

So, what's the deal with awards, anyway? We have always purposefully tried to lead by example. We have done that through transparency in all our marketing, fundraising and governance. And this is an area we encourage CWRT leaders to consider following our lead as well.

The science is clear that humans not only thrive on but need recognition. Physiologically, when we are publicly recognized the hypothalamus and dopamine receptors of the brain are stimulated and result in psychological feelings of belong-

ing and acceptance. More importantly, it drives recipients to undertake similar behavior that led to success.

Studies of employee award and recognition programs tell an amazing story. For example, companies with highly engaged workforce outperform their peers by 147% in earnings per share. And employees who receive strong recognition are 33% more likely to be proactively innovative. Rewarding workers creates a positive company culture of engaged employees which is the key to business success and profitability.

Although CWRTs are nonprofits, similar outcomes can be expected in terms of attracting new and retaining current members, development of new, innovative approaches to organizational management, and improved public relations.

The challenge for CWRT leaders is who to recognize, when, and how often. The answers to those questions depend on your circumstances. But we can tell you that it needs to be deserved and heartfelt. If your CWRT is new to the concept, try recognizing the staff of your meeting place. Applause is always welcome and we're sure they will appreciate the gesture.

In terms of the CWRT Congress, we will continue with our Innovation and Phoenix awards in 2023. And we are announcing the Matthew Borowick Marketing Award to stimulate organizational excellence in their marketing efforts. We urge you to initiate or enhance your award and recognition programs with our help. Entries are due June 1, 2023. All three awards are located [HERE](#).

IMPROVEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND NETWORKING

“The science is clear that humans not only thrive on but need recognition.”

Mike Movius



CWRT Congress VP Carol VanOrnum and President Rich Jankowski — Old Baldy CWRT



(Left to Right) Mike Movius, VP Mike Hoover, President Brian Cieslak, and Treasurer Mark Radeleff — Inland Empire CWRT

ELIMINATING ROADBLOCKS TO CHANGE, OR “WE TRIED THAT BEFORE AND IT DIDN'T WORK.”

By Sid Gamertsfelder, VP, Civil War Roundtable of St. Louis

We recently had a Board discussion concerning our name tags, or lack thereof. Prior to the pandemic, we used name tags. Returning to in-person meetings, it seemed that they'd gone missing. Comments flew in like “Well, they were too big, too heavy, too hard to return, and they are a pain in the neck, and you couldn't read them anyway.” But when alternatives were proposed, people were just plain resistant. It seemed all liked the idea of having name tags, but most were fed up with past practice.

Do you have a group of people that seem to say “We tried that before and it didn't work”? Or the more dangerous dead end, “that won't work here!” Most organizations run into this phenomenon with bigger issues than nametags, but still, similarly may feel they are at a standstill.

My background as a young (long ago) engineer had me running into this frequently. At first, I did what most people do and tried to think of a different solution. However, my engineer's mind was more analytic and less innovative. I became angry.

From personal experience, that does not work.

Rather than give up I approached a mentor who told me that my problem was not in what I was proposing but rather I was not asking the right follow-up questions. He explained it was essential to understand why something does not work.

One of the issues was getting them to the meeting, collecting them and returning to storage in a searchable manner. A major issue was people forgetting to drop them off. Finally, the name badges were falling apart. All were valid concerns.

I took this as a big learning opportunity to go back, ask questions, listen to the history, and try to understand what happened and why. I made sure I was talking to “original sources” as much as possible. I listened!

I began to think about the reasons the change proposal failed. Was it the implementation, the communication, or was the goal

unachievable? I found that when these and the other questions that arise out of listening are answered, the path forward became more obvious.

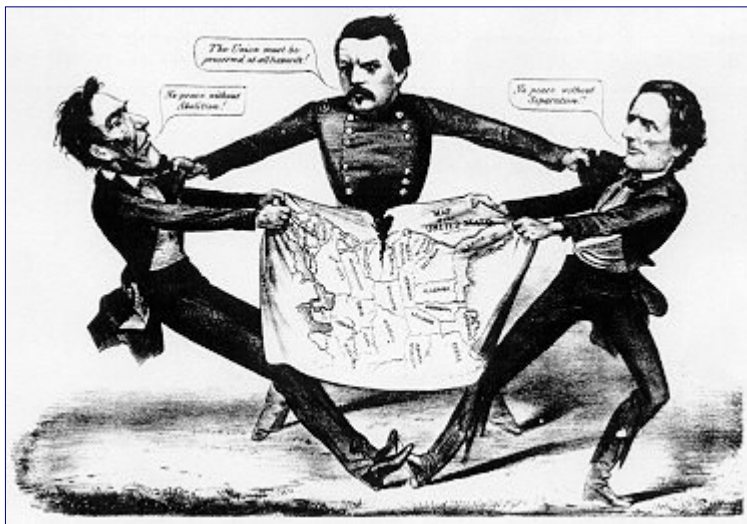
Getting the opposers on your side is what you need to be after. The goal is not to be right but to do the right thing for the organization. Being right and having the organization fail is not achieving success.

Our name tag problem was resolved by listening to objections and reviewing other options than what had been done in the past. Time was spent listening to the issues and a new proposal was made to the Summer BOD meeting. Buying a lanyard with “Civil War Roundtable of St. Louis” on both sides as well as the member's name, and having the member be responsible for bringing it to each meeting was well received by the Board.

“The goal is not to be right but to do the right thing for the organization.”

Sid G.

If the first try does not succeed, we'll modify the proposal until we have a good system. At that time, we should meet the goal of having both visitors and members recognizing and knowing each other.



Cartoon courtesy of NPS

MEMBER RETENTION—THE NEXT LEVEL

By Carol VanOrnum

Attracting new members to your CWRT is a topic at the top of every round table Board's agenda. But *retaining* your current members is just as, if not more, important. It requires a concerted effort by Board members and volunteers to cover all the aspects and duties of a Membership Retention Team.

Have you ever asked your members why they joined? Or why they stay as members? Do you know what aspects of your round table experience are most important to them? Is it the lectures, the camaraderie, the dining experience? Contacting and asking their opinions is key to making your members feel valued. Sending surveys is good; phone calls are better.

Are your newest members familiar with the benefits of membership? Has someone explained or shown them how to navigate your website with all its features, e.g., dues and meal registration pages, speaker presentations calendar, merchandise, ancestry? Are they aware of which social media platforms you use? A new member onboarding packet would make them feel most welcomed.

Members generally like to be connected. Try developing a communication plan which consists of distributing a first-rate newsletter, whether it's

monthly, quarterly, or biannually. Promote activities using a social media platform. Send out meeting notices and other upcoming events. Make them sound interesting, compelling, and/or fun. Call members personally for birthdays and anniversaries. They'll feel appreciated.

It's important to catch disengagement early – before they make the decision to leave. After all, it's easier to catch someone teetering than it is to pick them up off the floor. Follow up with members who are delinquent in their dues and ascertain whether they've lost interest or can't afford the payment. If the latter, arrange a payment plan. Or sadly, conduct an exit inter-

view. But keep them on the mailing list! They may come back.

Finally, build and engage your CWRT community. Get them off their seats and into the community to attend picnics, do community projects, and participate in your symposium. The more engaged your members are, the deeper their roots will grow, and your organization will thrive.

The CWRT Congress developed The Sustainability Challenge just for you. Member Retention is the first of ten modules to complete. The suggested steps above are yours to use to make your CWRT an even better organization than it is today. Engage and Succeed. Find The Sustainability Challenge [HERE](#).

“The more engaged your members are, the deeper their roots will grow.”



This beautifully aged angel is located in the Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia. It belongs to John J. Thayer and his family. According to Walt Lafty, research administrator of the G.A.R. Civil War Museum and Library and a member of the Old Baldy CWRT, Thayer was born in 1840 and was 21 years old when the Civil War began. He never served in the military during the war. Instead, he was a printer in Philadelphia his entire life, owning his business, the Thayer Printing House. He died in 1922 at the age of 82.

CVO

SPEAKER CARE—FROM THE HORSES’ MOUTHS

An interview with Tim Smith, Scott Mingus, and John Fazio

We can all agree that taking good care of your speaker ensures they’ll want to return at a future date. We polled three nationally-respected speakers and learned a lot! Timothy B. Smith of Shiloh, TN, John Fazio of Akron, OH, and Scott Mingus, Sr. of York, PA all had stories to share.

CWRT Congress: What do you value most in the process of being a speaker for a CWRT? Schedule flexibility, good A/V equipment, friendliness of CWRT, selling books, etc.

Smith: Obviously, all those are great helps. I don’t always do power point but when I do it really helps if the people running it know what they are doing. I don’t sell books - just too much trouble, but it’s good when the roundtable works with the publisher and gets books to sell for their own profit. Probably the biggest thing for me is keeping in touch and sending reminders. I speak at so many places that I normally don’t turn my attention to the next event until the cur-

ent one is done, so it’s nice to have nudges to keep on track. I also like to be able to make my own flights and be reimbursed. I live nearly two to three hours from any airport, and it takes a good bit of logistics to get there and fly without hitting rush hours, etc. Just makes it easier for me.

Mingus: I value friendly CWRT points of contact who are over-communicators (reminders, updates, etc.). Some POCs send out reminders not only to the speaker but to their members, as well as my price lists for books, etc. up front 2-3 weeks before the scheduled talk and then repeat it a couple of days in advance.

Fazio: I most value the friendliness of my hosts and the rapt attention of the audience to my presentation. I also attach great importance to advance publicity, as well as to intelligently crafted and presented publicity, which tends to increase attendance, which every speaker appreciates.

CWRT Congress: What makes a good experience?

Smith: The best experience

is when the contacts stay in touch regularly, have everything prepared well, and make it a smooth event. So many times I get to the hotel that is prepaid and the hotel knows nothing of any prepayment. After a long day of driving to the airport and flying, that’s an added frustration. It’s also good for the roundtables out west to provide two nights’ lodging rather than one. It’s very difficult to get up before dawn, drive two or three hours, sit in an airport an hour or two, fly two or three hours, get to a hotel, and then have much energy to speak that night.

Mingus: A shining example is the collaboration between the Austin and New Orleans CWRTs. They sent me messages four or five times about the back-to-back talks, including reminders to book airfare. They booked my hotel room six months in advance and followed up as well. They asked about personal needs and sent

“...intelligently crafted and presented publicity, which tends to increase attendance, which every speaker appreciates.”
John Fazio

someone to pick me up at the respective airports and give me guided tours of their cities and local historical sites. Fabulous treatment!

Fazio: My best experiences have been characterized by good rapport with my hosts, particularly the contact people, tech assistants and others, and the engagement of the audience. I have had many good examples over the years, but perhaps the best one

(continued on Page 6)



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SPEAKER CARE, CONTINUED

(Fazio Continued from Page 5)

is the presentation I gave to the Mahoning Valley Civil War Roundtable in March of this year. We met in Canfield, Ohio, and there were at least 75 in the audience, which is a fine crowd. The audience appeared to be enthralled to my presentation and there were, accordingly, no drifters. I received numerous accolades from audience members at the finish of the presentation and some even by mail after I had returned home. Gary Wholf, my contact person, even

coming. Another one put my wife and me up in literally a roach motel. You could see through the crack in the front door. Don't do that.

Mingus: I have had a few bad experiences. Once, a CWRT wanted to hold their business meeting prior to my talk. I drove more than two hours to get there and then I had to sit through more than an hour of arguments, discussions, and disagreements about some points of new business. Then, when it's finally turn for me to speak, I learned that I only had 40 minutes left before their venue closed for the night. I hustled through the talk, abandoned formal book sales, and left at the appointed time. They are not the only CWRT to have their business meetings first, but usually the members are respectful of the speaker's time and keep it short. New business is tabled or delayed until after the talk. On another occasion, I showed up on the same date as another speaker. They had mixed up the dates and given two of us the same date instead of back-to-back months. I went home and let the other guy give his talk; he had driven farther. I did go back the next month and they were apologetic and bought a bunch of books, so all was well. Neither speaker ever went back to my knowledge, however.

Fazio: I have had almost no bad experiences, so it is difficult to answer this question. I would say

that low attendance and inattention of the audience are bad signs, the latter demonstrated by drifters, i.e., people who seem to drift away, some of whom sometimes do not return. I prefer not to mention any particular event, because I do not wish to malign anyone. We all have bad days occasionally. In about 20 years, I cannot recall ever having difficulty with any of my hosts.

CWRT Congress: Do you have an example of a CWRT that went the extra mile to make your presentation successful and enjoyable?

Smith: Most do. Many go out of their way to make my stay enjoyable, and a lot want to show off their local historical spots. Some have even taken me to do research in nearby repositories. In terms of money, many provide honorariums, which is nice but not in my mind required. I do it sort of as a service somewhat. However, I normally lose money on the deal. Most roundtables gladly pay lodging and travel be it air or mileage. But they often do not think about the gas it takes me to

drive the two or three hours to the airport, the parking while I'm gone, the food I eat on the way there and back, or other small expenses that add up quickly. Like I say, I do it much as a service, but it's still nice when a few roundtables go above and beyond in terms of real expenses

Mingus: One CWRT researched my interests in advance, learned that I am a wargamer and collector of painted miniature soldiers, and they presented me with a very nice hand-painted figure after my talk, in addition to the agreed-to honorarium and travel expenses. I was touched by their thoughtfulness. They did their homework.

Fazio: I very recently presented in Lakeside, Ohio. They gave plenty of advance publicity. The result was a very well attended presentation. There were no drifters and the Q. and A. at the end of the presentation was spirited. My hosts could not have been friendlier or more helpful.

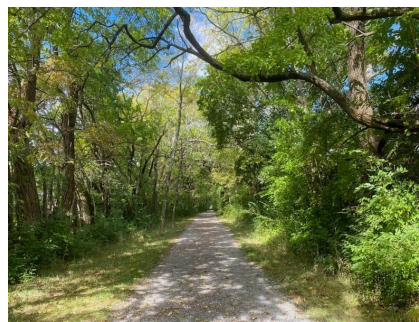
"I was touched by their thoughtfulness. They did their homework."

Scott Mingus

promised to have me return for another presentation next season. In addition, sales of my book (my first book) were brisk—10 copies sold.

CWRT Congress: What makes a bad experience?

Smith: One roundtable did not follow up about travel plans or lodging as the event drew closer, despite my emails. Finally, a day or two before, I simply sent an email saying I would not be



On the Third Winchester Battlefield, VA

BULL RUN CWRT COLLABORATES WITH SCHOOLS TO TEACH A HOW-TO CLASS ON CREATING HISTORIC SIGNAGE

By Carol VanOrnum

The Northern Virginia Community College's Department of History and Art History, in partnership with the Bull Run Civil War Roundtable (BRCWRT) and the George Mason University (GMU) Facilities and Grounds Team, recently completed a project to recognize an important historic site on the GMU Fairfax campus. This redoubt, first constructed in June of 1861 by the 5th Alabama Volunteer Infantry under

administration to recognize the site. They also followed the process to gain eligibility to list it on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. A video of the Redoubt at Farr's Cross Roads, shot in September 2021, can be found [here](#).

Not only did the BRCWRT lead several instructional visits to the site for students of the GMU's history class on the Civil War, it has helped formulate a class on creating historical markers for preservation and interpretation.⁽¹⁾

According to Kim Brace, Vice President of the BRCWRT, the Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) - Historic Signage program began in 2018.

"This program is a BRCWRT supported class at a local NVCC campus. After approval of the class outline, two classes have been delivered and one cancelled during the pandemic in 2020. Research is based upon a compilation of 'best practices' developed by BRCWRT members who have helped create some 100(+) historic markers in Fairfax and Prince William counties over the past 25 years. The class covers what is needed to take an idea for a historic sign through a process of approval, installation, and dedication at a suitable location. The current presentation covers two major types of markers: roadside (vertical) and way-side (interpretive)." Currently, the pandemic sidelined the class, but there are hopes of getting it going soon.

⁽¹⁾ George Mason University, "Mason's History and Art History department collaborates on project to preserve Civil War structure on campus," <https://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/articles/16007>, 5/24/21.

Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.

Ben Franklin

the command of Col. Robert Rodes is one of the best preserved of its kind. In the last few months, the Campus Planning office worked with the department and BRCWRT to provide signs to interpret this site, located at Farr's Cross Roads.

For several years, the department, alongside Fairfax County archaeologists and volunteers from the BRCWRT lobbied the university



The redoubt at Farr's Cross Roads, Fairfax, VA

GIVING TUESDAY— NOVEMBER 29, 2022

GIVING TUESDAY

This year, the Civil War Round Table Congress will once again be participating in Giving Tuesday. Giving Tuesday will be taking place on Tuesday, November 29, 2022.

Giving Tuesday is the day when, in the midst of all of your holiday shopping and planning for the new year, you can take a moment to contribute to those organizations and causes that are important to you. Giving Tuesday is the prime opportunity prior to the end of the year when you can make those critical end of the year charitable contributions that will help you receive helpful tax deductions.

The CWRT Congress' goal for Giving Tuesday is \$2,500.00. While this is a modest goal, it is a reasonable goal. Of course, we hope to exceed that goal amount so we are able to do even *more good* with those generous gifts. Any contribution specifically earmarked for Giving Tuesday received by or before 11:59 PM, Tuesday, November 29, 2022, will count towards our goal amount. Donate [here](#) and indicate in the Notes section of your designation.

The monies raised by the CWRT Congress will go to two places: The operations of the CWRT Congress and to the American Battlefield Trust. The Board of Directors believe that both organizations perform important tasks as stewards of our nation's Civil War history, and that both organizations have established records of maximizing the dollars they receive.

If you have any questions, or would like more information about Giving Tuesday, please email Andrew Mizesak at JAGCWRT.Mizesak@gmail.com.

MEMORIAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS HELP

By Andrew Mizsak

Our nation is home to many monuments and significant sites that may be deserving of any of the four levels of national recognition that are available.

One designation is listing on the National Register of Historic Places, in an application process through your State/Territorial/Tribal Historic Preservation Office (SHPO or THPO) that is sent to the US Department of the Interior for their consideration.

Another is designation as a National Historic Landmark, which is a similar, but more extensive, process.

There are other sites that are

worthy of consideration as a National Historic Site, National Battlefield, or National Memorial. That process, oftentimes, takes several years and requires an Act of Congress.

In many cases, it is groups of active and engaged citizens who advocate to their Member(s) of Congress and US Senators as to why their place of importance should be considered. At the very least, statements of historical significance and other relevant documents, resources, and artifacts that highlight the notable event or events are shared with the Congressional and Senate Offices and their staffs.

Two things are key in bringing this process to full fruition:

patience and relationship building. Just like how Rome was not built in a day, an Act of Congress does not happen overnight. It is imperative that your research relative to the site is spot-on, so that your organization becomes even more of an undisputed subject matter expert about your site and its significance, which then puts you in the position as the verified resource to the key people in Washington. This will advance your relationship with those offices, as well as keeping in regular contact with them.

Additionally, you need to allow the legislative process to work through itself. Think of the

“Your organization becomes even more of an undisputed subject matter expert about your site and its significance.”

legislative process as a long, winding river. There will be some smooth, straight areas; there will be some rapids; there will be a lot of twists and turns. Be patient... the Congressional and Senate offices will be your navigators.

Remember, too, with over 10,000 bills introduced in the Congress every two years, bills like this face an uphill climb from day one.

Within the CWRT Congress, Board Member Andrew Mizsak is available to work with any organization interested in possibly seeking an Act of Congress for a site or area they believe might be worthy of it. Andrew can be reached via email at jagcwrmt.mizsak@gmail.com.

Any organization interested in seeking a National Register of Historic Places or National Historic Landmark listing should reach out to Dana Best-Mizsak of the James A. Garfield CWRT at jagcwrmt.mizsak@gmail.com.



Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington Cemetery, September A.D., 1866

This was the first memorial at Arlington to be dedicated to soldiers who had died in battle and whose remains could not be identified. The vault likely contains the remains of Confederate soldiers as well as U.S. Army troops. (Photo www.arlingtoncemetery.mil)

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Pasadena CWRT



“... an honest-to-goodness, black powder, fire belching, beauty of a cannon,” according to one Old Baldy CWRT member and attendee of their 2018 Naval Symposium on the USS Jersey.