The disruption that occurred in March 2020 disrupted many things. One of those was the focus of the CWRT Congress. Whereas we were focused on determining the common practices of Civil War Round Tables through face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations and surveys, we were suddenly thrust into a position of helping to keep isolated CWRT members from becoming disenchanted with the war.

It was only in November that we realized that the CWRT Newsletter Survey had not been analyzed. So, we have revisited our Survey Monkey site and have now completed the following analysis. Our fourteen page, fifteen questions received 178 total responses from 108 separate CWRTs. The completion rate was 81% and typically took 3:17 to complete.

Before we begin, the rate at which recipients of newsletters actually read them has long been unknown. With the advent of email services such as Constant Comment, MailChimp, etc., CWRTs and their leaders can now discover what is known as the “open rate”. (The percentage of recipients who actually open emails carrying CWRT newsletters.) The open rate of most CWRT newsletters is less than encouraging. But despite that, it is important to consider the value of newsletters in terms of a member benefit, a means of communicating directly to recipients AND as a marketing tool outside the organization.

SUMMARY
Through this survey, we discovered the following PROVEN PRACTICES about CWRTs and their newsletters.

1. Most CWRTs have and will continue to publish a newsletter.
2. Some CWRT have elected, for a variety of reasons, to communicate the information that would generally be published in a newsletter through means that serve their membership and needs.
3. Although not having a volunteer editor can stop newsletter publication, it can also be an opportunity to find/ attract a new member with the needed skills. Use your resources to find that skilled individual.
4. Many CWRTs are using their newsletters as a means to market their organization to others. The importance of doubling or tripling the impact beyond current members should be emphasized.

5. The analysis has a number of market-partner organizations listed; however, the list is not complete nor exhaustive. CWRTs might consider expanding the market-partner listings to further expand their reach into the community.

6. CWRTs that distribute their newsletters by means other than email might consider the cost and time savings as well as “open rate” data that many of the free services provide.

7. Because upcoming meeting/speaker information seems to be the most important article in CWRT newsletters, that might help drive a decision to publish that information in other ways such as Meet-up and other social media marketing channels.
It is clear that the vast majority of CWRTs publish a newsletter as 81% of respondents answered in the affirmative.
Interestingly enough, only 28 of the 33 respondents who advised they do not have a newsletter advised why their CWRT does not have one. Of those, 36% advised they did not have an editor, 29% advised they just stopped publishing their newsletter, 18% advised a newsletter is not needed, 7% advised that the cost was too great and 46% advised the following:

- Information by email distribution is sufficient
- We had one but found getting in a timely fashion was problematic. Started using tour web page to serve the same purpose. More timely articles and information posted in a timely manner. This serves our needs better.
- It is in the works and probably will be out next month.
- Don't know
- New CWRT. Use Facebook page to communicate with members
• We incorporated our newsletter into our new website. So technically we still have a newsletter, it is digital.
• Never had one, trying to start one up
• Small roundtable
• No one interested in doing it.
• We have a newsletter telegram - computer generated!
• We will... just have not gotten around to it.
• I used to do a monthly "President's Message," which served as a newsletter, but I do not have time for it anymore.
• Editor died and no one wants the job. Send out meeting reminders by email
Ninety-four percent of the respondents advised that their newsletter is published to coincide with their CWRT season.
Eighty-two percent of respondents advised that they distribute their newsletter by way of email, 8% through their website, 7% through the U. S. Postal Service, 1% at their meetings and 3% advise through the following:

- Mailchimp
- Combination email and website
- Website and email (to members)
- One of my CWRTs mails it; the other emails it.
Interestingly enough, 70% of those that send their newsletter through the post advise that the recipients read it, 10% advised they do not know and 20% advised they don’t know.
Opening rate means that recipients actually open the email in which a CWRT sends their newsletter. Most, 59% advise they do not know the open rate, 21% said the open rate is 80 to 100%, 9% said 100% open rate, another 9% said 60 to 80%, 3% said 40 to 60% and 59% said they frankly don't know.
Most, 88% advised they have not considered discontinuing their CWRT newsletter, 7% advised they don’t know and 5% said they have considered it.
Q8 If so, what would be the criteria for discontinuing it? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 9  Skipped: 169

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of readership</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty finding an editor</td>
<td>55.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too few submitted articles</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents:</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The criteria for making the decision to discontinue their newsletter would be as follows:

1. Difficulty finding an editor (56%)
2. Lack of readership (44%)
3. Too few submitted articles (33%)
4. Other (22%)
   a. No plan for discontinuing the Newsletter
   b. I'm tired of fooling with it.
5. Cost (11%)
The most important column of those with a CWRT newsletter is about Upcoming meeting and speaker (69%), Featured article (14%), President’s message (7%), Activities outside of meetings (4%) and CWRT project(s) (1%). Another 4% advised the following:

- Articles written by members
- President’s Column, Preservation Corner, CW Generals Graves - Ms Rebelle, Book Review
- Don't know.
- The fist 3 items
- Monthly article on Grave sites of Civil War people
- Schedule of upcoming Civil War related events
The software that editors use to publish the CWRT’s newsletter indicates the involvement and knowledge of respondents. Although 38% didn’t know, 37% advised MS Word, MS Publisher, 8% Adobe and 9% responded Other that includes the following:

- Seamonkey
- MadMimi.com
- Would have to check with our editor
- MSWord, then Adobe to send to webpage
- Coreldraw
- xara
- InDesign
- Libre Office
- Mac
Of the 133 respondents to the question of using their newsletter as a marketing tool, most, 53%, said they do, 38% said they do not and 9% didn’t know.
The responses to this question is very interesting. Recipients of CWRT newsletters include the following: 99% members, 42% local historical societies, 26% local museums, 22% libraries, 10% sons/daughter organizations, 8% genealogical societies and 1% veterans groups. Another 37% said “other” which includes:

- Other CWRTs, speakers
- Other CWRTs, contacts list
- American CWRT.
- Visitors
- Anyone who expresses interest.
- Other roundtables
• News media
• College History Department
• Other CWRT
• speakers, other CWRTs, interested parties
• Former presenters
• Friends who have joined the email list
• People who may be interested in joining.
• Friends of the Round Table
• Local weekly paper
• Past CWRT Speakers
• Senior center
• Some non-members and one local bookstore
• Posted on website for public access
• Other round tables
• Not sure of the rest
• Previous visitors
• Anyone who expresses an interest to receive it
• Selected other RT’s
• Once the newsletter is sent to the membership it is posted on the round table website.
• Other CWRTs
• Other roundtables and speakers
Those who responded that their CWRT newsletter is NOT used as a marketing tool explained the reasoning by stating that 52% have never thought of it that way, 23% said there is limited outside interest, 15% said it is a member benefit, 10% said because of cost, another 10% said there were privacy concerns and 18% said “other” which included the following:

- Not sure
- Don't know
- Only sent to members
- Have not set updated website
- Not certain what that means
- We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit
- One needs an identifiable target market to invest with mailings at 70 cents per unit
• Don't know.
• Only goes to members
• Anyone expressing interest
• I don't know if they do or not.
Of those who have not used their newsletter as a marketing tool, when asked what organizations they would include in their mailing list, they responded as follows:

- Local historical societies (84%)
- Members (81%)
- Libraries (61%)
- Local museums (53%)
- Sons/Daughter organizations (44%)
- Veteran groups (42%)
- Genealogical societies (33%)
• Other (14%)
  o Historical preservation groups
  o Historic society
  o High Schools
  o At Civil War Shows and reenactments we have a table with forms to fill out if they want to receive our newsletter. This list includes historical societies and reenactment groups.
  o Don't know.
  o Local universities
  o Social media
  o Reenacting groups
The following CWRTs responded to this survey:

ACWRT Queensland Australia.
Alabama CWRT
American CWRT of Australia
Atlanta CWRT
Baltimore CWRT
Baton Rouge CWRT
Bella Vista CWRT
Brandywine Valley Civil War RT
Brunswick CWRT
Buffalo CWRT
Bull Run CWRT
Camp Olden
Cannon Valley CWRT
Cape Fear CWRT
Cape May County CWRT
Capital District CWRT
Central Delaware
Central Ohio
Chicago
Chicago, Salt Creek, Northern IL
Cincinnati
Cincinnati CWRT
CWRT North Florida
CWRT of Cobb County
CWRT Of Fredericksburg

CWRT of the District of Columbia
Cleveland CWRT
Colonel Henry Ryerson CWRT
Connecticut CWRT
Cumberland mountain
CWRT Montgomery County PA
CWRT of Arkansas
CWRT of the Ozarks
Delaware Valley CWRT
Des Moines CWRT
Eastern PA CWRT
East Bridgewater CWRT
First Defenders CWRT
Frederick County CWRT
Frederick County MD
Greater Orlando CWRT
Greater Pittsburgh CWRT
Green Mountain CWRT
Green Mountain CWRT
Hagerstown CWRT
Hamilton County, IN CWRT
Hershey CWRT
Houston CWRT
Indianapolis CWRT
Inland Empire in Redlands, CA CWRT
James A. Garfield CWRT
Joshua L. Chamberlain CWRT
JOSUHA SILL CWRT
Kankakee Valley CWRT
Kansas City CWRT
Kent Civil War Society
Los Angeles CWRT
Louisville CWRT
Lowcountry CWRT
Lynchburg, VA CWRT
Madison County Historical Society CWRT
Mahoning Valley, Ohio CWRT
Mason-Dixon CWRT
Michigan Regimental
Milwaukee CWRT
Monroe County CWRT
Montgomery County, MD CWRT
North Alabama CWRT
Northeast Georgia CWRT
Northern Illinois CWRT
Ohio Valley
Oklahoma City CWRT
Old Baldy CWRT
Olde Colony Civil War RT
Onondaga County CWRT
Palm Coast CWRT
Pasadena CWRT
Pender CWRT
Phil Kearny CWRT of North Jersey
Puget Sound CWRT
R E Lee CWRT of Central NJ CWRT
Raleigh CWRT
Rhode Island CWRT
Rocky Mountain CWRT
Rufus Barringer CWRT
Sacramento CWRT
Salt Creek CWRT
San Diego CWRT
San Francisco CWRT
San Joaquin Valley Civil War RT
Scottsdale CWRT
Shippensburg Area Civil War RT
South Suburban CWRT
St Louis CWRT
Tennessee valley civil war RT
Tri-State CWRT
Twin Cities CWRT
CWRT Washington CWRT
Wayne County CWRT
West Virginia Mason-Dixon CWRT
Western NC CWRT
Western PA/Butler PA CWRT
Western Reserve CWRT
Williamsburg CWRT
Western New York CWRT
York PA CWRT