

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LXIII No. 6, February 2026



587th Regular Meeting

DATE: Saturday, February 21, 2026
PLACE: Glen Ellyn History Center at Stacy's Corners
800 N. Main Street, Glen Ellyn, IL (NW corner of Main & Elm Streets.)
TIME: 11:00 a.m.
PROGRAM: **"Cold Harbor 1864"**
SPEAKER: Dennis Doyle

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BOOK SALE until 2pm

In May 1864, U.S. Grant and the Army of the Potomac began the Overland Campaign against Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. For five weeks, the armies battled in Virginia's Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, and the North Anna River. The fighting was intense, relentless and costly in terms of casualties. Grant, having vowed not to turn back, pressed Lee to the environs of Richmond, engaging in another series of battles at Bethesda Church, Totopotomoy Creek, and Haws Shop. In the first week of June, Lee made a determined stand at Cold Harbor, near the 1862 Gaines Mill Battlefield. On June 3, 1864, Grant attacked a strongly fortified position, resulting in one of the costliest defeats of his career. It was the only attack he ever expressed sorrow for.

Dennis Doyle earned his B.A. from Colorado State University, his M.A. in History from American University, and his M.A. in Sociology from DePaul University. He is semi-retired from teaching at Joliet Junior College. Dennis is a past president of the Chicago and South Suburban Civil War Round Tables. Dennis is an enthusiastic speaker and has addressed Civil War round tables across the United States.

Please remember to pay dues by the February meeting. Thanks to those who have already renewed.

ALL FOR THE UNION

On February 7, 2026, Robert I. Girardi will present "*The Civil War Generals*" at the 27th Annual Appomattox Court House and Longwood University Civil War Seminar at Farmville, VA.

On February 11, 2026, Robert will present Abraham Lincoln and the Common Soldier at the Warrentville Public Library.

VACANT CHAIR Longtime member and friend Ron Carlson passed away on January 28th after a brief illness. Many have fond memories of Ron, especially on Civil War trips.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Check with the organization sponsoring the program for meeting status.

February 6, 2026

Northern Illinois CWRT will feature Wayne Rhine presenting "*The Great Escape from Libby Prison.*"
Arlington Hts. Library www.northernilcwr.org

February 8, 2026 at 2pm

NW Indiana CWRT will feature Tom Rock presenting "*The Army of Virginia at Gettysburg.*"
Crown Point Community Library Northwest Indiana CWRT on Facebook

February 9, 2026 at 11:45

Armchair Generals Discussion Group will feature Charles F. Larimer presenting "Love and Valor: Intimate Civil War Letters." Gale Borden Library, Elgin IL

February 10, 2026 (Zoom only)

McHenry County CWRT will feature Stuart Sanders presenting "*Aftermath at Perryville.*"
Woodstock Library www.mchenrycivilwar.com

February 13, 2026

Chicago CWRT will feature Keith Bohannon presenting "*Wheeler's Cavalry in the Atlanta Campaign.*"
Blossum Café, 8349 W. Lawrence Avenue, Norridge, IL 60706 www.chicagocwr.org

February 17, 2026

Lincoln/Davis CWRT will feature Steve Alban presenting "England and Russia as a Cause of the Civil War." Country House Restaurant, Alsip, IL lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

February 26, 2026

South Suburban CWRT will feature Chuck Rebesco presenting "*The Gibraltar Brigade, Army of the Potomac.*" Aurielio's Pizza, 19836 Wolf Road, Mokena South Suburban CWRT on Facebook.

March 2, 2026 at noon.

Rock River Valley CWRT will feature John Hopkins presenting "*The 1913 Gettysburg Reunion.*"
Veteran's Memorial Hall, 211 N. Main Street, Rockford.

March 4, 2026

Kankakee Valley CWRT will feature Robert I. Girardi presenting "*The Very Spirit of War: General John A. Logan.*" Bradley Public Library Kankakee Valley CWRT on Facebook

The Civil War Round Table of Chicago's 2026 Tour will be "Charleston and Savannah" April 29-May 2, 2026. For itinerary and registration information see www.chicagocwrt.org

Kenosha Civil War Museum features **Second Friday Lectures at Noon.**

On February 13, 2026, Dennis Doyle will present "*Irish Americans in the Civil War*".
Free and Open to the Public and No Prior Registration is Required.

Kenosha Civil War Museum will host The Midwest Historic Gaming Society Gaming Weekend.

Saturday, February 21, 10am-4pm Sunday, February 22, 12pm-3pm

An "open house" format will be featured to allow the public to check out tables of miniatures depicting Civil War and Revolutionary War battles.

FUTURE SALT CREEK CWRT MEETINGS

Check us out on Facebook and at saltcreekcwrt.org

Mar. 21, 2026 Ed Urban will present "*The Murder of CSA General Earl Van Dorn.*"

Apr. 25, 2026 Charlie Banks will present "*General Nathaniel P. Banks.*"

May 15, 2026 Brian Seiter will present "*To Wilson's Creek.*"

June 19, 2026 Annual Banquet: Mark Pohlad will present "*Abraham Lincoln and Chicago.*"

BACK IN HISTORY

50 Years Ago: Brooks Davis presented "*The Mississippi Marine Brigade.*"

25 Years Ago: Ron Carlson presented "*Ben Butler.*"

10 Years Ago: Jill Silbert presented "*Women in Black: Mourning Customs During the Civil War.*"

THE SALT CREEK CWRT

President: Robert I. Girardi

Vice-President: Jan Rasmussen

Secretary-Treasurer: Jan Rasmussen

Board Members: Brian Conroy, Rick Zarr, Dan McCarthy, Nancy & Jon Fritz

Historian: Cindy Intravartolo

Newsletter Staff: Jan Rasmussen, Rob Girardi, Brian Conroy

Facebook and Website Editor: Brian Conroy

FEBRUARY 2026 PRESERVATION REPORT by Brian Conroy

Preserve The Missing Piece at Appomattox Court House PLUS Defend Sacred Ground at Gaines' Mill ★ Cold Harbor

Two profoundly significant parcels of battlefield land are urgently in need of protection. Together totaling just 2.4 acres, these properties represent a rare chance to complete and protect key stories from American history. One property is one of the **last unprotected tracts** within the preserved landscape of **Appomattox Court House** — the site of General Lee's surrender and the symbolic beginning of national reconciliation. Securing this land would complete a decades-long effort.

The second property lies at the **Old Cold Harbor crossroads**, tied to both the **Battle of Gaines' Mill** and the **Battle of Cold Harbor**. This tract offers one of the most powerful interpretive opportunities in Virginia and is critically threatened by modern development.

Together, these two parcels are valued at **\$680,000**—but through state and federal grants and a deferred payment agreement, only **\$172,500** must be raised by the end of January. Thanks to a limited-time **\$4-to-\$1 match**, every dollar donated will be multiplied four times in impact!

Gaines' Mill and Cold Harbor (1862 & 1864)

These battles were separated by two years but connected by geography and consequence. Confederate commanders such as **Jackson, Stuart, and Lee** used this land as a launch point. Union generals like **McClellan and Hancock** also moved through this terrain. The crossroads at Old Cold Harbor witnessed cavalry charges, troop deployments, and the suffering of thousands. Today, it remains unprotected — and at risk of commercial development.

Appomattox Court House (April 9, 1865)

The Civil War's final act unfolded on the land adjacent to the parcel now available for preservation. It was near this ground that **a white flag appeared**, carried by a Confederate courier. Days later, **General Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia**, ending the war in Virginia and setting the tone for future surrenders across the South. This unprotected property lies in the center of the preserved battlefield — a literal and symbolic missing piece in the story of surrender and national healing.