

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LXIII No. 5, January 2026



586th Regular Meeting

DATE: Saturday, January 17, 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: **“When Draftees Did Their Duty:
Four Months in the 51st Illinois Infantry”**
SPEAKER: Jonathan Sebastian

In late summer of 1864, another draft occurred in the Northern states. One hundred ninety-two men from Northeastern Illinois made their way to Camp Douglas in response to this call. They were assigned to the 51st Illinois Infantry. If these men thought that when they reached the front the fighting would have subsided or the war would be over, they were sadly mistaken. In fact, they would see almost non-stop terrifying action for the next four months.

Jonathan Sebastian earned his B.A. in history from Judson College (now University) and his M.A. in Public History from Loyola University Chicago. He has been an adjunct professor of history at Judson University teaching World History 1500 to the Present and U.S. history. More recently, he was a social studies teacher at Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart. He was a tour guide at Jubilee College State Historic site outside of Peoria, Illinois, a project-based researcher at the Pritzker Military Library and was the curator of the Fischer Farm historic site in Bensenville, Illinois. He was an experience facilitator at the Arlington Heights Historical Museum and the education and programs assistant at the Elmhurst History Museum. Currently, he is the Museum Manager and Curator at the Elk Grove Historical Museum.

Jonathan is the author of *Bensenville*, and many articles and essays in historic journals. He is a past president (2x) of the Chicago CWRT and has led several battlefield tours.

Membership renewals are due. Thanks to those who have already renewed.

ALL FOR THE UNION

Thanks to Brian Conroy, Art Foley, Ginny Procnier, Jan LeMaire, Nancy & Jon Fritz, Brian Seiter and Steve Alban for their participation in making "Memorabilia Show & Tell" a success.
Thanks also to those who brought Holiday treats.

THE VACANT CHAIR

Longtime member Leigh Franklin passed away December 31st after a brave battle with cancer. Leigh was a familiar face at the Civil War Shows.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Check with the organization sponsoring the program for meeting status.

January 9, 2026

Chicago CWRT will feature Guy Fraker presenting "*Lincoln the Lawyer*".

Blossum Café, 8349 W. Lawrence Avenue, Norridge, IL 60706 www.chicagocwrt.org

January 11, 2026 at 2pm

NW Indiana CWRT will feature Chuck Rebesco presenting "*Preserving the Gettysburg Battlefield*".

Crown Point Community Library Northwest Indiana CWRT on Facebook

January 12, 2026 at noon

Armchair Generals Discussion Group will feature "*The Election of 1860*".

Gale Borden Library, Elgin IL

January 13, 2026 (Zoom only)

McHenry County CWRT will feature Darryl Smith presenting "*The Fort Donelson Campaign*".

Woodstock Library www.mchenrycivilwar.com

January 20, 2026

Lincoln/Davis CWRT will feature Arne Bernstein presenting "*Chicago's Historic Sites*".

Country House Restaurant, Alsip, IL lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

January 22, 2026

South Suburban CWRT will feature Bjorn Skaptson presenting "TBD".

Aurielio's Pizza, 19836 Wolf Road, Mokena South Suburban CWRT on Facebook

February 2, 2026 at noon.

Rock River Valley CWRT will feature Bill Waddell Jr. presenting "*Garrett Voorhees Nevius: Civil War Hero from Rockford*". Veteran's Memorial Hall, 211 N. Main Street, Rockford.

February 4, 2026

Robert. I. Girardi will present "*Abraham Lincoln's Doctor's Dog*" at the Lake Forest Library.

February 6, 2026

Northern Illinois CWRT will feature Wayne Rhine presenting "*The Great Escape from Libby Prison*".

Arlington Hts. Library www.northernilcwrt.org

February 11, 2026

Robert I. Girardi will present "*The Civil War Generals*" at Seminar at Appomattox Court House, Farmville, VA

The Civil War Round Table of Chicago's 2026 Tour will be "Charleston and Savannah"
April 29-May 2, 2026. More details to follow. www.chicagocwrt.org

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

On January 9, 2025, John Horn will present "*Lee Besieged*".

Free and Open to the Public and No Prior Registration is Required.

Kenosha Civil War Museum January Civil War Workshop

Saturday, January 17 1-2:30pm

Dave Powell will present "*Along the Kennesaw Line*"

Cost: \$25/\$20 Friends of the Museum

Registrations can be made by calling the museum at 262-653-4140 or by following this link: <https://84428.blackbaudhosting.com/84428/Along-the-Kennesaw-Line>

FUTURE SALT CREEK CWRT MEETINGS

Check us out on Facebook and at saltcreekcwrt.org

Feb. 21, 2026 Dennis Doyle will present "*Cold Harbor 1864*".

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: Bill Thomas presented "*The Confederate Navy*".

25 Years Ago: Jim Soens presented "*The Pioneer Brigade in the Army of the Cumberland*".

10 Years Ago: Robert Girardi presented "*The Real Warren Never Got in the History Books*".

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

January 2026 Preservation Report by Brian Conroy

Preserve The Missing Piece at Appomattox Court House PLUS Defend Sacred Ground at Gaines' Mill and 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.

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.

Give to Save History in Virginia.

This is an opportunity to finish what has already begun: *protecting hallowed ground where American history reached a turning point.*