

National Civil War Association

Dispatch

NOVEMBER 2019



NCWA1863.org

P.O. Box 266, Santa Clara, California 95052

NEXT COMBINED BOARD MEETING:

Saturday, January 11, 2020, 11:00 a.m.

Round Table Pizza, 878 Southampton Road, Benicia, CA 94510

ELECTION TIME!

Only vote using the materials supplied to you.

Members over 18 years of age vote for Brigade and Administrative Board, and those over 14 years of age only vote for Brigade positions.

You may only vote for (or write in) one individual NCWA member for each office.

All ballot sets must be individually returned in the envelope provided.

Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked by December 31st, 2019. Ballots returned at the Annual Meeting must be handed in before the meeting.

Any returns that do not meet the above requirements will be spoiled and not counted.

If replacement materials are required in the case of a spoiled ballot, please contact me at:

National Civil War Association
Kevin Groom
8835 Kona Way
Orangevale, CA 95662
910-998-3307
greytar1@aol.com



NCWA 2020 ELECTION BIDS FOR OFFICE

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT:

I've always said I'm going to be the Alpha and Omega of the NCWA. I joined in the first year, and I'll probably be around as long as the club is. And I hope we keep going for a good while longer. To this end, I'm pitching my kepi into the ring to run for President. We are going to face some challenges unique to this era, whether it's appealing to an increasingly disengaged public, who don't see history as relevant, the intrusion of modern political agendas, or the aging of our own membership. It's not the same world as when the club was formed, or even when technology was a different animal.

I will remind all of you that this is your club, and I regard the President merely an administrator. I would like to serve the best interests of the club and its membership, and in that capacity I ask your vote for President and ask each and every one of you to remember that the NCWA is the legacy of us all.

Yours in history,
Jane Beckman

Hello NCWA Members

I'm submitting this to notify the club of my intent to run for the position of President for the coming term. I've been a member for a while now, and if you think I could do a good job for the club, I'd appreciate your consideration and votes.

Respectfully,

Skott Borello
9th Va. Cavalry

VICE PRESIDENT: None Received



SECRETARY:

Once again, I would like to apply for the position of Secretary. I feel like I am getting to know the job well, and we finally have a functioning website, which I am easily able to edit. I would like to create flyers and posters to help advertise our upcoming events and school days, as I really enjoy doing graphics, and it is clear that we need to do more to inform and attract the public, as well as prospective new members. I would also like to continue publishing *The Dispatch*. I am still enjoying the job, and would like to continue for another year.

Melani Van Petten
Norfolk Light Artillery Blues
Army of Northern Virginia CSA

My official announcement

I am running for secretary of the National Civil War Association.
I will be fair in my accounting and receiving payments in any form, from any of our members, by whatever means necessary.
Jon Nickerson Tremayne

TREASURER: None Received

CIVILIAN BRIGADE

MAYOR:

I would like to put my name forward to serve as NCWA Civilian Corps Mayor for the 2020 season. As recent discussions indicate, it appears that the NCWA is facing some changes in our future. While change is seldom comfortable, we need to embrace those changes and help 're-create' a new, improved and re-energized NCWA. Rather than bemoan the loss involved with change, we need to look forward and become excited about the club we are becoming. I would like the opportunity to serve as your Mayor and help to define this organization moving forward. Thank you for your kind consideration and support.
Lynne Ashby

VICE MAYOR:

I, Debra Johnson am again running for the position of Vice-Mayor. I have served for a number of years and would like to continue to represent the members of Civilian Town as Vice-Mayor. I will work closely with the Mayor in whatever capacity, he or she needs. Thank you for your vote.

TOWN CLERK: I'm Susan Pfiefer and I would like to serve as Town Clerk. I've been your Town Clerk for the past year and would be honored to serve again during 2020

FEDERAL BRIGADE

BRIGADE COMMANDER:

I wish to formally announce my candidacy for Union Brigade Commander. For the past two years I have tirelessly served this Brigade as it's Chief of Infantry, and before that as the esteemed Commander of the 7th West Virginia. Though I have martyred myself dauntlessly for the cause of liberty on the field of battle countless times, and some would call me a saint, I remain just a man as flawed as the next. However, every so often destiny calls upon on us and either thrusts us into greatness or smashes our hopes and dreams upon the craggy shores of apathy and despair. Brethren, we now find ourselves at just such a juncture. I ask you to hoist me upon your shoulders and help me ascend to the highest peak, that I may reach down my hand and raise you up into the blinding light of everlasting glory! If you elect me your Brigade Commander, you shall not want for sanguinary endeavors, as we shall cut a bloody swathe across the Confederacy not seen since the days of Sherman! We few, we happy few, we band of brothers, if elected it is I that will be the lucky one, for with you at my back nothing can stand before our righteous fury, and a choir of angels will herald us from on high. As to my qualifications, I believe they speak for themselves, yet I will repeat them here for those that have not been paying attention for the past four years. Aside from my peerless battlefield acumen, the organizational skills of a British civil servant, and generally gregarious nature, I believe it is my award winning smile that permits me to properly gloat, that most qualifies me for command. I thank you now for taking the time to read what should be starkly apparent to all but the thickest duffer: we have officially reached the bottom of the barrel. In all seriousness, its been a great couple of years serving on your brigade staff working with Dan and Cosme. Dave, Logan, and Marcelo have made my job very easy the last two seasons, which is more a testament to them than me, and for which I heartily thank them for. Finally, the enlisted men, such as we have, are some of the most knowledgeable and dedicated re-enactors I've ever had the pleasure to know. Now I ask you to elect me and with you as a solid base we will rebuild this brigade and restore some of the former glory. Thank you for your consideration

Your most humble servant,

Charles D. Kenyon, Major
NCWA Union Brigade

CHIEF OF STAFF: None Received

CHIEF OF INFANTRY: None Received

SGT. MAJOR: None Received



CONFEDERATE BRIGADE

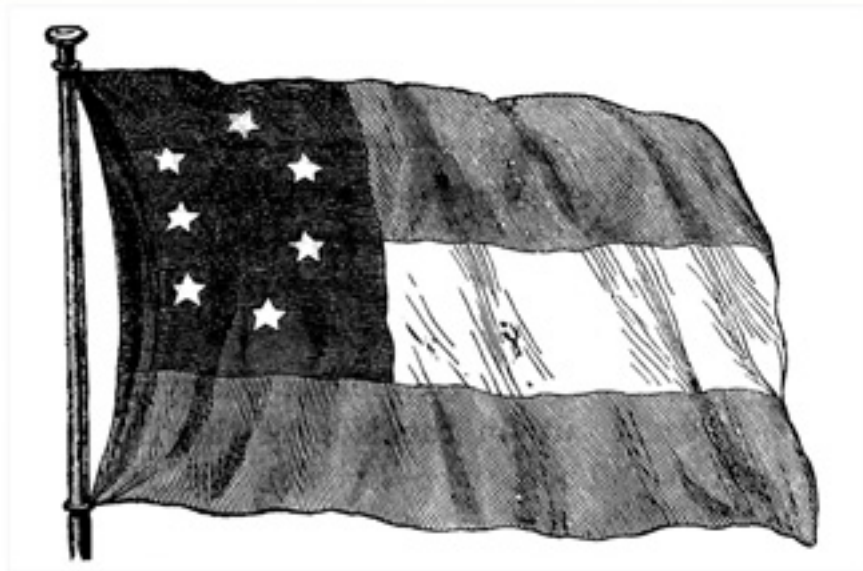
COLONEL:

In great hope and pride, I am asking to be your next confederate commander.
Jon Nickerson Tremayne

LT. COLONEL: None Received

MAJOR: None Received

SGT. MAJOR: None Received



FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Although the weather doesn't seem like it (at the moment), it is almost time for our big Fall event at Half Moon Bay! I am still trying to lock down the specifics for Civilians as far as our location on site and a few other minor details, so I will be sending our Civilian members an email once we get those things finalized.

However, I do want to give everyone the specifics of our Fall Apple Baking Contest!

- 1) Open to everyone—both as entrants and voters. All entries must use apples in some form to be included in the voting.
- 2) Voters must buy tickets—\$1.00 gets you two samples/tickets. Place your tickets in the containers to vote for your favorite goodie. One ticket=one vote. Winners will receive prizes!
- 3) Entrants will receive one free ticket for any submission prepared on site, plus one free ticket if a period recipe is used.
- 4) Voters can buy as many tickets as they want. Or can afford! Please bring your own utensils (plate, fork, etc.). Apple cider will be provided, so bring a cup as well.
- 5) Voting will take place between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday evening, with the winners announced (and prizes awarded) as soon as we can count up the votes.
- 6) Our Town Council will set sample sizes. If you want more—buy another ticket.
- 7) All proceeds will go to the NCWA General Fund. So support our club, bring your submissions, and come and vote.

So get those cookfires, either on site or at home, fired up. Bring your submissions to the Mayor's tent anytime before 5:45 p.m. on Saturday (so we can get organized), then join us to vote. This fun event is open to everyone, so plan to join us. The more the merrier—both entrants and voters!

And Finally, we have a really fun outing coming up on December 14—the annual Woodland Parade. This is a really nice way to wrap up the year and a fun get-together. We usually meet at Cosme and Yvonne Munoz' home around 8:00 a.m. for a bite to eat, some coffee for those who need help waking up, and to distribute candy canes to everyone. Make sure you bring your haversack (empty), or a basket (big) to carry candy canes. Bring plenty of candy canes to share if you can, which we will hand out along the Parade route. Following the Parade, we meet for lunch at a local spot arranged by Cosme. Details should be coming out in the next *Dispatch* and on Facebook. Please plan to attend to help bolster our numbers, and for a really fun way to celebrate the season!

See you all soon. For now, I have got some baking to get started...

Lynne Ashby, Mayor townplanner@comcast.net

Debra Johnson, Vice Mayor johnsonholland@sbcglobal.net

Susan Pfiefer, Town Clerk mampfief@gmail.com



HOW THE CIVIL WAR CREATED THANKSGIVING



Of all the bedtime-story versions of American history we teach, the tidy Thanksgiving pageant may be the one stuffed with the heaviest serving of myth. This iconic tale is the main course in our nation's foundation legend, complete with cardboard cutouts of bow-carrying Native American cherubs and pint-size Pilgrims in black hats with buckles. And legend it largely is.

In fact, what had been a New England seasonal holiday became more of a “national” celebration only during the Civil War, with Lincoln’s proclamation calling for “a day of thanksgiving” in 1863.

That fall, Lincoln had precious little to be thankful for. The Union victory at Gettysburg the previous July had come at a dreadful cost – a combined 51,000 estimated casualties, with nearly 8,000 dead. Enraged by draft laws and emancipation, rioters in Northern cities like New York went on bloody rampages. And the president and his wife, Mary, were still mourning the loss of their 11-year-old son, Willie, who had died the year before.

So it might seem odd that Lincoln chose this moment to announce a national day of thanksgiving, to be marked on the last Thursday in November. His Oct. 3, 1863, proclamation read: “In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity ... peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere, except in the theater of military conflict.”

But it took another year for the day to really catch hold. In 1864 Lincoln issued a second proclamation, which read, “I do further recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust.” Around the same time, the heads of Union League clubs—Theodore Roosevelt’s father among them—led an effort to provide a proper Thanksgiving meal, including turkey and mince pies, for Union troops. As the Civil War raged on, four steamers sailed out of New York laden with 400,000 pounds of ham, canned peaches, apples and cakes – and turkeys with all the trimmings. They arrived at Ulysses S. Grant’s headquarters in City Point, Va., then one of the busiest ports in the world, to deliver dinner to the Union’s “gallant soldiers and sailors.”

This Thanksgiving delivery was an unprecedented effort—a huge fund-raising and food-collection drive. One soldier said, “It isn’t the turkey, but the idea we care for.”

The good people of nearby Petersburg, Va., had no turkey. Surrounded and besieged by Grant’s armies since June, they were lucky to eat at all. The local flocks of pigeons had all mysteriously disappeared and “starvation parties” were a form of mordant entertainment in this once cosmopolitan town.

What prompted Lincoln to issue these proclamations—the first two in an unbroken string of presidential Thanksgiving proclamations—is uncertain. He was not the first president to do so. George Washington and James Madison had earlier issued “thanksgiving” proclamations, calling for somber days of prayer. Perhaps Lincoln saw an opportunity to underscore shared American traditions – a theme found in the “mystic chords of memory” stretching from “every patriot grave” in his first inaugural.

Or he may have been responding to the passionate entreaties of Sara Josepha Hale, editor of Godey’s Lady’s Book – the Good Housekeeping of its day. Hale, who contributed to American folkways as the author of “Mary had a Little Lamb,” had been advocating in the magazine for a national day of Thanksgiving since 1837. Even as many states had begun to observe Thanksgiving, she wrote in 1860, “It will no longer be a partial and vacillating commemoration of our gratitude to our Heavenly Father, observed in one section or State, while other portions of our common country do not sympathize in the gratitude and gladness.”

So how did the lore of that Pilgrim repast get connected to Lincoln’s wartime proclamations?

The Plymouth “first Thanksgiving” dates from an October 1621 harvest celebration, an event at which the surviving passengers of the Mayflower – about half of the approximately 100 on board — were able to mark their communal harvest with a shared feast. By the account of the Pilgrim leader Edward Winslow, this event was no simple sit-down dinner, but a three-day revel. “Amongst other recreations,” Winslow wrote, “we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which we brought to the plantation.”

There is nothing novel or uniquely American—and nothing especially “Pilgrim”—about giving thanks for a successful harvest. Certainly it has been done by people throughout history and surely by earlier Europeans in America as well as Native Americans.

But New Englanders, who had long marked a Founders Day as a celebration of the Pilgrim and Puritan arrivals, began to move across America and took this tradition—and their singular version of history—with them. Essentially a churchgoing day with a meal that followed, the celebration of that legendary feast gradually evolved into the Thanksgiving we know.

Eventually, it was commingled with Lincoln’s first proclamation. During the post-Civil War period, the iconic Thanksgiving meal and the connection to the Pilgrims were cemented in the popular imagination, through artistic renderings of black-cloaked, churchgoing, gun-toting Puritans, a militant, faithful past that most likely rang familiar for many Civil War Americans.

But one crucial piece remained: The elevation of Thanksgiving to a true national holiday, a feat accomplished by Franklin D. Roosevelt. In 1939, with the nation still struggling out of the Great Depression, the traditional Thanksgiving Day fell on the last day of the month—a fifth Thursday. Worried retailers, for whom the holiday had already become the kickoff to the Christmas shopping season, feared this late date. Roosevelt agreed to move his holiday proclamation up one week to the fourth Thursday, thereby extending the critical shopping season.

Some states stuck to the traditional last Thursday date, and other Thanksgiving traditions, such as high school and college football championships, had already been scheduled. This led to Roosevelt critics deriding the earlier date as “Franksgiving.” With 32 states joining Roosevelt’s “Democratic Thanksgiving,” 16 others stuck with the traditional date, or “Republican Thanksgiving.” After some congressional wrangling, in December 1941, Roosevelt signed the legislation making Thanksgiving a legal holiday on the fourth Thursday in November. And there it has remained.

Kenneth C. Davis is the author of “Don’t Know Much About History” and “America’s Hidden History.” His forthcoming book, “The Hidden History of America At War: Untold Tales from Yorktown to Fallujah,” includes an account of the siege of Petersburg, Va.

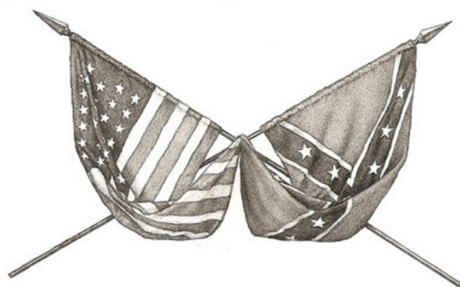
2019 CIVIL WAR REENACTING SCHEDULE

DATES	EVENT	SPONSOR
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November 9-10	Half Moon Bay	NCWA
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School Day November 8

December 14	Woodland Christmas Parade	
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION
AND MORE EVENTS,
PLEASE GO TO
NCWA1863.ORG/EVENT-CALENDAR/**

ncwa1863.org
Post Office Box 266
Santa Clara, CA 95052



NCWA CONTACT INFORMATION

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Union Colonel Email	Bishop, Dan <i>dwbishop75@yahoo.com</i>

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