

**Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table**  
*PO. Box 2872 Huntsville, Alabama 35804*  
**October 2024 Newsletter/Journal**  
**To Inform and Educate**



The Round Table meets at the Elks Lodge;  
725 Franklin St @ 6:30pm the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday  
of each month except December.

The Lodge is smoke free as of 11 June 2024.

**Announcements;**

**2. Thursday October 10: INTREPID HAZARD!** She is back, Kelly Blake and the History of Hazard Stevens.

Women in the Civil War; check out the book table for intriguing history.

**4.** Chickamauga Field Trip Report: Participants and their lessons learned.

**5.** Check out our new sponsor: Tortora's Wood Fire Grille.

**5. Board Reports**

**6. TVCWRT Features;**

**Book Review: A Tempest of Iron and Lead, Spotsylvania Court House, May 8-21, 1864; by Chris Mackowski.**

**Article: The Chickamauga Rule by Colonel Robert Hooker (US Army, Retired).**

**8. Little Round Table:** John Breckinridge.

**9. What's up in 2025 for the Little Round Table?**

**10. All the members that make the Round Table the perfect place to be on a Thursday night.**

**Announcement: Thursday, September 12:** Miss Kellee Blake is back to illustrate another adventure in Civil War history. Intrepid Hazard: The Civil War Adventures of General Hazard Stevens,” Stevens was a force of nature: a Rhode Islander of the “best sort” who left Harvard to fight alongside his father General Isaac Stevens, the first governor of the Washington Territory.

The Stevens’ led the December 1861 occupation of Beaufort, SC, before Isaac was dramatically killed and Hazard wounded at the 1862 Battle of Chantilly. A colonelcy was arranged for the young hero Stevens to recruit for the 1st Loyal Virginia Regiment. While on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, Stevens braved a hail of bullets while single handedly attempting to rescue a vessel during the 1864 Confederate Raid on Cherrystone. He remained intrepid and, in 1870, Stevens and mountaineer P. B. Van Trump made the first successful ascent of Mt. Rainier.

Stevens then returned to Massachusetts and an unsuccessful Congressional bid. His final decades were spent in law, farming, and leadership in Washington State. Congress awarded him the Medal of Honor in 1894 for his bravery at the 1863 Battle of Fort Huger and, in 1905; Stevens made a second successful ascent of Rainier. He remained a child of Newport until his 1918 death and rests today in the Island Cemetery.

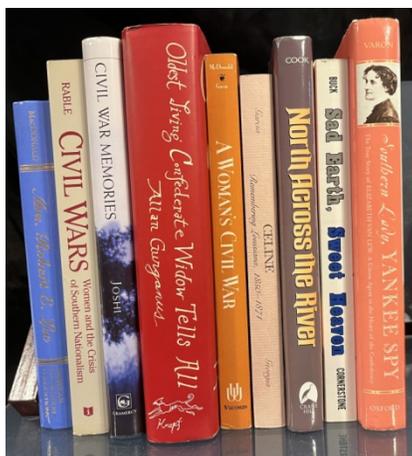
Kellee Green Blake is the retired Director of the National Archives-Mid Atlantic Region and a Phi Beta Kappa, Summa Cum Laude graduate of Mary Washington College with a graduate degree in American History from Villanova University. She has worked from coast to coast with the National Archives, processing and administering records from the Founding Fathers to the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination. Kellee has been a regular speaker at national historical and genealogical conferences and is the author of two historical plays and multiple articles on the Federal Census, divided loyalties in wartime, and the law practice of Abraham Lincoln. She serves on several preservation and humanities boards and is writing a long overdue book about the Civil War occupation of Virginia’s Eastern Shore.

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## Women in the Civil War

Ms. Mary Geier, formerly of Birmingham Alabama, recently donated a number of books regarding the Civil War and other wars to the TVCWRT. She and her husband were active Civil War reenactors. She concentrated on the women’s life at home and supporting her rifle carrying husband.

Now downsizing, she has made their book collection available to the Round Table and some of the treasures are books focused on the woman’s war from Louisiana to Virginia: Now available to our members.



Pictured from Right to Left:

- Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All: a novel By Allan Gurganus
- Southern Lady, Yankee Spy: The True Story of Elizabeth Van Lew, a Union Agent in the Heart of the Confederacy

- Civil War Memories: 19 Stories of Glory and Tragedy: Featuring stories by Louisa May Alcott, Mark Twain, Ambrose Bierce, Steven Crane, and others.
- North Across The River: A Civil War Trail of Tears: Chronicles the deportation of Confederate civilians, many of them women and children, north out of the Confederacy. Refugees from William Tecumseh Sherman's march through Georgia were deported by the thousands to Ohio.
- A Woman's Civil War: A Diary, with Reminiscences of the War, from March 1862: It's a journal; there will be narratives of female lives only when women no longer live their lives isolated in the houses and stories of men. Carolyn G. Heilbronn.
- Civil Wars; Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism: A focused narrative addressing the role and involvement of Women in the Civil War.
- Sad Earth, Sweet Heaven; The Diary of Lucy Rebecca Buck during the War Between the States: Front Royal, Virginia, December 25, 1861-April 15, 1865.
- Celine; Remembering Louisiana 1850-1871, A journal illustrating what it was like to grow up female in the mid-nineteenth century Louisiana.
- Mrs. Robert E. Lee, Letters, memories, a story of the life of Mrs. Robert E. Lee.

**Check them out on the Book Table!**

**Thanks** to Jeff Ewing, Little Round Table Lead, for his documentaries on Fort Oglethorpe and the Chickamauga Battlefield Park.



**Bill Goss presents another masterpiece miniature by Art Helms to Jeff for his presentation.**



**Confederate Infantry Corporal  
September 18-20- 1863**



**Ray Doody  
wins a coffee  
Cup.**

**We went to Chickamauga to learn details regarding the battle from first contact to the Union skedaddle.**



Left to right standing: Steve Shaw, MIA, MIA, MIA, Kent and Elisabeth Wright, Johnnie Shaw, Harry Gatzke, Richard Blanton, Clive Hollick, John Scales, MIA, Michael Acosta, Fred Forst, Keith Clevenger, Robert Hennessee, Terry Clevenger, Terry Clevenger, MIA, Daryl and Ms. Carpenter, Jonathan Creekmore, MIA, Kyle Kolthoff, Douglas Everett, Ray Doody  
Kneeling: Rick Caniglia, Jim Ogden, Holding the banner: MIA, Sherry Shevalley

The Little Round Table discussed the lessons learned upon return from the trip to the Chickamauga battlefield. A summary of those thoughts follow:

- ✓ The importance of leadership:
  - The importance of sleep management, decision making under fire, presence at the critical time and place on the battlefield, leading the leaders.
  - Clear communication between leaders.
- ✓ Tactical impacts: bridges critical to success, advantage of repeating rifles, trees magnify the sound, smell, and visual perceptions of the battle at the tactical level.
  - The verity and tactical destruction of fence lines.
  - Selecting the correct attack formation to improve the possibility of success.
  - Communications between leaders is critical to success.
  - Time management dictates success or failure.
  - Mastering the use of cavalry to collect enemy disposition and strength.
  - Concentrating combat power at the critical time and place.
- ✓ The unintended consequences of luck.
- ✓ Result of the battle:
  - The Army of the Cumberland, forced to retreat to Chattanooga, would endure a siege.
  - Provided the opportunity for Lincoln to place Ulysses S. Grant in command of all the Union Armies.
  - ❖ One of the most unique and appreciated experiences: John Scales solicited from those that were on the trip to give him the names of their ancestors that had fought and possibly died on the Chickamauga Battlefield. Several

travelers participated and John pointed out the locations where their ancestors most probably fought during the tour.

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### Welcome our newest sponsor Tortora's.

182 Old Highway 431 Ste B, Owens Cross Roads, AL 35763

Tuesday - Thursday 4:30-8:00

Friday-Saturday 4:30pm - 8:00

\* Closed Sunday-Monday \*



Tortora's Wood Fired Grill (<https://www.tortoraswoodfiredgrille.com>)

**Blue & Gray Education Society (BGES):** Check out what is going on in the BGES; [Blue and Gray Education Society – America's Premier Civil War Education Organization](#)



**The Civil War Round Table Congress (CWRT):** offers a speaker online each month. Check out their website for the authors, speakers, topics you would like to learn about. [Check out the free lectures and education opportunities scheduled for this month.](#)



We have expanded our Social Media formats; check these out!  
<https://gab.com/groups/22961>



<https://www.facebook.com/tvcwrt> Share the TVCWRT Facebook notifications with your friends.

### Board Reports;

**Technology Officer, Michael Acosta:** Live streaming of our Round Table sessions to members via internet is offered through Discord at no charge. Be aware streaming can be limited because of the facility WIFI limitation. All dues-paying members that are interested should email our Tech/Website rep, Michael Acosta at [michaelacosta1836@gmail.com](mailto:michaelacosta1836@gmail.com) He will send instructions on how to set up an account on Discord and get rolling. ***The RT needs a backup Discord manager.***

**Membership Chair, Kevin Rodriguez:** There were no renewals or new members in September. We did add 10 complimentary memberships given to those who signed-up for the field trip. We currently have 94 paid memberships, 2 lifetime members, 11 complimentary members (including Elk's Lodge President) and 38 spouses/significant others for a total of 145 members.

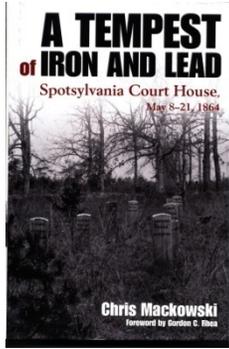
**Programs Chair, Art Helms:** The 2024 calendar is full. It's another stellar year for the Round Table.

- ✓ November 14: Kent Wright, "Instant Navies and Foreign Diplomacy"
- ✓ No meeting in December.

## TVCWRT Features:

### Book Review:

**A Tempest of Iron and Lead, Spotsylvania Court House, May 8-21, 1864; by Chris Mackowski, Savas Beatie, 2024, 359 pages. A Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table Review by Arley McCormick**



The author is no stranger to the Civil War. He is the Co-founder and editor-in-chief of the Savas Beatie, Emerging Civil War Series. As the title of this book implies, his narrative describes the judgments, decisions, actions, and results of each day in the Wilderness and at Spotsylvania Courthouse. He spices his story line with narratives of soldiers that participated including the phraseology and spelling from the letters and stories repeated to relatives and loved ones. Quite often the comments of soldiers convert the abstract descriptions of regiments moving to contact and destruction into real personal experiences in forgotten brush and trees, adding to the understanding of the madness that resulted.

Maps abound, adding to your understanding of time and space, and there are also copies of original sketches that add a perspective to the complex terrain features each leader had to consider. The descriptions of the leaders of each army engaged give us a perspective of their personality, experience, motivation, and, in some cases, the logic to the madness of the fight.

Civil War enthusiasts will find nuggets of information here and there that they have missed in other accounts. Dr. Mackowski's skill, research, and perspective is superior to many authors and adds to any discussion of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Courthouse, its impact on the war, and the soldiers that fought there. Dr. Mackowski recognized that 60,000 soldiers were lost and at the end of the day those remaining knew it was only the beginning of the killing season, yet they soldiered on.

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**The Chickamauga Rule;** *Reprinted from the Magazine of the Association of the United States Army, 2014*

The colonel looked around the hangar impassively. "Men, have you ever heard about the Chickamauga Rule?" The commanders and staff looked at each other, puzzled. In the fall of 1995, we were all tired, having worked overtime for weeks preparing to deploy. Our Italy-

based paratroop battalion was closed on the departure airfield and soon would be departing on a journey to another foreign land for another challenging mission. We were nervous. The whole world was watching this time. We would be the first American unit in, and the media were all over us. In fact, they were flying in on the same planes as we were. What on earth was the colonel talking about?

He began to speak in a low even voice. He told us about how, long ago in the Civil War, at the momentous Battle of Chickamauga in Georgia, Union MG George H. Thomas was placed in charge of the rear guard. As the Union defense began to collapse, Thomas fought stubbornly through the long day, buying time for the rest of the Army to withdraw. He took a fearful pounding but held his ground, earning immortal fame as “the Rock of Chickamauga.” Many of us knew the story.

The colonel leaned forward intently. “Here’s the part you don’t know,” he intoned.

As night fell, Thomas decided to disengage and fall back on Chattanooga, but someone would have to cover his retreat. Later, I looked it up. The bitter task fell to three Yankee regiments; the 22nd Michigan and the 21st and 89th Ohio. By a strange twist of fate, all three were “orphans.” The 22nd had only recently arrived from Nashville and was new to the Army. The 21st belonged to the division of MG James S. Negley, who had loaned it to another general before fleeing the field. The 89th, which belonged to an entirely different corps, had been placed under BG James B. Steedman’s 1st Division of the Union Reserve Corps. In modern parlance, all were attachments and not organic to Thomas’ corps.

We could see where this was going. The old man continued his tale.

In pitch darkness, the three orphan regiments were ordered to hold the ridge “at all hazards.” Their colonels protested. They were out of ammunition; their men were exhausted, “Use the bayonet,” they were told. At 8 p.m., the rebels mounted yet another furious attack to seize the high ground. The Yankees could have thrown down their weapons and fled, but instead they held their ground. The survivors were captured and marched off to prison camps, where they were to languish for months on end. But Thomas got away, to great glory.

The colonel paused in his story. We waited expectantly.

“A few days after we land, we’re going to come under command of another division headquarters, flying in to take charge, they’re not like us. They’re from another tribe, and this time, we’ll be the attachments. So just remember: The Chickamauga Rule is in effect.”

We went to bed, considerably sobered. The next day, we boarded the planes and flew away to begin our mission. The weather was harsh, the conditions were brutal, and the area of operations was littered with land mines. We could handle all that, but much to our chagrin, the colonel had been right about the Chickamauga Rule.

In our first week, the S-4 (logistics officer) was hauled before the division chief of staff for commandeering leftover U.N. rations. (Our resupply aircraft had been diverted to fly in more of the division staff, and our troops were out of chow.) Our new bosses had occupied all the choice real estate, so we set up our headquarters in a bombed-out warehouse, shivering at 14 degrees below freezing. Our soldiers, manning the perimeter of an old Soviet air base, lived in miserable conditions with no hot showers or hot food. Day by day, our missions expanded: run the division mess hall, run the ammunition supply point, run the airfield departure and arrival control group, run checkpoints on the zone of separation, and man the Russian sector, as the Russians had been delayed. Despite our best efforts, we seemed unable to please our irascible division commander. We prided ourselves on our toughness and our ability to improvise and get the job done, but we were at the breaking point, and tempers began to flare.

Our colonel did his best to manage relations with our higher headquarters, and his best was pretty good. He was ably assisted by our sergeant major, a wise and fearless man who could charm or punch as the situation required. Never the less, we continued to get the short end of the stick. Then, as so often happens in the Army, help showed up when least expected.

We often saw the division command sergeant major trudging about on foot in the snow, rifle in hand, at all hours of the day and night, checking up on soldiers. He seemed to have no love for headquarters, nor did he buy into the long-standing rivalry between Germany-based tankers and the south-of-the-alps airborne. He just liked soldiers, whatever their size and shape.

One night, while checking our positions, I ran into him. Over a canteen cup of coffee, I explained that the headquarters commandant had banned our troopers from the only buildings with hot showers. Could we help? He winked at me. "Tell you what. Every night, the commanding general has a commander's update. It lasts about two hours. There are four showers next to his hooch. If you guys are good as I think you are, you ought to be able to run a platoon in there every night while he's out. Try not to get caught, but if you do, I'll cover for you." We did, and morale soared. When this great soldier became the Sergeant Major of the Army, none of us was surprised.

A few days later, an angry company commander came to see me. He had been tasked to transport two allied officers by ground to their headquarters. "It's a 12-hour movement," he expostulated, "in the dead of winter, through the snow, there's six million mines in this country, and we have no mine maps of the area. Why can't we wait a day or two for the weather to clear and fly them? This doesn't pass the common-sense test." He was dead right. The colonel and the S-3 (operations officer) were out patrolling the Russian sector, and as the second in command, this was now my problem.

I took the angry captain to see the division operations officer, who replied blandly, "You airborne guys are always complaining. Follow your orders." We next tried the chief of staff, who also roughed us up. Continuing up the chain, I approached the one-star assistant division commander.

He was a small man, wizened and merry, with a mangled hand and missing foot on account of his service in Vietnam. "What can I do for you?" he beamed. I blurted out our problem. He paused thoughtfully. After a moment, he said, "You're absolutely right." Holding up what was left of his right hand, he said, "I've already got that T-shirt. I'll take care of it." He did and morale soared.

For weeks we soldiered on and few days were fun or easy. That's life on real-world operations. We never really overcame our status as orphans, but when things go really tough, we had friends in high places. In later years, our colonel would rise to the top of the Army, and many of us would go on to command battalions and brigades of our own. Along the way, we learned many lessons. One we never forgot was to take special care of our orphans. The Chickamauga Rule taught us that.

*By Colonel Richard Hooker, (US Army Retired)*

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## **Little Round Table addressed more lessons learned from the Battle of Chickamauga**

### **The importance of leadership;**

Sleep deprivation caused tragic error: Rosecrans; Bragg's possible autistic behavior kept him away from the key points at critical times.

### **The relevance of Civil War principles**

The principles of war used during the Civil War are still relevant today and can be applied to current conflicts.

- Massing troop formations increase firepower.
- Hold the high ground is a solid defensive tactic
- Bridges are key terrain features

### **The role of new weapons**

- New weapons, like the Spencer repeating rifle, played a key role in the battle.

### **The impact of terrain**

- The thick woods and swampy terrain around Chickamauga Creek made it difficult to draw clear battle lines, leading to close quarter combat.
- Battle sounds and smoke are magnified in forests.
- A surprising education on the variety of fences and how to neutralize them in tactical situations.

### **The impact of Bragg's inaction**

- Bragg's inaction after the battle that provided a tactical victory for the South eventually contributed to a strategic defeat.

### **The rise of Grant**

The Battle of Chickamauga set up the rise of Grant, which changed the nature of the war. **In fact, Robert E. Lee pointed out; the biggest repercussion of Chickamauga is that it sets up the rise of Grant**

- **Next UP: October 24, 2024, 6:30pm, John Breckinridge, Led by Bernie Biederman**

### **LRT Programs for 2024-2025, begin 6:30pm at the Elks Lodge: (Subject to change)**

- *October 24, 2024, John Breckinridge. Led by Bernie Biederman.*
- *November no scheduled meeting.*
- December 12, 2024, Chambersburg, PA, What It's Like to Be On An Invasion Route, Led by Jeff Ewing
- January 23, 2025, Civil War Heavy Artillery Barrels, Led by Clive Hollick
- February 27, 2025, Jefferson Davis Goes West – Again? Led by Jeff Ewing
- March 27, 2025, Battle of Chattanooga – Part I, led by t/b/d

- April 24, 2025, Battle of Chattanooga – Part II, led by Jeff Ewing
- May 22, 2025, The Legacy of the American Civil War, led by Emil Posey
- June 26, 2025, Yeah – That's Like Your Opinion Man, Led by Quora Digest
- July 24, 2025, The Civil War Stories of Ambrose Bierce, Led by t/b/d
- August 28, 2025, Andrew Johnson – Vice President, Led by t/b/d
- September 25, 2025, The Impeachers Led by TBD
- October 23, 2025, Emily Dickinson's Unlikely Civil War Preceptor, Led by Jeff Ewing
- November no scheduled meeting
- December 11, 2025, The Election of 1864 – The First Stirrings of Equality, Led by t/b/d

*Recommendations for topics to Jeffrey Ewing Jr., fusionewing@gmail.com*

## **Member Honor Roll**

### **Life Members**

***Carol Codori  
Ed Kennedy***

### **Patron**

***Emil Posey  
William Goss***

### **Sustaining Member**

***Kent & Elizabeth Wright***

### **Supporting Members**

***Daryl Carpenter  
Terry Clevenger***

### ***The TVCWRT Management Team***

### ***OFFICERS (Elected)***

- *William Goss, President*
- *Interim Vice President, Cheryl McAuley*
- *Robert Hennessee, Secretary*
- *Sallyanne Cos, Treasurer*

### ***BOARD MEMBERS (Appointed)***

- *Michael Acosta, Technology Officer*
- *Art Helms, Programs Officer*
- *Preservation Officer, Alan Ruzicka*
- *Communications Officer, Robert Hennessee*
- *Arley McCormick, Newsletter Editor*
- *Kevin Rodriguez, Membership Officer*

### ***COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Appointed)***

***Greg and Steph Cousins***

***Rick Dreisbach***

***Harry Gatzke***

***Art & Robin Helms***

***Robert Hennessee***

***Rick Jaramillo***

***John & Cheryl McAuley***

***Larry & Connie Parke***

***Kevin & Judy Rodriguez***

***Alan & Diana Ruzicka***

***John Scales***

- *Jeffry Ewing, Little Round Table Coordinator*
- *Jason Bruening, Facebook Coordinator*
- *Marjorie Reeves, Reception Coordinator*
- *John Scales, Field Trip Coordinator (Former President)*
- *Emil Posey, Elks Liaison*

**GRAY BEARDS**

- *John A. Allen, Former President and Founder of the Little Round Table*
- *Mark Hubbs, Former Preservation Officer and Co-founder*
- *Kent Wright, Former Programs Officer*

**STAGE CREW**

- *The team of Acosta and Bruening, Masters of the Sound System*