

# THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER

## PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

[HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/](http://www.pscwrt.org/)  
**DECEMBER, 2011**

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 8, 2011**

**China Harbor**, 2040 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, Washington

**Time:** Social hour at **6 p.m.**; Dinner served at **7 p.m.**; Program at **8 p.m.**

**MENU CHOICES: Mongolian Beef, Chicken or Salmon**

Dinner includes: salad, vegetable delight, General Tao's chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit. **Cost is \$21 for adults and \$10 for those under 18 (student rate), payable at the door, but reservations and meal choices are required.**

You have two choices to make reservations and meal choices:

1. Go to <http://www.pscwrt.org/> and click on "DINNER RESERVATIONS". Then follow the easy instructions to register your choices.

2. Call **Rod Cameron at 206-524-4434** and let him know.

**Deadline for reservations is 12 NOON on Tuesday, December 6.**

**NOTE:** *Remember to turn off cell phones before the meeting so there are no distractions for the speaker. Thank you!*

### **PROGRAM: TRIPLEHEADER BOOK**

**DISCUSSION.** Read selected pages of one, two, or all three. Think about the following questions, but you can probably think of better ones, so please do and let us know what they are. All questions related to the books are welcome. We will discuss the books in the following order, with a team of two trying to keep the peace during each discussion. *To read up on these questions, see the list of chapters/pages immediately following...*

#### **SEARS, CONTROVERSIES AND COMMANDERS: DISPATCHES FROM THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC** (peacekeepers Jim Dimond and Pat Brady)

1. Say something nice about McClellan.
2. Do any Union generals look good in Sears' account? Which one looks worst?
3. Does Sears like Hooker because Hooker did not like McClellan? Sears defends Hooker at Chancellorsville by arguing that Hooker's trouble was not loss of nerve but a concussion from a shell. So what? By then Hooker had already been flanked. If Sears thinks a concussion is an excuse for Hooker, shouldn't Sears give us a counterfactual explanation of what a clear-headed Hooker might have done to save the day?
4. Is Sheridan's sacking of Warren at Five Forks a case of animosity toward a McClellan disciple, another general with a case of the slows?

#### **MCPHERSON, THIS MIGHTY SCOURGE: PERSPECTIVES ON THE CIVIL WAR** (peacekeepers Mike Movius and Pat Brady)

1. Did the Confederacy pursue a coherent overall strategy? If so, what was it? What did Donald Stoker, The Grand Design (spoke to us last season) say about this? Is a coherent strategy only for armchair strategists after the fact?
2. Were Lee's goals more than a raid during the Gettysburg campaign? If you lose more than 25,000 casualties, does that mean you must have had more than a raid in mind?

3. After the war, how did Southern schools get rid of "long-legged Yankee lies" in textbooks that came from the North? Why did Woodrow Wilson tell a long-legged Yankee lie about the Monitor beating the Merrimac? Is Blight, Race and Reunion, a bunch of long-legged Yankee lies? What makes a Yankee lie long-legged?

4. Which Union army was tougher--the Army of the Potomac or the Army of the Tennessee? Is the indirect approach too vague to mean anything? Which Civil War general suffered the highest percent of casualties during his battles? (Hint: It wasn't Grant.)

5. Is there a meaningful difference between "total war" and "hard war"?

6. Visiting Bloody Lane in 1970, the commanding general of the 101st Airborne said: "You couldn't get American soldiers today to make an attack like that." Agree?

7. "A century of Civil War is better than a day of slavery." Agree?

8. Was a negotiated peace ever close during the war?

9. Was the Ann Rutledge story for real?

10. Was there a moral issue for the UDC and the UCV forced history text publishers to develop history that was based on their agenda? What was the issue? How does this continue to play out with those who attended public school in the South? What does that say for America?

11. U. S. Grant has been hailed as the "Savior of the Union". And, yet, McPherson says that the four things that "everyone" knows about Grant are:

- He was a drunk
- He failed at everything before the war
- He defeated Lee only by sacrificing thousands of soldiers
- His presidency was riddled with corruption

Who was the real Grant? Why does he have such a dishonorable reputation?

12. Describe the offensive-defensive strategy. Why was it difficult to define? What was the real strategy of the South? Give examples.

13. Do you subscribe to McPherson's assertions that Lee had an offensive orientation, while Davis' orientation was defensive? Why was the relationship between the two so cordial, while Davis continued to struggle with his relationship with Joseph Johnston and others? Was Davis an effective leader?

### **BLIGHT, RACE AND REUNION: THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICAN MEMORY** (peacekeepers Dick Miller and Pat Brady)

1. Less than fifty years after the end of a bitter and extremely bloody civil war, most people in the United States were able to view the war as a time when men fought over deeply held principles and out of their commitment were able to forge a stronger, unified country. What enabled politicians, war veterans, and everyday Americans to move from bitter hatred to reconciliation? What was lost in the transition?

2. Adam Goodheart writes in his new book, 1861, "Americans today find it fairly easy to fathom the idea that there was a right side and a wrong side in World War II, a side that stood for freedom and a side that stood against it...We find it harder, though--much harder than most people did in the 1860s--to accept that there was a right side and a wrong side in our own Civil War. It is difficult to fathom that millions of Americans could have fought as enemies of America." Why has it become so hard for Americans to accept that one side was right and one side was wrong?
3. How does the way in which we commemorate the Civil War today change the way in which we see what the war was about? Does the Puget Sound Civil War Roundtable have a responsibility in the way in which it commemorates the Civil War? If it does not, why not? And if it does, how should the Roundtable commemorate the war?
4. How did the postwar battle of ideas end up turning the results of the war upside down?
5. Blight's theme is that sectional reconciliation was achieved at the price of racial progress: the North sold out the Freedmen. Does he say why this happened? Imagine a people and country without sectional reconciliation, such as boat people fleeing South Vietnam. What value do you place on sectional reconciliation?
6. How do Woodrow Wilson's words at Gettysburg on July 4, 1913 compare to Lincoln's on November 19, 1863?
7. What did black Baptist minister George Frazier tell Sherman and Stanton in January 1865?
8. Blacks in Charleston SC held the first Decoration Day to honor Union POWs who had died. Where did Decoration day go from there?
9. What was the meaning of the war in the emancipationist vision of Frederick Douglass and George Washington Williams? How did the view of W.E.B. Du Bois compare? What did Douglass think of the Lee cult? How widespread was the emancipationist vision?
10. How did causation of the war figure in soldiers' memoirs? What were they trying to do in their memoirs? Many veterans wrote about wartime atrocities committed by the other side. Did that contribute to reconciliation?
11. How did black troops appear in white memoirs?
12. How did Uncle Remus figure in postwar reconciliation?
13. "I don't go to reunions," said John Mosby. What did he think of the Lost Cause, the Lee cult, and the role of slavery in the war?
14. How did Booker T. Washington figure in reconciliation? What did Washington say at the 1897 dedication of Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial in Boston?

### **Last chance to do your reading!**

Now that you know the questions we will be discussing at the December meeting, here are the portions of the books where the topics are covered. You will have about two weeks to complete the reading- so read fast! Here are the chapters/pages that will be covered for each book:

***Controversies and Commanders: Dispatches from the Army of the Potomac***, by Stephen W. Sears; Preface and Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7, and 10  
***This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War*** by James M. McPherson; Chapters 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, and 15.  
***Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*** by David W. Blight; Prologue, Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 (pages 237-254 only), 8 (pages 264-266 and 292-299 only), 9, 10 (pages 338-345 only), and the Epilogue.

You can purchase any or all of the above at the WHAT'S NEW section of our website:  
<http://www.pscwrt.org/whats-new.html>

## **Lecture/Discussion Series: "Let's Talk About it: Making Sense of the American Civil War."**

*This email was forwarded to the editor from Mike Movius for the "Volunteer". Looks like a good opportunity!*

Dear Puget Sound Civil War Roundtable:

I believe the following opportunity may be of great interest to your members. Starting in January, the Mercer Island Library will host a free five-part reading and discussion series called "Let's Talk About it: Making Sense of the American Civil War." In commemoration of the Civil War sesquicentennial, the series encourages participants to consider the legacy of the Civil War and Emancipation. The discussions will focus on three books: *March* by Geraldine Brooks, *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam* by James McPherson, and *America's War: Talking About the Civil War and Emancipation on Their 150th Anniversaries*, edited by Edward L. Ayers. If any PSCWRT members are interested in joining our discussion series we would be happy to reserve them a spot!

### **Sunday, January 22, 2012 – 2pm**

Part One: Imagining War

Geraldine Brooks, *March* [2005]

Selection from the anthology *America's War* [2011]: Louisa May Alcott, "Journal kept at the hospital, Georgetown, D.C." [1862].

### **Sunday, February 12, 2012 – 2pm**

Part Two: Choosing Sides

Selections from the anthology *America's War*

### **Sunday, March 11, 2012 – 2pm**

Part Three: Making Sense of Shiloh

Selections from the anthology *America's War*

### **Sunday, April 15, 2012 – 2pm**

Part Four: The Shape of War

James M. McPherson, *Crossroad of Freedom: Antietam* [2002]

Selections from the anthology *America's War*

### **Sunday, May 13, 2012 – 2pm**

Part Five: War and Freedom

Selections from the anthology *America's War*

Each discussion will be led by our project scholar, Dr. Lorraine McConaghy, Public Historian from the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI). Free copies of the books being discussed will be available for those who register, while supplies last.

In addition to the book discussion series, we have several other Civil War related events planned for spring, including a program on the music of the Civil War (presented by Vivian and Phil

Williams), and a program on the Civil War in Washington Territory (presented by Dr. McConaghy) – I welcome your input regarding additional program ideas!  
Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,  
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425-369-3229

## **IMPORTANT DISPATCHES**

*The following is information concerning you and the PSCWRT. Please read and take notice.*

### **Vice-President Successor Resigns**

Steve Bass, who would have become president of the PSCWRT starting September 2012, has regretfully resigned his position as VP Successor. Steve cited job changes entailing additional responsibilities as the reason for his resignation. The officers and board feel badly about this, and are working to fill Bass's position. They hope to have the new person on board soon. Meanwhile Steve says he will continue to be a member of the Round Table and attend as many meetings as possible...

### **NEW MEMBER!**

Joe Joiner has become a member of the PSCWRT! His email contact is: [joejoiner@mac.com](mailto:joejoiner@mac.com)  
Contact Joe and welcome him in!

## **WHAT'S NEW ON THE PSCWRT WEBSITE?**

**[www.pscwrt.org](http://www.pscwrt.org)**

By Mike Movius, Webmaster

### **TOP TEN BOOKS**

As announced during the November meeting, the PSCWRT wants to develop a list of the top ten Civil War-related books and publish that list on our website. We have developed an online survey to collect the titles and their authors. To date (11/24/11), nine (9) members have responded to the survey. But, with nearly 80 members, that represents only a small proportion of our membership. Please take the time to go online and tell us your favorite book OR books. The URL is: [http://www.kwiksurveys.com?s=OOMDKM\\_9062d89d](http://www.kwiksurveys.com?s=OOMDKM_9062d89d) It will only take a moment.

### **CHARACTER IDENTIFICATION CONTEST**

There is a new feature on the PSCWRT website...it's an artwork identification contest. During a visit to the National Portrait Gallery, one of our members took photos of some of the more illustrative Civil War-era figures. Those photographs are on display on our website. You are asked to show your acumen by identifying the people in the 24 photographs. They are on display at: <http://www.pscwrt.org/documentation/art.html> The winner will be announced at the December meeting. Who are these people?

## **MEMBERS ONLY SECTION**

The PSCWRT website has a new and important section...MEMBERS ONLY

<http://www.pscwrt.org/members-only/> This section was developed partially to protect the contact information of our members, but also to provide exclusive information about the operations of the board. Our Webmaster has developed a unique logon and password for every dues-paying member who has told us his/her/their email address. Please take the time to ensure that your logon and password work. And, by the way, make sure that your contact information is up-to-date.

In the future, other significant additions may be made to this portion of the website. So, remember your credentials.

## **HANUKKAH/CHRISTMAS IS COMING**

Often times, we search for gift ideas for our loved ones. The PSCWRT is in a unique position to help. The website now has a section called HOLIDAY GIFTS. It's located at:

<http://www.pscwrt.org/holiday-gifts.html> Take a look at the over sixty books. If you find one of interest, tell the gift-giver the title and URL. It's as simple as that. Not only will you get something you will actually like (THIS IS A NO TIE ZONE), but also the Roundtable gets 15% of the purchase price. Oh, yeah!

## **THE "LAST WORD"**

By Mark R. Terry

Not much to say except...

*Merry Christmas and a Happy  
New Year!*

**On behalf of the officers and board members of the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table, I wish you all a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR in 2012. May you and yours be blessed during this season and in the year to come.**

**God bless you,**

*Mark Terry*

**Editor, Washington Volunteer**

## **DUES & DONATIONS**

Now that the new season is beginning, here is your third reminder that membership dues are payable either at the meeting or by mail: \$20 per individual, \$25 for a couple. Also, donations are gratefully accepted. These will help secure speakers for our meetings. Please note that all donations are tax deductible as the PSCWRT is a 501(c)3 organization. Contact Treasurer Jeff Rombauer, 425-432-1346, [jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com](mailto:jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com)

**We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the January, 2012 Washington Volunteer is Wednesday, December 28, 2011. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!**

## **2011-2012 OFFICERS**

### **Elected:\***

President, Richard Miller, 425-201-3234 or 206-808-8506, [Milomiller882@msn.com](mailto:Milomiller882@msn.com)

Vice-President/Successor: vacant

Immediate Past-President Mark Terry, 425-337-6246, [markimlor@comcast.net](mailto:markimlor@comcast.net)

Vice-President, Programming, Pat Brady, 206-246-1603, [patsbrady@comcast.net](mailto:patsbrady@comcast.net)

Vice-President, Newsletter, Mark Terry (info above)

Treasurer, Jeff Rombauer, 425-432-1346, [jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com](mailto:jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com)

Secretary, Larry Jilbert, 253-891-4022, [ljjclj@comcast.net](mailto:ljjclj@comcast.net)

*\*Except for Immediate Past President, which is an automatic position.*

### **Elected Board of Directors:**

Jim Dimond, 253-277-3783, [shinodad@gmail.com](mailto:shinodad@gmail.com)

Mike Movius, [webmaster@pscwr.org](mailto:webmaster@pscwr.org)

Rick Solomon, [ricksolo@integraonline.com](mailto:ricksolo@integraonline.com)

### **Appointed:**

Publicity Chairman, Stephen Pierce, 425-640-8808, [horseless1@juno.com](mailto:horseless1@juno.com)

Assistant Treasurer, vacant

Dinner Reservations Coordinator, Rod Cameron, 206-524-4434, [rodcam@comcast.net](mailto:rodcam@comcast.net)

Webmaster, Michael Movius, [webmaster@pscwr.org](mailto:webmaster@pscwr.org)

Official Greeter, Larry Cenotto, [cenottothe5th@yahoo.com](mailto:cenottothe5th@yahoo.com)