The Grapeshot

Newsletter

November 2025

The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

Welcomes

John Banks

as he presents

Civil War Journey of a Lifetime:
Antietam, Gettysburg,
and Beyond

Scottsdale Civic Center
Library
Copper Auditorium
Tuesday, November 18, 2025
6:00 pm
Doors open at 5:00 pm
for social hour, meet the
speaker, book sale, and
Civil War Video

Join the meeting on YouTube
https://youtube.com/live/3m3uurOwfAo?feature=share

Follow us on Facebook

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Inc.
501 (c) (3) non profit Corporation , Founded 1978

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About Our Speaker

John Banks

The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable welcomes author, Civil War historian, blogger, vlogger, and podcaster, John Banks.

Join John as he takes us on a "Civil War Road Trip of a Lifetime." Over more than a year, John Banks crisscrossed the country exploring battlefields, historic houses, forts, and more. He rode on the back of an ATV in Mississippi, went under the spell of an amateur hypnotist at a U.S. Army fort in Tennessee, admired a sunset from the grounds of the notorious Andersonville prison camp in Georgia, prayed during a tense boat ride in Charleston Harbor in South Carolina and briefly interviewed Louie the wild boar in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

John Banks is author of A Civil War Road Trip Of A Lifetime, Connecticut Yankees at Antietam, and Hidden History of Connecticut Union Soldiers. His work has been featured in such notable publications as *The New York Times*, *Civil War Times, Civil War Monitor, Civil War News, America's Civil War,* and *Military Images*. Banks and his friend Tom McMillan, an historian, author and former journalist, and co-host of The Antietam And Beyond Podcast (which you can find in the iPhone App store and on Google Play). Banks is a mountaineer from West Virginia University (B.A. in journalism), a longtime journalist (*The Dallas Morning News,* ESPN, The History Channel), and is presently secretary-treasurer of The Center for Civil War Photography.

November 18, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Join the meeting on YouTube
https://youtube.com/live/3m3uurOwfAo?feature=share

Scottsdale Civil War Round Table
Speakers & Programs September 2025 -May 2026

November 18 - John Banks, "Civil War Journey of a Lifetime: Antietam, Gettysburg, and Beyond"

December 9 - Derek Maxfield "Man of Fire: William Tecumseh Sherman in the Civil War"

January 20 - Lucas Wilder, "Chattanooga & Chickamauga"

February 17 - Curt Fields, "An Evening with General Grant"

March 17 - Roseann Bacha-Garza, "Civil War in the Rio Grande Valley"

April 21 - Lynn Herman, "The New Mexico Campaign & Glorieta Pass"

May 19 - Neil Chatelain, "Treasure & Empire in the Civil War"

GENTLE REMINDERS

- Members, please remember to wear your name badges to our meetings. It helps us to remember you and for others to get to know you.
- New members, please stop by the welcome desk to pick up your name badges and welcome tote bags!

Letter from our President

Mark Stoler

We had a large and enthusiastic audience for our October speaker, Brad Gottfried, including 14 guests. The Roundtable has also added 13 new members so far this season.

As a follow-up to Brad's comparison of the Antietam and Gettysburg campaigns, the History Discussion Group had a lively session on whether and how Lee could have won at Gettysburg. And speaking of Gettysburg and the great "what-ifs?" of the Civil War, I recently read The Great Partnership by Christian Keller, a professor at the Army War College in Carlisle, on the working and personal relationship between Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. It's a topic I didn't think there could be anything new to say but Keller's book is very engaging and insightful. Over the summer I also read Without Warning, the historical novel by our May speaker, Terry Pierce, on the Gettysburg campaign, focusing on George Meade and his unexpected (and undesired) elevation to command of the Army of the Potomac only three days before the battle. The detail and amount of research behind the novel is very impressive and illuminates the challenges faced by Meade in those days.

In this issue you will also find information on Western Spirit Museum on a series of programs on Billy the Kid, including an appearance by Western historian Paul Hutton (I've already attended to see one of the featured movies) and for upcoming programs of ASU's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

We are always on the lookout for members who would like to work to support our organization. It takes a lot to keep it going. If you are interested in becoming more involved please contact me at stolerscwrt@gmail.com or speak with me or other Board members at one of our meetings.

WE STILL HAVE A FEW SEATS AVAILABLE for the Roundtable's trip to Picacho Peak State Park and Pioneer & Military Memorial Park in Phoenix on Saturday, January 24, 2026.

It's a full day trip via motor coach to the site of the 1862 battle at Picacho Pass. On the way, we'll stop at Pioneer & Military Park to see the graves and hear the stories of the many Civil War veterans who were also early Arizona pioneers.

At Picacho Peak, Steve Smith, a public historian and member of the Tucson Roundtable, will give a presentation on the battle and its background. We will also visit the original site of the battle monument. On the bus, our tour guide will be Arizona historian Jarrod Riddle who will provide commentary on the Gadsden Purchase, the Mormon Battalion, and other aspects of Arizona history of that era.

WHEN: January 24, 2026

TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

COST: $150 per person

The cost includes bus fare, cemetery admission fee, a box lunch, bottled water, admission to Picacho Peak State Park. The bus will depart from the Scottsdale main library at a place to be determined. The bus will leave PROMPTLY at 8:30 to maintain our schedule, so please make plans to be at the library no later than 8:15. Please note space is limited since the bus holds 50 passengers only. Seats are available to Roundtable members on a FIRST COME –FIRST SERVED basis.

To reserve your place, you must complete both the **reservation form** and **liability release** for each passenger.

You have 2 options for making reservations:

Download and fill out the forms by clicking on the links above, include check made payable to the Roundtable and mail to:

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

7349 N. Via Paseo Del Sur, Ste 515-274

Scottsdale, AZ 85258

Go to the **Roundtable website**, click on Picacho Peak tab at top, complete credit card payment form, and mail the forms to the address above. Your registration will be complete once payment and forms are received.

2025-2026 Roundtable Officers, Board & Committees Officers

President:	Mark Stoler (203)645-1387; stolerscwrt@gmail.com
Vice President:	Richard Cox
Treasurer:	Bruce Washburn
Secretary:	Hal Bliss

(All Officers serve until 6/1/2027)

Board Members

Tom Merrill, John Taylor, Pat Toftoy (until 6/1/26)

Elise Moore, Jim Payne, Cheri Stegall (until 6/1/27)

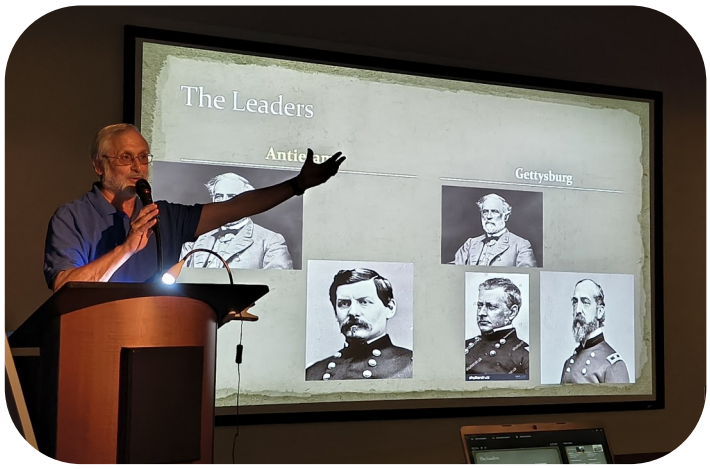
Committees

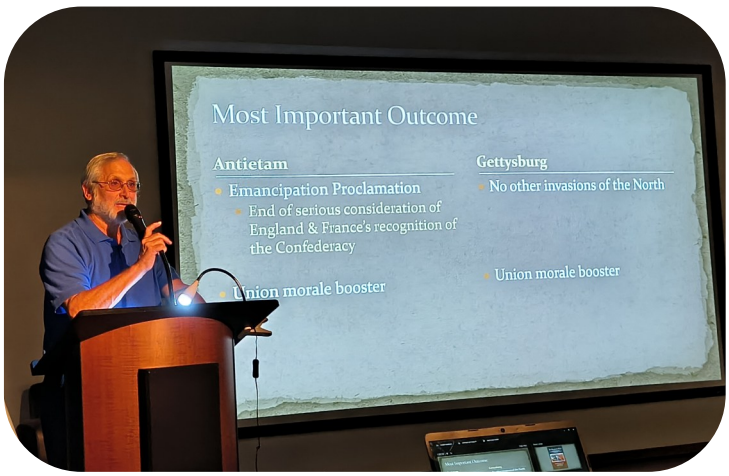
Program:	John Taylor, Cheri Stegall
Grapeshot:	Richard Cox
Greeters:	Jim Payne
History:	Richard Cox
News Media:	Jim Payne
Event Support & YouTube:	Tom Merrill
Book Sale:	Pat Toftoy
Membership:	Mark Stoler, Cheri Stegall
Travel & Tours:	Elise Moore
Grapeshot Editor:	Barbara Ray
Database Management:	John Machir

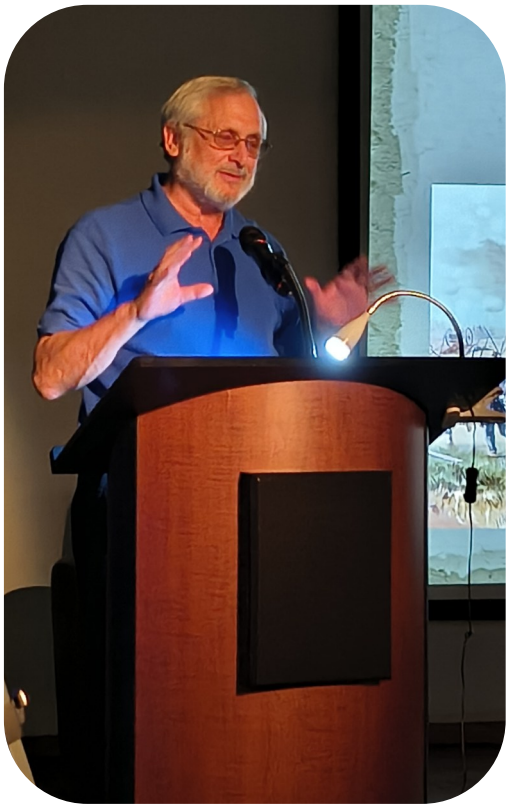
Photos from September meeting

Above: October speaker Brad Gottfried chatting with John Taylor

Below: Members enjoying the excellent selection of books on display







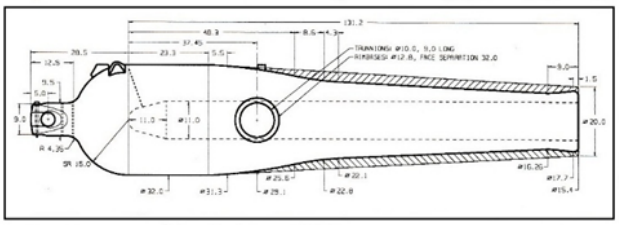
Above and Below Left, Above Right: Brad Gottfried enthralls listeners with his talk on the Antietam and Gettysburg campaigns

Phoenix's Civil War Cannon

by Ed Dobbins

In July 1897, a thirteen-foot long 15,840-pound Civil War Naval cannon was unveiled in front of Phoenix City Hall. Installed upright at a 90-degree angle with the muzzle pointing skyward and the breech buried three feet into the earth, the unusual presentation puzzled both residents and visitors. While vertical cannon displays are sometimes encountered in military cemeteries, they were rarely used in city center plazas. The confusion was further compounded by the cannon's red sandstone paint which disguised its cast iron origin.

A few years later, the cannon was remounted in the more traditional horizontal orientation and has since endured the desert sun for over a century at three different locations in Phoenix. Today it resides on the grounds of the Arizona National Guard Military Reservation adjacent to Papago Park.



The Dahlgren XI Cannon

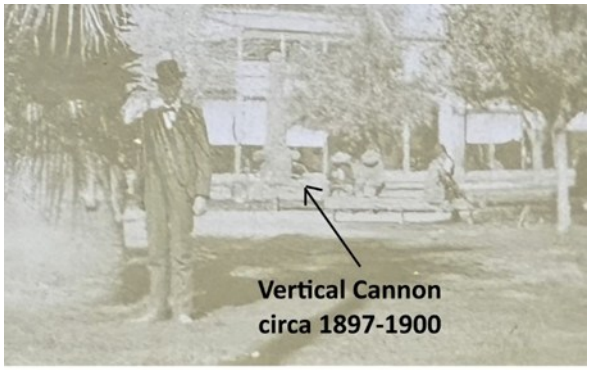
The Phoenix cannon is a Dahlgren XI, an eleven inch bore shell gun manufactured in 1864. It is registered number 400 of the 465 that were made. The XI model was one of a series of big guns designed by John Dahlgren as improvements over pre-war cannons prone to bursting during use. While there are conflicting reports on the role of number 400 in the war, two reliable sources place it on the tugboat *USS Alert* which, in 1864, operated with the James River Flotilla in Virginia.

After the war, the cannon was stored at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard's surplus ordnance yard in San Francisco. Following an 1896 Congressional Act that authorized both the War and Navy Departments to provide Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) posts and other organizations condemned ordnance for public display, the local Phoenix GAR requested, and was sent, a cannon.

Dahlgren Guns at Mare Island c1889

The gun arrived via the Santa Fe Railroad on April 24, 1897, and was moved "with considerable difficulty" from the freight station to Porter Cemetery near 14th Ave. and Madison. GAR Post Commander Ed Schwartz originally planned to erect the cannon in the center of the GAR section at Porter in an upright position and top it with a large ball or shell. Shortly after its arrival, however, he persuaded Phoenix city officials to display the cannon in a more visible area in the center of town. They chose the northwest corner of the plaza surrounding city hall.

The cannon came from Mare Island without a base or cradle for mounting. In perhaps an effort to limit expenses, the city decided to not fabricate a mount and instead follow Schwartz's vertical installation plan. Great care was taken to ensure the gun stood "as straight as a bean pole."



Vertical Cannon Installation at Phoenix City Hall

Public reaction to the upright cannon was swift and far from complementary. Newspapers mocked the installation as an attempt at "cannon agriculture" and a mark of our preparedness should a war with Mars ever occur. Visitors were perplexed and one wondered if the cannon was a new species of cactus. The red sandstone paint convinced an elderly gentleman that it was made of stone while the *Los Angeles Times* succinctly summarized the installation as "more startling than artistic."

Civil War Cannon at Phoenix City Hall c1910

Three years later, a group of civil war veterans' objections to the vertical orientation prompted the city to reposition the cannon to horizontal. In May 1900, the city contracted with a local iron works to make a cradle for the gun. The "grand old cannon" in its new mounting was unveiled on the 4th of July 1900.

The cannon remained outside City Hall until 1929 when the local government moved to the newly built Maricopa County Courthouse/Phoenix City Hall building. When it was clear there was not a place for the cannon at the new location, VFW Post 720 asked that it be given to them. Their request was granted and in October 1929 the cannon and its cradle were moved to 7th Ave. and Van Buren.

It remained in that location until at least 1952, when VFW Post 720 relocated to East Thomas Rd. The whereabouts of the cannon between 1952 and 1973 remain uncertain and no record of the sale of the VFW Post or transfer of the cannon has been found in the public records. A 1956 newspaper reference, however, described the old post building as the "National Guard conference room," suggesting its possible acquisition by the National Guard which owned an adjacent property. From the 1950s into the 1960s the building on the property next to the VFW was used as the Office of the Adjutant General and later, in the 1970s, for other purposes.

The cannon first appears on the Arizona National Guard Military Reservation in the 1976 Maricopa County Historical Aerials. A document provided by the National Guard indicates that it was installed there in 1973 near the Bushmaster Boulevard and E. McDowell Road entrance. The cannon stands alongside other Arizona National Guard Gate Guardians including an A-7 Corsair aircraft, an AH-1 Helicopter, M109, and a 155mm self-propelled Howitzer.

Civil War Dahlgren Cannon at Arizona National Guard Papago Park Military Reservation

A 1997 publication reported that only twelve of the original 465 Dalhgren XI guns have survived unaltered. While a few more may have since surfaced, the Dahlgren XI cannon is a scarce example of its class and a significant artifact of Civil War naval history. Despite its odd introduction to the city, the cannon has been on display in Phoenix for most of 130 years amidst several changes in ownership and locations.

Further research is needed to fill in the gaps in its journey, particularly between 1952 and 1973. Preserving and sharing the story of this historic weapon, created before Phoenix was settled, is a meaningful tribute to the past that reflects Phoenix's evolving relationship with its history.

Ed Dobbins has written extensively on Phoenix area history and is a member of the Scottsdale Roundtable.

ARMIES OF LAST RESORT: THE CONFEDERATE HOME GUARDS

Part militia, part police force, home guard units in the Confederacy played many roles as the fate of the nascent southern nation ebbed and flowed. Because they were loosely organized and supervised and few accurate records of their activities survive, what we know about them comes from letters, diaries and oral legends. In fiction, they have been both glorified and demonized.

For example, Margaret Mitchell's Georgia home guards fought Sherman's troops bravely but futilely during the battle for Atlanta in *Gone With Wind*. North Carolina home guardsmen hunted down deserters with a fierce zeal in Charles Frazier's *Cold Mountain*. In the movie *The Free State of Jones*, the home guard mercilessly exploited Mississippi civilians by stealing their crops while purportedly enforcing the Confederate government's "tax in kind" on agricultural products.

In reality, home guard units rarely fought in battles or were as villainous as they have been portrayed in fiction. They were formed in the heady days in 1861 when everyone in the South thought the war would be over in a matter of weeks. They were meant as a stopgap, a temporary force to keep the peace for a brief time while many of the men went off to join the Confederate cause. As more and more individuals and then entire local militia units joined the regular armies, home guards were thought of as the last line of defense against any invading Union forces.

Ultimately, all eleven seceding states authorized and formed home guard units. All able-bodied white males between the ages of 18 and 50 who were exempt from Confederate military service were expected to enroll. As the war went on, their ranks were augmented by wounded veterans who were deemed unfit to return to the armies.

They were designed to be quasi militias, with official ranks and regulations, but they were largely left to their own devices for organization, training and what their actual duties might entail. They improvised their own uniforms and carried their own firearms, because neither the central government nor the states had any extra weapons to spare.

How the home guard units were used varied from state to state and depended on local conditions. Some guarded critical infrastructure and Federal POWs. Some units were formed to deal with a specific threat, as in Missouri in August 1861, when a unit was formed to guard a few bridges and then disbanded two months later. Others acted as unofficial scouts to inform Confederate armies of Federal troop movements. Their peacekeeping functions included guarding against potential servile insurrections and assisting the slave patrols with rounding up escaped slaves.

With passage of the Confederate conscription act in early 1862, the most serious work of the home guard units began. They were assigned to track down draft dodgers and deserters. The Confederate government offered a bounty for turning in deserters, but the bounties were seldom paid.

Most historians believe the home guards weren't as ruthless (or effective) as depicted in *Cold Mountain*. Still, they must have had their hands full. North Carolina provided more soldiers to the Confederate armies than any other state. The state also suffered more casualties than any other state except Virginia. But the most sobering fact is that North Carolina experienced the highest number of desertions than any other state.

Sketch from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, 1863. A Home Guardsman examines "negro passes" on the levee road below New Orleans

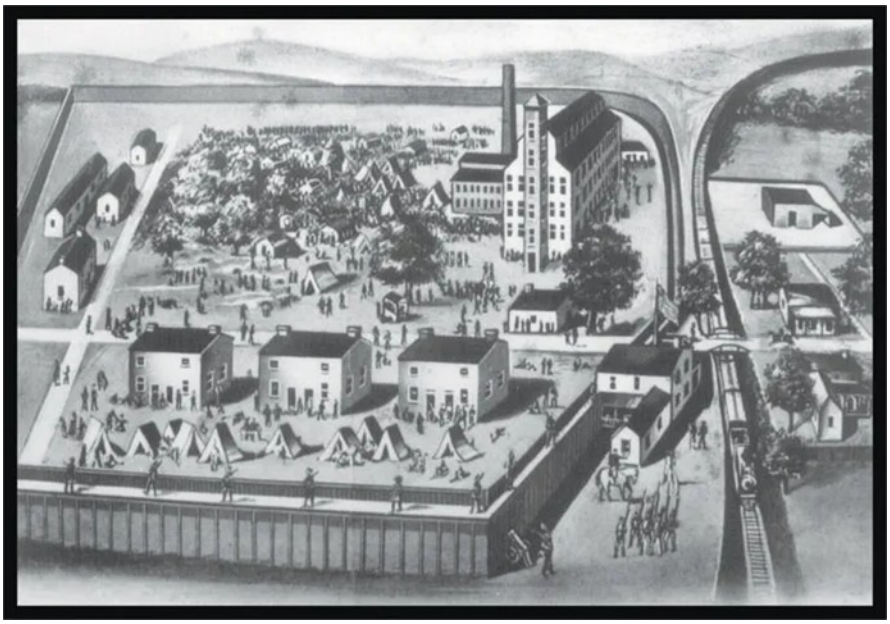
Still, the changing roles of home guard units during the war brought considerable confusion over how these units were meant to be used and how well they did their duty. Some guardsmen took advantage of the confusion and took on more authority than was granted by state law, military regulation or desired by their neighbors. Some of the lawlessness depicted in *The Free State of Jones* might have happened in some areas as Union forces advanced and neither Confederate forces nor local governments could protect the civilians in large areas of the South.

By late 1864, as Union forces occupied ever larger areas of the Confederacy, most home guard units disbanded or their members joined the Confederate armies. Since they were not part of the military, they were afraid that if captured they would be treated as guerillas and executed.

Dick Cox is SCWRT Vice President and Chair of the History Committee.

THIS MONTH IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY

November 11, 1861. The Confederate government buys an old cotton processing factory in Salisbury, North Carolina to accommodate some 1,000 Union prisoners. The site will become the second largest Confederate POW camp and over 3,700 Union prisoners will die there.



Salisbury, NC POW Camp

November 2025 Trivia Questions

1. What Civil War era politician had one son who became a Union general and another son who became a Confederate general?

2. What is arguably the westernmost violent death stemming from the Civil War?

3. What university in Washington, D.C. is named for a Civil War general?

4. Who was President Lincoln's first secretary of war?

Answers on final page

HISTORY DISCUSSION GROUP TOPICS SET FOR 2025-26

LOCATION AND MEETING TIMES

SCWRT's History Discussion Group is an informal monthly get-together for Civil War buffs in the greater Phoenix area to discuss topics in Civil War history.

We meet at the Wildflower Bread Co. in the Seville Shopping Center, at the northeast corner of Indian Bend and Scottsdale Roads. The McCormick Stillman Room, which is a partitioned meeting room at the back of the restaurant, has been reserved for us.

Our meetings start at 6:00 p.m. and end at 7:30 p.m. There is ample parking in the shopping center parking lot. In exchange for the Wildflower's hospitality, we encourage but don't require attendees to buy some food and beverages from the restaurant before our meetings.

Everyone – members, non-members, family, friends, and visitors – are welcome. We're casual and have lots of fun talking about history! Come and check us out!

The following is our schedule and list of topics for the coming season:

11/20/25 Was secession constitutional?

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

1/29/26 The Civil War "Name Game": Are any of the many names applied to the war accurate?

2/26/26 The generalship of Robert E. Lee

3/26/26 In what ways did the war permanently change the U.S.?

4/30/26 Films about the Civil War: Which are the best?

NO MEETING IN MAY

What's Going On at Neighboring Roundtables?

TUCSON 2025/2026

Nov 7	Terry Pierce "Justified Defiance at Gettysburg"
Dec 5	Sarah Ramsey "Baseball in the Civil War"
Jan 2	Bob Presman "Was Abraham Lincoln a White Supremacist?"
Feb 6	Floyd Gray Ft Huachuca
March 6	Amanda Dahl, Director of Sanguinetti Museum in Yuma "John W Jones: The Unsung Civil War Hero and Spy"
April 3	Bob Consigli "Capt. Frances Lowell"
May 1	Dr. Christopher Oakley Prof at NC "Placing the Platform: Using 3D Technology to Pinpoint Lincoln at Gettysburg" (Zoom)

SUN CITY WEST AND SURPRISE 2025-26

DATE	TOPIC	LEADER
11/04/25	Andersonville	Jim Ramage
12/02/25	Governor Zebulon Vance Of North Carolina	John Kelly
1/06/26	Andersonville Pt. 2	Jim Ramage
2/03/26	Statesmen of the Lost Cause	Thomas Gergen
3/03/26	U.S. Army Camel Corps	Bill Andrews
4/07/26	Quantrill's Raiders	Brian Callahan
5/05/26	Gen. Ambrose Burnside	Dan Lookabill

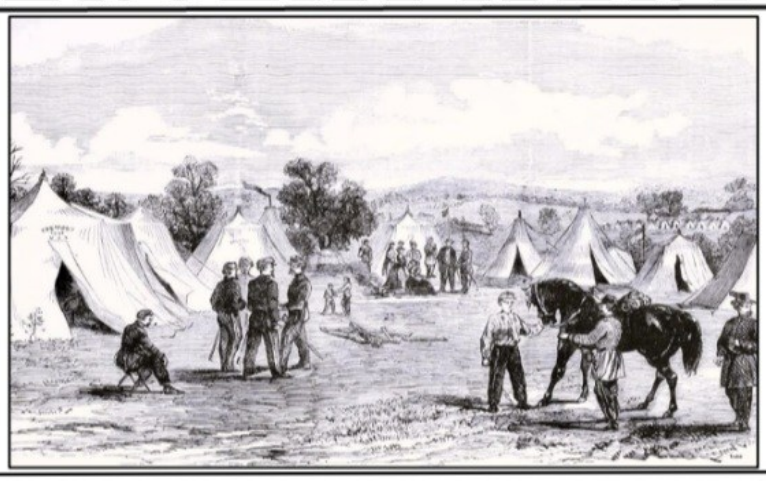
The

ARIZONA CIVIL WAR COUNCIL

Presents An

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR ENCAMPMENT

COME VISIT THE FURTHEST WESTERN BATTLEFIELD OF THE CIVIL WAR!



A PERFECT EVENT FOR ALL AGES!

NOVEMBER 22nd-23rd, 2025

LOCATION: *Picacho Peak State Park*

15520 PICACHO PEAK RD. PICACHO, AZ 85141

SCHEDULE: *10:00AM - 3:00PM*

Saturday & Sunday

Living history demonstrations & interpretive talks will occur in the Union & Confederate camp throughout the day.

Come see Civil War living history displays at Picacho Peak State Park! Walk through the Union and Confederate camps, and chat with reenactors to learn about the life of a Civil War soldier.

COME OUT TO AN EVENT, OR EVEN BECOME A REENACTOR!

WE ARE STRICTLY A HISTORICAL AND EDUCATIONAL 501C(3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION AND DO NOT HOLD ANY POLITICAL VIEWS AS AN ORGANIZATION.

CONTACT:

www.ArizonaCivilWarCouncil.com
ArizonaCivilWarCouncil
@ArizonaCivilWarCouncil
ArizonaCivilWarCouncil@Gmail.com

Western Spirit
SCOTTSDALE'S MUSEUM OF THE WEST

Smithsonian Affiliate

The Resurrection of Billy the Kid

He died young…but he wouldn't stay buried! Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West and *True West* Magazine combine forces to bring the West's most notorious outlaw back to life in *The Resurrection of Billy the Kid*. Bob Boze Bell's high-voltage historical paintings of what "really" happened during the face off with Thom Ross's surreal reimagining of the Kid's life as a fevered frontier dance. And at the end of it all? A haunting, life-size sculpture of Billy on his death bed by Buckeye Blake, staged like a wake complete with candles, curtains, and a guest book for mourners. Part art show, part séance, part showdown, this is Billy the Kid as you've never seen him before.

The exhibition is open now — experience the legend for yourself.

This link https://westernspirit.org/project/billy-the-kid/ provides a schedule of all Billy related events including movies and an appearance by historian Paul Hutton.

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Scottsdale Civil War Round Table Membership Form

Please Join Us!

Your membership enables the SCWRT to donate towards civil war preservation projects and attract the best Civil War experts from around the country to speak at our meetings, from September to May! Please fill out this form and return it with your check payable to Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Mailing address:

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

7349 N. Via Paseo Del Sur, Ste 515-274

Scottsdale, AZ 85258

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Student Membership (no charge)

Active Duty Military (no charge)

Lifetime ($500) $_____

Individual Annual ($35) $_____

Family Annual ($45) $_____

Additional donation $_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED $_____

The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable is an Arizona non-profit corporation and a U.S. 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Website: www.scottsdalecwrt.org

All members receive our monthly publication, The Grapeshot, from Sept-May

Follow us on Facebook at Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

Other Online Opportunities

A series of free lectures on **Wednesdays hosted by the Civil War Round Table Congress** (CWRTC). Check out their website for topics and to register.
2025 Lectures | CWRT Congress

CWRT Congress Fridays With U.S. Grant for a special series with Dr. Curt Fields.
To register (free)
www.cwrtcongress.org › videos › grant.html

YouTube Channel for CWRT Congress includes 40+ recorded past talks:
CWRT Congress - YouTube

From Chambersburg Civil War Seminars and Tours
Zoom presentations 15th and 30th of every month.
For schedule and registration www.civilwarseminars.org/lectures

See Your Round Table Online
Watch past speakers on our YouTube Channel
Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable - YouTube
Visit our website: Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable - SCWRT Home
Follow us on Facebook: Facebook

Gary Gallagher presents a series of 48 lectures entitled “The American Civil War.” Available on Audible as part of The Great Courses.

Chris Mackowski hosts The Emerging Civil War Podcast. New episodes on Tuesdays.

Find articles by **Gary Dorris** on his blog at alincolnbygadorris.com.

A Tax-Smart Way to Support Our Mission

As many of you know, our organization is brought together by our shared passion for the history of the American Civil War and our commitment to preserving the places where that history was made. Every program we hold, every speaker we bring in, and every donation we make to battlefield preservation is made possible by your generosity.

If you are at the stage of life where you are required to take a an annual **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)** from your retirement account, there's a way to make your support go even further. By directing part of your RMD to our organization, you can make a contribution that is **not counted as taxable income**. Because we are a recognized **501(c)(3) nonprofit**, we are eligible to receive these tax-free charitable transfers. Any such contribution must come to the nonprofit **directly** from your retirement account to be nontaxable to you while still counting toward your RMD.

This is a simple but powerful way to support these mission goals:

- To help preserve the battlefields and historic sites that keep this history alive for future generations,
- To inform the public about the American Civil War through our meetings and programs.

We are deeply grateful for all the ways our members contribute—whether through time, ideas, or financial support. Together, we keep history alive and make a lasting impact.

Obviously we are not in a position to give you tax advice, but if you are interested in supporting our work through the RMD process please consult with your financial advisor on how best to go about it. For your reference, the full name of the organization is Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable, Inc., and our E.I.N. is 77-0639661.

With appreciation,
The Board

November 2025 Trivia Answers

1. John J. Crittenden, Kentucky senator, author of the Crittenden Compromise
2. May 20, 1863, at La Paz, Arizona, where secessionist William “Frog” Edwards ambushed a party of Union soldiers. He killed one and wounded two more.
3. Howard University, named for General Oliver Otis Howard, who became the first commissioner of the postwar Freedmen’s Bureau.
4. Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania