

On The Skirmish Line

The Newsletter of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust

Rally Around Talley

The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust has launched an end-of-year campaign to pay off the remaining debt on a portion of the Chancellorsville battlefield. In September 1999, the CVBT acquired 25 acres of the historic Talley Farm. This land is outside of the Fredericksburg - Spotsylvania National Military Park's authorized boundary, which means that the National Park Service could not effect a purchase. This ground is quite historic, though, so the Trust bought it, fulfilling the role for which it was formed. True to our name, we will hold this land in trust for this and future generations.

As we have informed you previously, this property has several significant features. First, it includes the only surviving earthworks established

by the Union Eleventh Corps on this part of the battlefield. Second, this land connects two sections of the National Military Park - the historic Burton Farm, where Stonewall Jackson reconnoitered the Federal position, on May 2, 1863, and the flank attack area, where Jackson's columns made their assault several hours later. Careful tree trimming on the Trust property will reestablish the historic view between these two sites. Third, this purchase will allow visitors and scholars to study the terrain where one wing of the Confederate attack momentarily faltered that day. Finally, this land is a part of the western approach to the Chancellorsville battlefield. Its preservation will help maintain an historic ambiance for visitors.

The price of this land came to \$190,000. Just

over a year later, we have paid \$145,000 of this amount. We intend to pay the rest of the note, \$45,000, by December 29, 2000. You can help with this effort through an end-of-year donation (and have probably already received an appeal letter from our organization's president). Any amount is welcome and all of it will be used to pay for dirt and grass (not paid staff).

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



An 1890's photo looking west on the Orange Turnpike towards the Talley Farm. The ridge at the distance is the Talley Ridge where Jackson attacked the Union army.

Reenactment Helps to Save Talley Farm

Musketry volleyed across the Virginia landscape once again as several thousand Civil War reenactors refought the battle of Chancellorsville. The setting was actually the Army National Guard training facility at Fort Pickett and the time was September 23-24, 2000.

PRIMEDIA Enthusiast Group, publishers of *America's Civil War* and *Civil War Times Illustrated*, planned and staged this dramatic event. More importantly for our purposes, these good folks directed a portion of the proceeds to the CVBT, for battlefield preservation. Between reenactor donations and contributions from the visiting public, the Trust received slightly more than \$11,000 from this weekend event. These funds will be used to help complete the purchase of the Talley Farm property.

The CVBT Board extends its thanks to **PRIMEDIA** for focusing this enormous event so strongly on battlefield preservation. Glenn LeBeouf was our initial contact, but we also worked with Dean Regan, Dann Shoaf, and Robert Dobbs. Each of these individuals was extremely committed to making the battle reenactment a first class event and it was our great pleasure to work with them. We hope they will consider us for future events.

Superintendent Honored

We are pleased to inform you that Sandy Rives, Superintendent of the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park, has received the United States Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award. We cannot think of anyone more deserving. Mr. Rives has worked extremely hard to maintain good working relationships with the local jurisdictions within which this far-flung park is located. He has also aggressively sought to refine the process by which state agencies such as the Virginia Department of Transportation fulfill their respective missions around these national resources. Maintaining the integrity of a national park requires many different skills and a working knowledge of countless competing interests. It is extremely difficult work that typically goes unnoticed by the public at large.

In addition to overseeing the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park, Mr. Rives has been involved with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Commission. The United States Congress created this federal commission, in 1996, to develop a plan to manage a number of battlefields in the Shenandoah Valley. This year, the federal government approved the commission's management

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Membership Categories

Annual Member
\$35

Active Member
\$135

Sustaining Member
\$250

Patron
\$500

Benefactor
\$1,000

Life Member
\$5,000

Life Patron
\$10,000

Corporate Member
\$500

Corporate Patron
\$1,000

On The Skirmish Line

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Spotsylvania Supervisor

Wants to Hear From You

As you know, most of the Chancellorsville battlefield is located in Spotsylvania County. The CVBT has sought to work with the Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors to ensure this national resource receives the protection it deserves. Unfortunately, the Spotsylvania Board has not always been supportive of preservation goals. The most recent example of their close relationship with developers is the rezoning of a portion of the May 1st battlefield from agricultural to commercial use.

With this background, it is interesting to note that Ms. Tricia Messner, recently elected Spotsylvania County Supervisor for the Chancellor District, has expressed an interest in battlefields. In September of this year, Ms. Messner posted the following on her website:

“There’s No Place Like Home.....”

Speaking of our historical roots, it’s interesting to note that Lee’s Greatest Victory, The Battle of Chancellorsville will be Virginia’s Largest Civil War Reenactment this year! I would invite you all to drop by my house conveniently sited at the battlefield after the fighting. We could enjoy mint juleps and discuss the fighting from the veranda. However, the battle won’t be reenacted here. In fact, you need to go to Fort Pickett, VA to be a part of our local living history. The day promises battle reenactments, noted historians, period vendors, artists, food, music, living history. Sounds like wonderful three days, packed with educational opportunities as well as production of tourism dollars and I’m only sorry that all of that will go to the residents of Fort Pickett and not Spotsylvania. One can wonder about the fight to preserve our historic resources and then our lack of using those historic resources to enhance our own community. Apparently the National Park Service believes that reenactments glorify war and thus they

are not allowed on the actual sites of the battles. I realize that one could argue that there would be damage to the property and the like but I figure if the fields sustained an actual civil war, I suppose they could handle a mock one. Maybe we should return to Americans the right to show they can be proper stewards of those resources that last time I checked were rightfully theirs.”

Ms. Messner is to be commended for stating her opinions so publicly and inviting citizen response. We find them unusually instructive. If Ms. Messner is serious about educational opportunities and preserving historic resources, we encourage her to suggest the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors consider establishing a suitable battle reenactment site within their county. Such a facility would need to include sufficient space for the actual reenactment, consisting of open space, woods, and dirt roads. Thousands of parking spaces would be needed for reenactors and spectators, and these would need to be screened from view of the mock battlefield. Provision would also need to be made for the necessary utilities for vendors, and, of course, public toilets. County supervisors must always consider how to maintain their tax base, but this type of development would prevent thousands of new houses from being built, thereby reducing the burden for new schools. In addition, this type of facility could be used as a county park when not in use for living history events. I am sure the reenactment community would prefer to refight the war closer to the actual sites. Reenactors, however, would not consider using actual hallowed ground. They are quite respectful of this nation’s history.

Someone already responded to Ms. Messner, as follows:

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Renewal Note

Please check your mailing label to see if your membership is due for renewal. The date appears in the upper right hand corner of the label. Clip out the renewal form and send it back.

Spotsylvania Supervisor

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"You wondered why the reenactments are not held on the battlefields. Well, honey, ya see it's like this. The battlefields are considered "ballowed grounds," if ya will. The folks here are kinda protective about the fact that many of their ancestors are still out there in those battlefields. Folks don't take kindly to play soldiers and horses running all over their ancestors. Maybe in your spare time between folding up the laundry and typing up your CITIZEN'S REPORT, you could visit the battlefields and pay your respects to those folks out there. And, maybe while you are there, you could talk with some of the visitors who come here to visit these places and ask them why in

Folks don't take kindly to play soldiers and horses running all over their ancestors

the world would they want to visit a blooming battlefield."

As noted before, Ms. Messner invites citizen comment. Her e-mail address is Forthesakeof10@aol.com. We do not recommend sarcastic comments, but elected officials certainly understand public opinion and welcome comments that give them a clearer understanding of how their decisions are perceived. Ms. Messner is to be commended for opening this type of public dialogue.

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Mark Your Calendar for CVBT's Annual Meeting

Don't forget to leave **May 5th and 6th, 2001** open for the CVBT's Annual Meeting. The 2001 edition of the Annual Meeting is sure to be an exciting event. Next year's events will include a Riverboat cruise on the Rappahannock and guided tours by reknowned Historian Gary Gallagher. This event seems to get bigger and better each year, so make plans to attend. More information will be available in January. See you there!!

.....

Superintendent

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plan and work will soon commence to acquire and preserve the battlefields of Jackson's 1862 Campaign as well as sites from the 1864 Valley Campaign.

For generations to come, students of the Civil War will be able to visit battlefield sites that may not otherwise have been preserved but for the hard work of people like Sandy Rives. The Central Virginia Battlefields Trust is gratified that Mr. Rives has received at least some of the recognition he so richly deserves.



Generosity of America's Youth

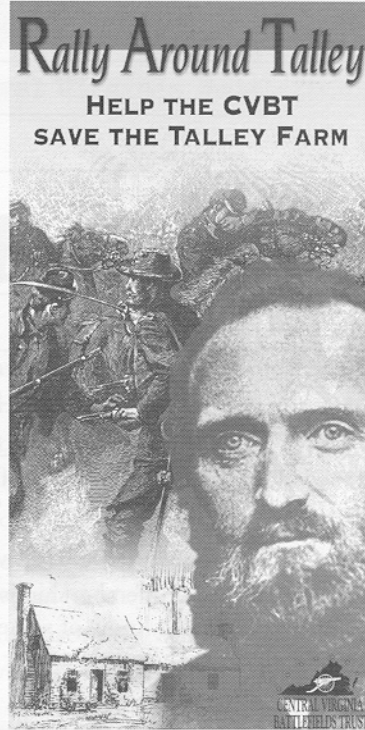
We are often in awe of the dedication our members show in forwarding funds to buy dirt and grass. We know that hard earned money is needed for a great many things and are certainly grateful for any amount that is forwarded to us. To show that we are equally dedicated to the preservation of historic ground, we continue to operate through an active Board of Directors instead of any paid staff. It seems to work. One member wrote us: "Your 'no overhead' pitch always gets me!"

One gentleman from Austin, Texas, a **Mr. George Cagle**, pledged to send us \$5 a month for a year. Mr. Cagle continues to make good on his pledge and we pledge to convert these funds into dirt and grass that he can visit and enjoy when he gets older. Mr. Cagle was ten when he made his promise last February. We are in awe. We also recognize our responsibility to spend these funds wisely. How could we do otherwise.

Donate to Talley Farm and Receive a Gift

As a gift from the CVBT, for donations of **\$250.00 or more**, you will receive this beautiful poster of the Talley farm appeals campaign. This full color 18" x 36" print is suitable for framing and will become

a lasting reminder of your generosity in helping the CVBT save the Talley Farm, site of "Stonewall" Jackson's famous flank attack. Return the form below with your generous donation and this print will be yours.



www.cvbt.org

Our web page continues to expand, through the generosity of member Gary Embry. The CVBT web site is well worth a visit and includes an inordinate number of links to other Civil War web sites. Pay us a visit. You will not be disappointed.

YES! I would like to help the CVBT to save the Talley Farm.

NAME: MR. AND MRS. MR. MRS. MS.

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) _____

PLEASE MARK DONATION:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$135 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER \$ _____ |

I WANT TO CVBT TO USE ALL MY DONATION FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE TALLEY FARM, PLEASE DO NOT SEND ME THE TALLEY FARM POSTER.

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

- VISA MASTER CARD CHECK

Please return completed form with credit card information or a check payable to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust**.
Mail completed form to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, 604A William Street, Suite 1, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.**

RENEW TODAY!!

Renewing Member

New Member

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP: ANNUAL MEMBER - \$35 ACTIVE MEMBER - \$135 SUSTAINING MEMBER - \$250

PATRON - \$500 BENEFACTOR - \$1,000 LIFE MEMBER - \$5,000 LIFE PATRON - \$10,000

CORPORATE MEMBER - \$500 CORPORATE PATRON - \$1,000

METHOD OF PAYMENT: CHECK VISA MASTER CARD

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) _____

Please return completed renewal form with credit card information or a check payable to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust.**
Mail completed form to: **Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, 604A William Street, Suite 1, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.**

In a constant endeavor to keep our costs down, the CVBT publishes a renewal form in all issues of "On The Skirmish Line". Please check your mailing label to see if your membership is due for renewal and clip out the form above and send it back to our office. If your membership is current, but you know of someone who would like to join, please pass this membership form on to them. The CVBT would be glad to include them in our ever growing list of members.



**CENTRAL VIRGINIA
BATTLEFIELDS TRUST**

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