

Campaign 65  
Skirmish 8  
April 11, 2024

# The Dispatch

Editor  
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## Newsletter of The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table

Welcome to our fellowship forum where we discuss our past, emphasizing remembrance, education & preservation.

Meetings held at Central Penn College Conference Center and virtually on Zoom.

NOTE

Thursday, April 11 — Dr. Jon M. Nese

### Weather at the Battle of Gettysburg

Join us on **Thursday**, April 11, as Pennsylvania State University Professor of Meteorology, Dr. Jon M. Nese, discusses new findings on the weather conditions that prevailed during the Battle of Gettysburg in July of 1863, and the impact weather had on the outcome of the battle.

How “hot” was the fighting at Gettysburg? It is generally accepted that it was 87 degrees on the afternoon of Pickett’s Charge. But what did it *feel like* to the soldiers who participated in that epic struggle? Humidity, dew point, and heat index are critical factors to answering that question, as is a thing called “wet bulb temperature,” a term little-known to those outside the field of meteorology. Drawing on never-before used data for the first *qualitative* estimate of the combination of heat and humidity for the battle, Dr. Nese will reveal that the actual heat index on the afternoon of Pickett’s Charge was as high as 105 degrees, which led to heat exhaustion and heat stroke with prolonged exposure and physical activity. The oppressive heat caused many soldiers to faint and be carried from the battlefield insensible. Is it any wonder the charge failed?

Dr. Nese is Associate Head for Undergraduate Programs in the Department of Meteorology and Atmospheric Science at Penn State University, where he teaches a variety of courses on weather and atmospheric sciences. He also oversees the Weather Communications Group which is responsible for Weather World, the department’s long-running weekday weather magazine show. His presentation will be based on an article that he co-authored with Licensed Battlefield Guide Jeffrey Harding entitled “Pickett’s Charge—A Perfect Storm of Heat: Never before Used Data Allows for Heat Index Estimate during Fateful Attack,” which appeared in the July 2022 edition of *Gettysburg Magazine*.

Those who are unable to attend this engagement in person are invited to tune in to the lecture and Q&A session via Zoom. Click on the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88641390902>. The meeting ID # is 886 4139 0902. No password is required. To dial in by phone, click on the following link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88641390902>. or call 1-301-715-8592.



**Zoom participants should join the meeting by 7:00 pm.**

#### DINNER IS SERVED!

5:30 pm—Refreshments  
6:15 pm—Dinner

7:15 pm—Announcements  
7:30 pm—Presentation

#### Buffet Dinner Selections

Cider Brined Pork Loin, Almond Crusted Salmon, Jasmine Rice Pilaf, Honey Glazed Carrots, Mixed Field Greens,, House Made Soup du Jour, Rolls/Butter, Assorted Cookies

Cost: \$26 per person

pay at the door or on our website: [harrisburgcwr.org/events](https://harrisburgcwr.org/events)

**Dinner reservations must be made no later than  
noon on Monday, April 8**



Phone: Brian Foster at 717-962-6122 or  
Email: [hccwr.membership@gmail.com](mailto:hccwr.membership@gmail.com)

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**Web Links** (CTRL + click)

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## President's Pen

*I never saw troops behave more magnificently than Pickett's division of Virginians did today in that grand charge upon the enemy. And if they had been supported as they were to have been—but, for some reasons not yet explained to me, were not—we would have held the position and the day would have been ours.*  
--General Robert E. Lee

As we embark on another month of exploring the rich history of our nation, I am thrilled to extend my warmest greetings to each of you. April brings with it the promise of new insights and discoveries. I am honored to serve as your president during this exciting time.

First and foremost, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our esteemed March speaker, Jeffrey D. Wert. His captivating presentation on the struggle for the Spotsylvania mule shoe during the Overland Campaign of 1864 truly left an indelible mark on our collective consciousness. His ability to delve into the minds of the soldiers who endured this harrowing battle provided us with a profound understanding of their experiences and sacrifices. For those fortunate enough to attend, I'm sure you'll agree that the time spent listening to the speaker's insights flew by all too quickly.

As we turn our attention to April, I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for us to continue our exploration of Civil War history. Our upcoming events promise to be both enlightening and enriching, and I encourage each of you to participate fully in our discussions and activities. Our April speaker, Dr. Jon M. Nese, a highly-regarded professor of meteorology from Penn State, will reprise a lecture on weather conditions at the Battle of Gettysburg that was an enormous hit at last June's Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College. He will offer new insights into why Pickett's Charge failed. You won't want to miss it!

Additionally, I want to take a moment to address the ongoing need for volunteers within our organization. As we look ahead to the coming years, we recognize that there are many crucial roles that need to be filled to ensure the continued success of our Round Table. Each of us has the opportunity to be a recruiter for our group, to reach out to fellow history enthusiasts and invite them to join our ranks. I urge you to consider stepping up and volunteering your time and talents to help us fulfill our mission. Whether it's serving on the Board or as an officer or committee chair, or contributing to our outreach and recruiting efforts, your involvement is invaluable. Together, let's work towards a future where the legacy of the Civil War is preserved and celebrated for generations to come. Will you answer the call and become a vital part of our team?

In closing, I want to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for your ongoing dedication to our Round Table. Your passion for preserving and sharing the stories of our nation's past is what makes our community so special. Together, let us continue to honor the memory of those who came before us and ensure that their legacy lives on for generations to come.

John West



We had an excellent turnout in March for Jeffrey D. Wert's presentation on Spotsylvania

A donation to the Harrisburg CWRT has been made in memory of  
**Suzanne Sweatlock Gumpert**

## Field Trip Updates

As this newsletter went to press, our spring field trip to Spotsylvania Court House on Saturday, May 4 remains sold out. Anyone still wishing to participate in that trip should contact our Treasurer, Steve Williamson, by email at [steve.williamson.WCCS@outlook.com](mailto:steve.williamson.WCCS@outlook.com) or at 717-580-0443 and ask to be put on the waiting list. There are currently five names on that list. As registrants fall out, Steve will offer seats to those on the waiting list in the order they asked to be put on the list.

Our fall field trip, entitled "Flames Beyond Gettysburg," will take place on Saturday, October 19, and will pick up where our fall field trip for 2023 left off. Guide Scott Mingus will be back, and will trace the route of the Confederate invasion of Adams and York counties in June 1863, culminating in the burning of the Columbia-Wrightsville bridge over the Susquehanna. More details are in the flyer which is posted on our website at <https://harrisburgcwrt.org/events/>. Note that you can now register for the trip on the website, or you can fill out the form at the bottom of the flyer and mail it to Steve Williamson with a check for the \$25.00 deposit. Thirteen have already signed up. We anticipate this trip will fill up fast, so the best advice is: **"don't delay, register today!"**

## Other Upcoming Events

**Thursday, March 28:** The 2024 Wert Lecture, "Abraham Lincoln & American Immigration," with Harold Holzer. 7:00 pm, Stern Great Room, Dickinson College. Free & open to the public.  
<https://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/2024/01/17/2024-wert-lecture-with-harold-holzer/>

**Saturday, April 6:** "All Roads Lead to Gettysburg" Conference at Temple University's Center City Campus next to the Philadelphia City Hall. 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Free & open to the public.  
[https://liberalarts.temple.edu/research/labs-centers-and-institutes/center-study-force-and-diplomacy/lecture-series/2024-cenfad-conference-all-roads-lead-gettysburg?fbclid=IwAR07OS7rdXBTJvROGKHfzDUKNXUS\\_JT2bRdUKyKmVMjJM\\_Ja9w5TKZWA-9Q](https://liberalarts.temple.edu/research/labs-centers-and-institutes/center-study-force-and-diplomacy/lecture-series/2024-cenfad-conference-all-roads-lead-gettysburg?fbclid=IwAR07OS7rdXBTJvROGKHfzDUKNXUS_JT2bRdUKyKmVMjJM_Ja9w5TKZWA-9Q)

## 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet Fast Approaching



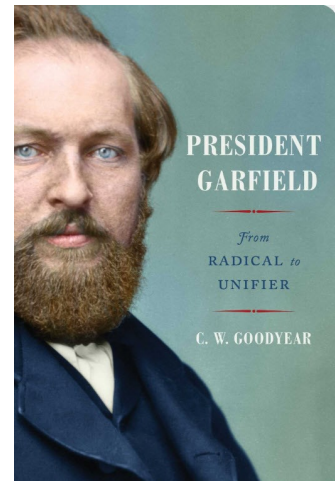
Our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary banquet will take place at Central Penn College on Friday, May 17. *New York Times* best-selling author, C.W. Goodyear, will discuss the Civil War career of President James A. Garfield.

Our planning committee is working hard to make this event a memorable one. It will include living historians (the Pennsylvania Bucktails), a special menu and HCWRT souvenirs, and a retrospective on our Round Table which will include speakers, published works, and a review of preservation efforts. In addition, Jim Schmick has agreed to have available books

authored by Round Table members and speakers from across the decades.

**Mark your planning calendars now and save the date!**

We're hoping for a record turnout.



## Check Out Our Website!

### Meeting Schedule—Campaign 65

#### 05/17/24—65th Anniversary Speaker

*The Civil War Career of President James A. Garfield*  
C. W. Goodyear

#### 06/06/24 (THURSDAY)- Nye-Sommers Lecture

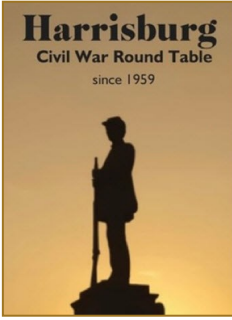
*The Good, The Bad, The Ugly, and the Mediocre:  
Leadership at the Battle of South Mountain*  
D. Scott Hartwig

Take a look at the website—we have been working to upgrade it to make it easy for our membership to follow our events, sign up and pay for dinners, sign up and pay for field trips, and annually renew membership.

You may see yourself in the roll through of pictures when you log on. Newsletters since 2019 can be viewed. Preservation of battlefields is part of our mission; see the impressive list of our donations through the years.

The website's Photo Gallery includes photos from our 2023 field trips to Chancellorsville, Antietam Creek, and Winchester, underscoring the fun we have on those trips.

<https://harrisburgcwrt.org>



# The Dispatch

The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table  
121 Windrush Lane  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-9236

April 2024

130th PA Monument  
Antietam National  
Battlefield

## The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table

Where we discuss our past, emphasizing remembrance, education & preservation. **All Are Welcome**  
Meetings are held at Central Penn College Conference Center, 600 Valley Road, Summerdale, PA



Follow the Harrisburg Civil War Round Table on Facebook



## Harrisburg Civil War Round Table Enlistment Form

### Membership

Current Member Renewal

Individual \$24

Individual or Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

New Member Enlistment

Family \$36

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Full Time Student \$5

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

An additional \$10 for a name badge is optional. If you want a badge, name should appear as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

### Donations\*

\$25     \$50     \$100     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*If your donation is made in memory or in recognition of someone, please provide name(s) here: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contacts:

For questions call: Brian Foster, Membership, Phone: 717-962-6122, email hcwrt.membership@gmail.com

Mail checks to: Steve Williamson, Treasurer, Phone 717-580-0443, 121 Windrush Lane, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-9236