



# Bugle Calls



## SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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### SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

#### Board of Directors

##### President

David Paul Davenport  
6156 N Mitre Ave  
Fresno CA 93722  
Phone (559) 277 3283  
E-mail Address:  
davidpauldavenport@yahoo.com

##### Vice-President and Programs

Michael Green  
847 E. Pleasant  
Tulare, CA 93274  
Phone (559) 688-2134  
E-mail Address: osogreen@aol.com

##### Treasurer & Web Master

Walter Schulze [Gail]  
1432 Locust Ave  
Clovis, CA 93611  
Phone (559) 297-4481  
E-mail Address: wschulze1@sbcglobal.net

##### Secretary

Jonathon Schulze  
1432 Locust Ave  
Clovis, CA 93611  
Phone (559) 297-4481  
E-mail Address: wschulze1@sbcglobal.net

##### Past President

Brian Clague [Linda]  
P O Box 116  
Shaver Lake, CA 93664  
Phone (559) 841-7161  
E-mail Address: bclague@netptc.net

##### Bugle Call Editor

Ron Vaughan  
730 E Tulare Ave  
Tulare CA 93274  
E-mail Address: ronvaughan@prodigy.net

##### Members at Large

Pattie Spencer and Michael Spencer  
1548 W Vasser Ave Fresno CA 93705  
Phone (559) 233 1059 (559) 304 8170  
E-mail Address: pds8919@aol.com

### President's Message

The next meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table will be held December 9, 2010, at 7 PM, at Denny's Restaurant in Clovis on Shaw Ave., east of Willow. Dinner is optional and served as soon after 6PM as possible based on when orders for meals are placed with our server. It is especially important that every effort be made to complete eating and paying for meals before our speaker begins at 7:15. I find it disruptive to have the server trying to complete transactions during the presentation. And I will make a point of also telling the kitchen staff to not play music during the presentation.

Donald Stoker, Professor of Strategy and Policy at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, is our guest speaker. He is the author of several works, most recently *The Grand Design: Strategy and the U. S. Civil War*. *Grand Design* was the History Book Club featured selection of the month for August, 2010. His talk will highlight the book and give all of us an opportunity to view the War from a fresh perspective.

At the suggestion of the November meeting attendees a Christmas gift exchange is also planned. Gifts must not exceed \$10 and be wrapped. All who wish to participate will place their gift in a common box and receive raffle ticket in return for doing so. At the appropriate time raffle tickets will be drawn and each "winner" will come forward to select a wrapped gift. For those who expected more in the way of a Christmas party I apologize. No one stepped forward to offer to host a potluck dinner on a night other than our regular meeting night and no one took exception to holding a regular meeting in December.

Elsewhere in this issue of Bugle Calls are items of interest including the Statements of Candidacy for those seeking positions of leadership in the SJVCWRT and a report by vice-president Mike Green informing us of the programs he has scheduled for 2011.

I look forward seeing you all on the 9th.

David D

## Statement of Candidacy

I, David Davenport, am seeking re-election to the position of President of the SJVCWRT, but not without reservations. First, I am trying to return to the workforce and if the job I applied for at UC Merced materializes I will be teaching on Thursday nights in the Spring, 2011, semester. Second, I am really not interested in hearing anything more about battles and persons about whom thousands of pages of scholarship have been devoted. On the other hand I don't see any other candidates on the horizon. In fact, I held off writing this because I hoped that someone else would want this job. Unfortunately, it appears that my statement of candidacy may be the only one in this newsletter for any of the four elected positions. What this means I cannot say. Voting will take place at our January 13 meeting.

## Items on the Web

Your president has been notified to two very interesting items on the world wide web. First, David Cheever, the Maine State Archivist, announced in early November that first person accounts of the lives of residents of Maine at the time of the Civil War have been compiled and placed on the internet at <http://maine.gov/sos/arc/sesquicent/civilwarwk.shtml>

The goal is to have an illustrated story for each week of the Civil War beginning with the election of 1860, hence the reason for the announcement now and not in April, 2011. The information comes from the State Archives and from county and local historical societies.

Second, on September 9, 2010, C-SPAN broadcast a round table discussion about civil war generals that can be viewed over the internet at <http://www.booktv.org/Program/11833/Roundtable+Discussion+of+Civil+War+Generals.aspx>. The website summary reads as follows: A panel discussion that focuses on Civil War Generals. The participants examine how each man ascended to the military rank and what separated each from their peers. The panel is moderated by Gen. Wesley Clark (Retired), editor of Palgrave's Great General Series and includes, Duane Schultz, Custer, Noah Andre Trudeau, Robert E. Lee, Donald Davis, Stonewall Jackson, Steven Woodworth, Sherman, and John Mosier, Grant. The event takes place at the National Archives in Washington, DC.

Click on "WATCH" under Program Information on the right side of the screen.

## YE OLD CHRIS- MAS PARTY! SJVCWRT MEET- ING DEC, 9TH, 6:00 pm

Please bring a wrapped gift valued about \$10.

Speaker will be Don Stokes, who will speak about his Book of The Month Club work on CW Grand Strategy.

## SJVCWRT Meeting November 11, 2010

Dave calls the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

Walt gives the treasurer's report. Balance is \$1874.10

This is the next to last meeting for this year.

Voting for board positions starts with written **Statement of Candidacy** for the Dec. meeting and voting in Jan. of 2011.

Sons of Confederate Veterans speaker introduces his E-book "The Doc".

Mike asks for volunteers to speak at meetings. Mike reminds members that dues are due in by January 1, 2011.

Mike introduces speaker Mr. Sniffen.

Dave Presents Joe West with the buffalo statue.

Dave raffles off the prints and poster.

Winner of "the Sharp-

# AFTER ACTION REPORT

## SJVCWRT MEETING OF Nov. 11th 2010

By Ron Vaughan

Twenty six persons were present for our meeting. One attendee was a new person, Jay West, who may be the luckiest man on Earth, or at least Fresno. That night he won two items from the Kearney raffle-- A painting of Sheridan's cavalry and the Statuette of a Buffalo soldier. Then he won a book in that drawing!

Our speaker was Dan Sniffen, who talked about Winston County, Alabama during the CW. Three of his ancestors lived there. Winston County had no slaves, only small farmers. The terrain was too rocky and hilly for plantation agriculture. When the state was voting on whether to secede, County residents meet at Bill Looney's Tavern. The eventual vote tally for Winston County was 447 for the "co-operation with the Union" platform, and zero votes for session. When this outcome was reported to the state convention, someone commented, "What next? Will Winston County seceded from Alabama and become the 'Free State of Winston'?"

Many of the citizens wanted to fight for the Union, but the county was cutoff, surrounded by pro- Confederate counties. So they had three choices: be conscripted into the Confederate Army, flee, or hide out in the mountains. Dan's ancestors tried each of these alternatives. Louis Kelly was conscripted by the Home Guard into the Confederate Army, but deserted. He fled to Union lines, and eventually joined the U.S. 1st Alabama Cavalry.

Daniel Hood was also conscripted and was enrolled into the 9th Alabama Regt.. He was wounded during the Peninsula Campaign, and later succumbed to his wound.

Silas Beasley, was a conscientious objector. He was able to hide from the Confederate authorities. He survived by hunting and made combs out of the bones, which he arranged for his wife to sell, to support herself.

Meanwhile, tavern owner Bill Looney, secretly helped 1200 Alabama Unionists to escape to the North during the war.

## Sort of a Book "Review"

I recently examined (euphemism which means didn't read, but thought about it) Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South, the newest work by Harvard historian Stephanie McCurry. Her thesis is that the Confederacy lost the war because it was anti-democratic. It was controlled by rich white men who denied slaves and poor white women their rightful place in society. What???

I don't know why Professor McCurry would write such a book, but her thesis is clearly flawed since the equivalent criticism can be levied against the victor in this titanic struggle. No "northern" states allowed former slaves and their descendents the right to vote, the right to serve on juries, etc. etc. some going so far as to prevent people of color from living within their boundaries (Iowa, for example). And poor white women in the north, just like their southern counterparts, in fact all women regardless of

shooter" -Kelly Newman.

Winner of "Battles and Leaders"- Lisa Peters.

Winner of "Sheridan's cavalry"- Joe West.

Dave raffles off books.

Dave ends the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Schulze, Secretary

economic status, were denied the right to vote in every state and territory of the Union and the Confederacy. Does McCurry not know this?

**H**er myopia reminds me of the many works condemning slavery in the antebellum Confederacy which fail to compare the “peculiar institution” there with slavery elsewhere in the Americas. For example, it is an undeniable truth that in general slaves in Georgia in 1840 had a much better life than slaves in Haiti in 1790, Jamaica in 1820, and even Brazil in 1875. Those societies placed much less monetary value on slaves because they were easily replaced at relatively little cost. After the international slave trade was outlawed in 1808 and enforced by British and American warships, the price of slaves increased in the United States so it was in the best economic interest of slave owners to provide the best available care for their slaves. The lash was used only as a last resort. Yes, Simon Legree, was a terrible man, but Uncle Tom’s Cabin was a work of fiction.

**W**hen I was teaching I tried to explain that it was remarkable that in the approximately 300 years of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade only 5% of the ten million people who left Africa ended up in North America given that in 1850 there were more people in North America of African heritage than there were in the rest of the American continents combined. This statistical fact “speaks well” of the treatment of slaves in North America when compared with all other places in the Americas.

**N**ow it appears that I have to explain to fellow historians who should know better that both Lincoln and Davis supported conscription, that both supported exemptions from military service for wealthy men, that both suspended habeas corpus, that both curtailed freedom of the press, that both arrested people who spoke against government policies, that both (at least before the war) supported slavery, and both did not give women the vote.

**I**n sum, Confederate Reckoning appears to be but another example of why a Harvard education is far from a good education.



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